

PEACE MATTERS

Winter 2023

CELEBRATING BETTY VILLAGOMEZ, NEW ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Congratulations to Betty Villagomez recently promoted to Associate Director. She has worked with the Center since 2019, first as a partner abuse intervention group facilitator and intake assessor, and more recently as a program manager for Spanish-language services. Betty has experience in providing victim services as well as mental health, family, and couples counseling. As an Associate Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, her “passion is helping families overcome and navigate challenges.” She’s a Licensed Professional Counselor with over 13 years of counseling and case management experience. Betty brings a great deal of experience to her new role which will now include more administrative and staff training responsibilities.



Betty’s favorite part of her job is working with participants in the partner abuse intervention groups. She likes witnessing the shift as the group evolves so that program participants stop relying so much on her as the leader, “...to supporting each other and really being there for one another.” She is the happiest in her job when she “hears a shift and something clicks for a participant, and when they talk about how stopping their abuse and engaging in safe relationships has led to more fulfilling relationships with their partners and children.”

The biggest challenge, Betty said, is recruiting and retaining highly skilled staff. It’s only recently the public has recognized partner abuse intervention services’ crucial role in intervening in and preventing domestic violence. Despite funding challenges, she said the Center has developed a staff with dedication and expertise in this important work.

EVERY GIFT MATTERS

You can make a difference this holiday season by supporting the Center’s mission to stop domestic violence where it starts. Your financial contributions are crucial to keep our life-altering programs running.



OUR MISSION

“The Center helps people who abuse to stop their domestic violence, take responsibility for their behavior, create healthy relationships, and strengthen their community.”

DID YOU KNOW?

- Domestic Violence services are a relatively new field. The first Victim's Shelter opened in the US in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1974.
- It wasn't until 1985 that the U.S. Surgeon General identified domestic violence as a public health issue.
- The Center is the only organization in the Chicagoland area solely focused on Partner Abuse Intervention (PAIP) Programs.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS! WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

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GENEROUS GRANTS FOR THE CENTER!

A big thank you to **Michael Reese Health Trust** for its generous grant to support our *Beliefs and Skills for Domestic Peace* partner abuse intervention program, aftercare support services, *Real Men Advancing Peace* and *Sisters Peace Circle*, and our community outreach and prevention activities. This funding is especially critical currently as our referrals continue to increase as it will help to ensure that this much-needed programming will be available to all who need it.



MICHAEL REESE



**CROWN FAMILY
PHILANTHROPIES**

The Center is excited to have recently received a grant to expand its data capacity. We are very appreciative of the **Crown Family Philanthropies** for this rare opportunity which will allow the Center to update its case management software and develop a custom reporting tool that will make it significantly easier to collect the aggregate data to describe program participants, their needs, and program outcomes. This will assist us in identifying areas for new programming or programmatic improvement.

Our sincere gratitude to the **Community Memorial Foundation** (CMF) for their recent general operating grant to the Center for support of the Center's partner abuse intervention and community outreach programs in the western suburbs of Chicago. The CMF focus is to improve the health of those who live or work in 27 targeted communities including La Grange, Downers Grove, and Westmont, among others.



**Community
Memorial
Foundation**



BOWLING FOR SAFE HOMES & COMMUNITIES WAS A SUCCESS!

This past October, friends and supporters of the Center gathered for a fun, fall fundraiser with a day of bowling and pizza! We met out at Striker Lanes in Berwyn where we also had a silent auction and spent time socializing. It was wonderful to engage with our community. **Hope to see you at the next fundraiser for the Center in the spring of 2024. More info to come soon!**