



Spring 2023 NCEDSV'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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A LETTER FROM NCEDSV'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Spring has sprung! Well, actually as I write this it's still pretty snowy in our northern parts and chilly and windy in the south. But I hold firm in the knowledge that spring will spring for all of us sooner rather than later. I also know that, while winter may have stayed too long for some, the next few months are going to fly by because there is a lot going on.

In this issue, we say a fond goodbye to Judy Henderson. I will leave Amber to remind us of all Judy's amazing talents but do want to share just how much I personally have enjoyed getting to know Judy and her infectious smile and positivity. I promised Judy that we will carry on her legacy and continue the wonderful work she has done building NCEDSV's training over her tenure. In that tone, I want to highlight some of our upcoming training opportunities.

I am excited to announce that NCEDSV will be facilitating the next two cohorts of the Victim Assistance Academy of Nevada (VAAN). The VAAN has always been an important opportunity for advocates working in all settings to come together for deep training and earn their certification. This round of VAAN will be a little different in recognition that often advocates learn best when they can share with others who work

in similar communities. The main content of VAAN will be presented virtually with participants working at their own pace within a specific window. We know that the richest part of any training is often the conversation, so, following the online portion of the training, participants will be assigned affinity groups based on their location (northern, southern, frontier) and will come together as a group to process the training and discuss how advocacy works in their communities. This hybrid format also enables us to open VAAN up to larger cohorts than in the past.

In addition to VAAN, our Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Core Advocacy training will take place in May. This training is for novice and experienced advocates as well as volunteers who do the work of advocates for NCEDSV member programs. The Core Advocacy training will be a combination of self-led online learning and virtual live sessions and will include a training team of both specialized experts and NCEDSV staff. As part of your membership tuition is FREE.

Finally, to coincide with Pride, in June we will host our annual Topical Training Series on working with victim-survivors under the LGBTQIA+ umbrella, and the intersection of victim-survivors living with HIV. This series will bring experts in the field to talk about four different topics: an overview of the trans and non-binary community, the importance of gender-neutral language, busting myths about HIV, and the intersection of domestic and sexual violence victim-survivors living with HIV. Our decision to host this series during Pride Month is an effort to uplift the voices of marginalized survivors, and start a discussion of ensuring we are serving all people of all genders. While trans-inclusive sheltering is not a part of this series specifically, we hope that this starts (or continues) conversations about moving in that direction for your agencies. Additionally, we want to bring awareness to the sizable intersection of domestic and sexual violence survivors who live with HIV, and encourage connections with HIV programs in your area.

Training is just one component of the things we have planned for this spring. As you read through this issue of VOICES, I encourage you to find one new thing to share with someone in your personal network who may not already know about NCEDSV. It is our collective voice and commitment that will bring the experiences of domestic and sexual violence out of the shadows and prevention, support and healing into the daylight. I am energized to be on this journey with you.

*May you be happy,
May you be healthy,
May you be safe,
May you be strong,*

Elizabeth Abdur-Raheem
Executive Director

AWARENESS

Denim Day

Written by Lorelee Rae, Technical Assistance Coordinator

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM); a month in which we honor survivors, strive to enhance understanding of what constitutes sexual assault and respond to community requests about how individuals can help to make a change.

Sexual assault is an act in which an individual(s) intentionally touches another person without the other persons' consent, or physically forces a person to engage in a sexual act against their will by using force or coercion. This includes the assault of a disabled or intoxicated person that the perpetrator should have known or reasonably known that disabled or intoxicated individuals are unable to give consent.

Statistics show that every 68 seconds an American is a victim of sexual assault. ([source](#)). Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault. It does not discriminate based on race, sexual orientation, socio economic status, gender, or age. It doesn't matter what someone is wearing, if they are drinking or if they are spending an evening at home. Nothing justifies sexually assaulting another person, equally no one "deserves" to be raped.

One aspect of SAAM is April 26th or Denim Day. Denim Day came about after a driving instructor in Italy took an eighteen-year-old girl out for her first driving lesson. After instructing her to drive to a remote area, during the process of assaulting her he removed her jeans and proceeded to rape her. He was convicted of rape and sent to prison; however, the Italian Supreme Court overturned his conviction. That conviction was overturned based on what the survivor was wearing. The court maintained that the victim's jeans were so tight that she had to have helped her rapist take them off, thus the "rape" must have been actually been consensual sex.

Women in the Italian Parliament were appalled and angered by this injustice and re-victimization of the survivor. In response, they wore jeans and protested on the steps of the Italian Supreme Court. Making international news, this social action prompted the California Senate and Assembly to take precisely the same action at the State Capitol in Sacramento. The response of communities and women across the country was such that this form of activism continues to take place every year since.

This year we encourage everyone to wear denim on April 26 as a statement of support for survivor-victims, that it doesn't matter what the person is wearing or what they're doing; there is no acceptable justification of any kind for sexual assault.

If you have been assaulted, contact your local sexual assault agency <https://www.ncedsv.org/find-help/> or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE (4673) or <https://www.ncedsv.org/find-help/awareness> to the sizable intersection of domestic and sexual violence survivors who live with HIV, and encourage connections with HIV programs in your area.

Financial Literacy

Written by Avery Contreras, Economic Justice and Housing Coordinator

The month of April is not only Sexual Assault Awareness Month but it is also recognized as National Financial Literacy Month.

Economic abuse is one of the most common reasons why victims do not leave their abusive relationship or why they return to them. In fact, the Center for Financial Security says that financial abuse occurs in 99% of domestic violence cases. The rates are alarming and it's clear that financial abuse can take many forms.

Have you ever had someone tell you how and when you can use your money? That is financial abuse. Have you ever had someone open up an account you didn't want and consequently you're in debt? That's financial abuse. Have you ever had your belongings stolen or damaged forcing you to replace them? That is financial abuse.

"When somebody shows up at your job and jeopardizes your job, yelling and screaming, that's financial abuse. It threatens your ability to take care of yourself." - Kerry Washington

Financial abuse is yet another control tactic that abusers hold over their victims. Unfortunately, it leads to other factors that affect victims. Homelessness, a damaged credit score, debt, mental health issues, unemployment, just to name a few.

"When a man starts my program, he often says, 'I am here because I lose control of myself sometimes. I need to get a better grip.' I always correct him: 'Your problem is not that you lose control of yourself, it's that you take control of your partner. In order to change, you don't need to gain control over yourself, you need to let go of control of her.'" - Lundy Bancroft

It is important to NCEDSV that victim-survivors, advocates and educators have the knowledge and resources to prevent and overcome financial abuse. The goal is economic justice. In order to reach that goal, NCEDSV has multiple programs available to help.

NCEDSV offers the L.I.F.E (Lives Improved by Financial Empowerment) Microloan Program. This program offers interest free loans up to \$500.00 to victim-survivors. These loans can be used towards almost anything. This program also helps to improve the credit score of the victim-survivor. The LIFE Microloan program is ideal for someone who is employed, able to make a monthly payment and is looking to build financial independence.

We also offer the Jan Evans Direct Assistance Program. The fund provides direct, emergency financial assistance grants of up to \$500 to battered women and their children who are fleeing abusive relationships or attempting to re-establish themselves after leaving such situations. This program helps with things including, but not limited to, relocation costs and storage fees to keep belongings safe. Lastly, NCEDSV offers the Housing Assistance Fund. This program helps victim-survivors who may be struggling with housing needs such as rent, deposits, or may need a hotel while fleeing an abusive relationship. While there is no certain amount that can be awarded, it is on a case-by-case basis as funding is limited.

If you have any questions on any of these programs, or any of the trainings that NCEDSV has to offer regarding financial literacy, please contact Avery Contreras, Economic Justice and Housing Coordinator, at averyc@ncedsv.org or 775-525-7623.

Resources:

[https://nnedv.org/latest_update/highlighting-financial-abuse-financial-literacy-month/Quick Guide: Economic and Financial Abuse \(ncadv.org\)](https://nnedv.org/latest_update/highlighting-financial-abuse-financial-literacy-month/Quick%20Guide%3A%20Economic%20and%20Financial%20Abuse%20(ncadv.org))
<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/domestic-abuse>
<https://quotestats.com/topic/quotes-about-financial-abuse/>
[The National Center for Victims of Crime – The National Center for Victims of Crime](#)

A CALL TO ACTION

We need your help! Can you answer the call?

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and we urgently need you!

Did you know that our Policy & Legislative efforts are entirely funded by private donations from funders like you? In fact, 74 cents of every dollar you donate goes directly towards providing victim service providers with the legislative support they desperately need, but are prevented from seeking themselves.

This year, our Policy Team needs resources to pass Assembly Bill 163 (AB163). This bill would allow sexual assault survivors the same workplace protections we won for domestic violence survivors in 2017.

Protections such as:

- Up to 120 hours of time off to attend appointments, court, or counseling related to their assault - without fear of losing their job
- Guaranteed unemployment benefits if a victim-survivor has to leave their place of employment related to their assault
- Training by NCEDSV for employers on the importance of creating a survivor-centered, trauma-informed workplace environment

To make this amazing bill a reality, we need your help! Can you answer the call?

Can you commit to donating:

\$5 monthly for 12 months, or

\$63 one-time donation

THEN ask a friend or family member to do the same!

Today we can do more, achieve more, create a better Nevada and end sexual and domestic violence together.

DONATE TODAY

IMPORTANT DATES

APRIL

Sexual Assault Awareness Month/SAAM
Financial Literacy Month
National Child Abuse Prevention Month

- Day of Action / Wear Teal Day – April 4, 2023 - [SAAM Day of Action | National Sexual Violence Resource Center \(NSVRC\)](#)
- Day of Silence – April 14, 2023 - [Day of Silence | GLSEN](#)
- April 23-29, 2023 – National Crime Victims’ Week
- Denim Day – April 26, 2023 – www.denimday.org
- International Anti-Street Harassment Week - April 3-9, 2023 - [Stop Street Harassment](#)
- Visionary Voice Award – April 28, 2023, 12-1pm: [Honoring Rachelle Pellissier](#)

Other Awareness:

- Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN) Day - April 18, 2023

MAY

Older Americans Month
Mental Health Awareness Month – [Mental Health Awareness Resources | NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

- April 29-May 5, 2023 – [National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center Week of Action](#)
- May 4-6, 2023 – [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women \(MMIW\) Awareness Conference](#)
- May 5, 2023 – “Wear Red” National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered People
- May 17, 2023 – International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia

JUNE

NCEDSV Birthday Month – Be sure to donate and support NCEDSV this month
PTSD Awareness Month - Learn about the intersections of PTSD and domestic and sexual violence
LGBTQ Pride Month – Learn about the rates of domestic and sexual violence in the LGBTQIA+ Community

- June 12, 2023 - Remembrance day of the Pulse Nightclub Shooting
- June 27, 2023 - PTSD Awareness Day
- June 28, 2023 - Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots.

EVENTS

For more events, check out our [CALENDAR](#)

ADVOCATES CORNER

May 5th is Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Day.

Written by Misty Stewart, Outreach Coordinator

There is such widespread anger and sadness in Native communities. Sisters, wives, and mothers are missing. Children grow up without their mothers, parents without daughters, and grandmothers without granddaughters. This adds layers of trauma for Native Americans.

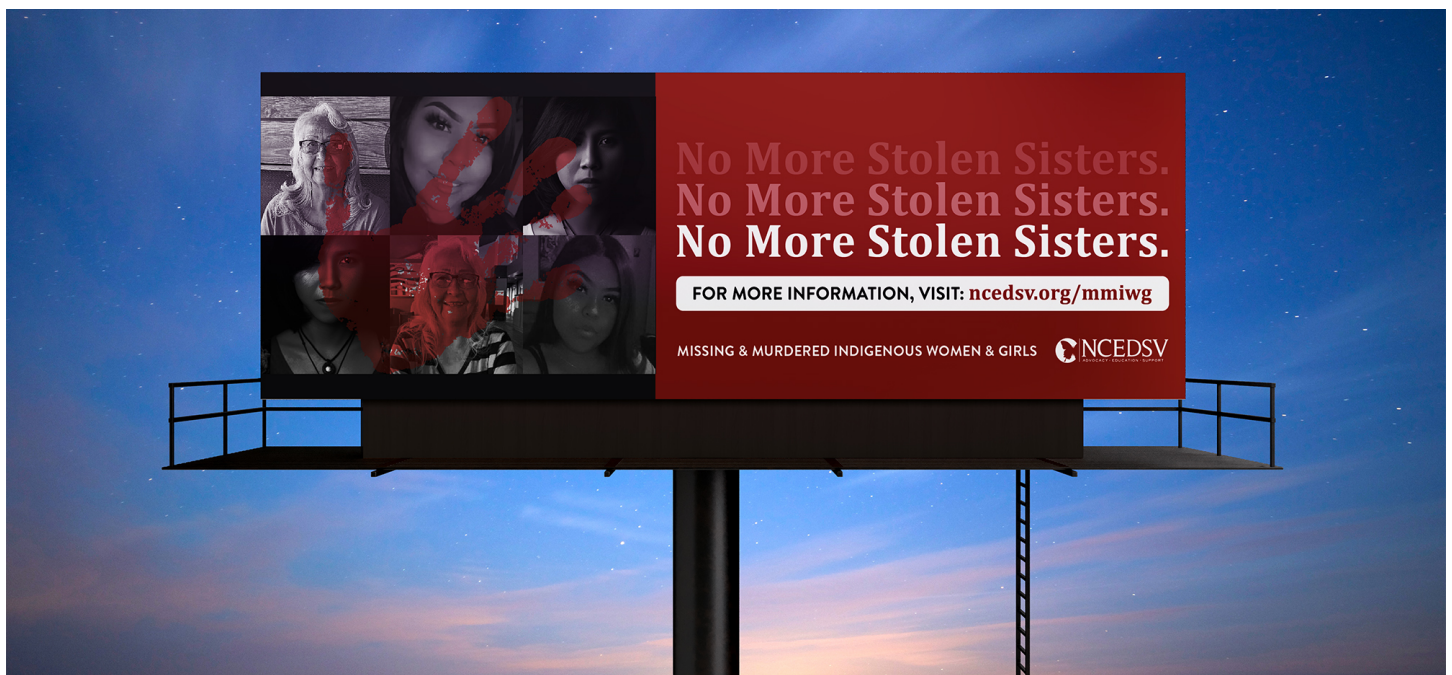
This crisis is not new. It is essential to understand the connections between sexual, domestic, and dating violence. The crisis of missing and murdered women (MMIW) has deep roots in colonization and genocide. It is due to the lack of legal protections, which can be attributed to the systematic erosion of tribal sovereignty that goes back more than 500 years.

So why the red hand? The red hand is the symbol of the MMIW movement. It signifies all the missing sisters whose voices were silenced and will never be heard. It stands for the oppression of Native women who now stand up to say # NoMoreStolenSisters.

Untold cases of Native women and children get logged as runaways. Unfortunately, Native missing women do not get the media nor law enforcement attention White women receive. Please see the link below for a toolkit to assist Native families when a loved one goes missing.

Resources

<https://www.niwrc.org/resources/toolkit/mmiw-toolkit-families-and-communities>



Is “Awareness” of Domestic Violence Good Enough Today?

Amber Batchelor, Program Director

In this issue of VOICES, we say thank you, goodbye and Godspeed to longtime advocate and educator Judy Henderson, our Senior Training Coordinator. After 17 years of “doing the work,” Judy left us for reasons of self-care and in excited pursuit of her next steps. As always, a good model to follow for most of us working in this field. With not a small measure of sadness we say good luck and wish her nothing but good things.



To those who will share where she lands we say: get ready for a fierce advocate with a gentle approach.

For Judy Henderson, mere “awareness” of domestic and sexual violence was never enough. Instead, she sought to fully inform and educate everyone possible about gender and power-based violence and the resulting trauma to individuals and communities left in its wake. Maybe the most important thing she taught, that brought understanding, engagement and a desire to know more, to those she reached was a specific message. Her message was one of hope and action that spoke of all of the things that we all can do to acknowledge, intervene and ultimately prevent the devastation of interpersonal violence.

Survivor-victims, advocates and all the others who received her message benefitted from it.

VISIONARY VOICE AWARD

Congratulations Rachelle Pellissier for your admirable service in the sexual violence prevention field!

The Visionary Voice Award is an annual award presented by NCEDSV and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) to honor individuals who have shown efforts to help put an end to sexual violence.

This virtual celebration will include:

- Virtual mingling
- Opportunity to congratulate Rachelle yourself!
- Special guest appearances

[For more info or to register, click here.](#)



POLICY UPDATES

Access to Mental Health as Violence Prevention

Written by Nicole Winkelmann Palma, Policy Intern

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time when the Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (NCEDSV) celebrates the resilience of our communities and recognizes the critical role that mental health care plays in creating a violence-free Nevada. Research shows that mental health services benefit both victim-survivors of power-based violence and society, since they may decrease the likelihood that an individual becomes a perpetrator of power-based violence in the first place.¹ This highlights mental health care as a powerful tool for both the treatment of trauma resulting from power-based violence and the prevention of future violence.

Prevention of perpetration is crucial in ending cycles of violence, as perpetrators often target those with untreated mental illnesses because of their vulnerability and likely previous victimization. Those who experience repeat victimization and untreated mental health symptoms struggle to adequately function in society, maintain employment, attend school, and parent to the best of their ability. In a 2022 Mental Health America study, Nevada ranked 51st in the nation for access to mental health care for both adults and youth. This study also found that Nevada had only one mental health care provider for every 460 Nevadans.²

NCEDSV's Economic Justice Workgroup was formed to recognize and address the intersections between violence and economic justice inequities through policy advocacy and community outreach. In February, NCEDSV used the research and arguments of the Economic Justice Workgroup to provide compelling testimony in support of AB 138, a bill working to expand Medicaid coverage of integrative, collaborative mental health services. Medicaid serves thousands of Nevadans, and this bill represents an opportunity to build greater supports for families who need interdisciplinary care that encompasses both physical and mental health. The Economic Justice Workgroup's research and understanding of the complexities of mental health care coverage and other economic inequities, along with its continued community and policy advocacy, hopes to help Nevada build healthier relationships and eradicate violence.

¹Tol, W.A. et al. February 2019. Can mental health treatments help prevent or reduce intimate partner violence in low- and middle-income countries? A systemic review. BMC Women's Health. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6376658/>

²Mental Health America. 2020. The State of Mental Health in America: 2020. Retrieved from: <https://mhanational.org/issues/state-mental-health-america>

Denim Day at the Legislature

As Lorelee Rae mentioned in her Sexual Assault Awareness Month article, Denim Day has been an important milestone every April for over 20-years now. It has political and personal implications for countless victim-survivors, their friends and loved ones. Missed or skimmed it? [Here's the link!](#)

This year, on April 26, the Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (NCEDSV), along with our program members and victim-survivors statewide, will join the Nevada State Senate. Assembly is raising awareness and honoring victim-survivors.

Denim Day at the Legislature will include opportunities for:

- 1:1 Meetings with your elected representatives
- Joining an Assembly member during floor session
- Rally in front of the legislature with guest speakers

Denim Day at the Legislature is not only a day of remembrance but also an opportunity for you to engage directly with policymakers and share your story!

You can register for the event [here](#):

Once you register, Serena Evans, NCEDSV Policy Director, will be in touch with more information. We hope to see you there!

2023 Legislative Session

The Nevada Legislative Session is in full swing, and NCEDSV is hard at work engaging with legislators and partner agencies to elevate victim-survivor experiences and advocate for effective policies that prevent and respond to violence in a victim-centered, trauma-informed way.

While NCEDSV is advocating on many bills, there are three that NCEDSV worked on during the interim to bring forward during the legislative session.

[Assembly Bill 163](#) Sponsored by Assemblywoman Cecelia Gonzalez, will enhance existing employee protections for victim-survivors of sexual violence.

o Currently, NRS 608.0198, NRS 613.222, NRS 613.223, and NRS 612.3755 establish employee protections for victim-survivors of domestic violence, allowing them to take off work to attend appointments, hearings, or counseling as a result of their victimization. The protections also require employers to make reasonable accommodations for victim-survivors in the work place. Additionally, the state is prohibited from denying unemployment benefits if a victim-survivor has to leave their job as a means to protect themselves. Proposed AB163 amends these statutes to expand the current protections to victim-survivors of sexual assault.

o This bill has successfully passed out of the Assembly unanimously and is now heading to the Senate. The effort goes on, as NCEDSV will continue to work with the Assemblywoman to get this bill across the finish line.

[Assembly Bill 245](#) sponsored by Assemblywoman Selena Torres, aims to create safer school campuses by reducing instances of power-based violence and increasing resources for student survivors should they experience this type of violence.

o This bill was heard in the Assembly Education Committee on Thursday, March 30. Next, NCEDSV will work to get the bill passed out of committee and then the Assembly.

[Senate Bill 382](#) sponsored by the Senate Committee on Judiciary, aims to undo the unintended consequences of a bill passed last session by ensuring an equal balance of power in protection order hearings for minors.

- o As of now, NRS 3.2201 appoints automatic counsel to the adverse party (or alleged perpetrator) during an extended protection order hearing if the adverse party is a minor. The current statute does not appoint counsel for the applicant (or alleged victim), which has created an unequal balance of power during protection order hearings.

- o This bill was just introduced on March 27 and awaits a committee hearing. We at NCEDSV will work with the Committee to ensure a speedy hearing and passage.

These bills highlight just a glimpse of the work happening at the Nevada Legislature. If you have any questions about the status of bills or emerging policies, don't hesitate to get in touch with NCEDSV Policy Director, Serena Evans.

NEWS

Teen Dating Violence Awareness

Communications Director, Sarah Slavenas, and Mike Kamer from Project REAL were featured recently on KSNV News, Las Vegas, to discuss Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. Thank you to Brett Forrest for featuring our story!

[Watch the News Story](#)

Recent Murder-Suicides Cause Concern

S.A.F.E. House Executive Director, Beth Flory, and The Shade Tree CEO, Linda Perez, were interviewed regarding the recent murder-suicides in Las Vegas and Utah. Domestic violence agencies in Las Vegas advise the community to do wellness checks on their family and friends.

[Continue Reading](#)

Housing Needs for Survivors of Domestic Violence

NCEDSV Executive Director, Elizabeth Abdur-Raheem, was interviewed by Nevada Current about the need of housing for survivors of domestic violence.

Read the article [here](#).

Click [here](#) for the most recent reports on DV Housing Statistics.

Domestic Violence Victims Seeking Help in Nevada Hits 5-year High

NCEDSV Executive Director, Elizabeth Abdur-Raheem, and S.A.F.E. House Executive Director, Beth Flory, were interviewed by News 3 Las Vegas in response to the urgent need for housing for survivors of domestic violence in Nevada.

Read the article [here](#).

New Report Shows Increase in Domestic Violence Victims Seeking Help

NCEDSV Executive Director, Elizabeth Abdur-Raheem, was interviewed by KOLO News 8 Reno about the increase in domestic violence victims seeking help.

Read the article [here](#).

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

- Sarah Sloan has been promoted to Training Coordinator.
- Misty Stewart has been promoted to Outreach Coordinator.
- Lindsay Yates has been promoted to Training Director.

SUPPORTERS

Thank You To Our Sponsors

Interested in becoming a corporate sponsor?

Contact NCEDSV at commdirector@ncedsv.org or return this [FORM](#).

