

# VOICES

## Summer 2023 NCEDSV'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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### *In this Issue:*

A LETTER FROM NCEDSV'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	1
AWARENESS	3
ADVOCATES CORNER	5
CELEBRATING 43 YEARS	7
POLICY UPDATES	8
ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES	10
SUPPORTERS	10

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## A LETTER FROM NCEDSV'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The sun is shining through my window today and I hope that each of you have set aside some time this summer to enjoy the weather, relax with friends and family, and do whatever it is that most feeds your soul. Here at NCEDSV, we wrapped a couple of things up in June and are heading into July preparing for new initiatives.

The first few days of June marked the end of the regular legislative session. The session was frantic throughout as snow canceled work days in the beginning and horse-trading picked up in the end. Governor Lombardo gained the dubious distinction of vetoing more bills than any other governor in a single session (75!). Despite this contentious climate, NCEDSV's Policy Director, Serena Evans, did an incredible job ushering through our priority bills and providing testimony on a variety of issues that impact victim-survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault across Nevada. Please take time to read her overview later in this issue.

June also marked the completion of the first hybrid cohort of the Victim's Assistance Academy of Nevada (VAAN). Thirty-three advocates across the state successfully completed the program and became certified.

We are continuing to learn and refine this new version of VAAN as the second cohort is already underway.

July marks the beginning of an exciting new grant for NCEDSV. This spring, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued their first ever funding opportunity specific to sexual violence coalitions. This initial funding is a one-year grant focused on determining our readiness to implement sexual violence prevention programming based in a health equity lens. The project will identify two key issues: health inequities impacting sexual assault prevention efforts in Nevada and NCEDSV's current capacity to create programs that effect these inequities.

There is certainly a lot of work to be done in this area. Nevada does not have a great track record for meeting the health needs of our citizens. In 2019, the United Health Foundation ranked Nevada 35th in the nation in their state-by-state assessment of general health. The report noted our high rate of violent crimes as one of the three key factors in our low ranking. And, we would be missing the mark if we do not recognize the disproportionate effect of violent crimes on underserved and oppressed communities.

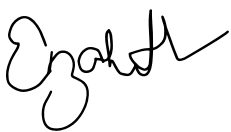
As we begin this critical work, we recognize the difficulty in seeking out, lifting up, and learning from those whose needs are not being met. We understand that when it comes to communities experiencing the greatest oppression, no news is hardly good news. No news simply means we don't know the news. We haven't looked, haven't asked and haven't listened. Consequently, marginalized victim-survivors, conditioned to being ignored, too often haven't seen the point in trying to access mainstream resources. And so we know that the demographics of those in our programs are far from consistent with the actual demographics of those being victimized. This is especially true for sexual assault which continues to be the most underreported crime across the nation.

It shows a true understanding of these dynamics that the CDC is asking coalitions to spend a full year investigating the health inequities in our own states and to genuinely discern if we have the expertise needed to change this landscape. They understood that neither they nor we have truly identified what is needed at this point.

In the introductory call for awardees, representatives from the CDC stated that this grant will be followed by a 5-year grant focused on implementation. They recognized that far too often, we run in and start doing things before clearly analyzing the landscape and ensuring that our approach is making an impact in all the spaces we find abuse. By issuing this initial discovery grant, they have removed this temptation.

I am excited about doing this less showy but more grounded work. I hope that each of you will be able to take part and hold us accountable to truly hearing and understanding all those who are not being served equitably now. I look forward to sharing with you our journey of discovery.

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



Elizabeth Abdur-Raheem  
Executive Director

# ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2023



## Radical Resilience: Beyond the Self in Care

September 19-21, 2023 | Nugget Casino Resort | Reno, Nevada

*Written by Sarah Slavenas, Communication Director*

[Early Bird Registration is now open!](#)

We at NCEDSV are excitedly preparing for our first in-person Annual Conference since the onset of COVID-19. The value of advocates and other professionals who work with victim-survivors of domestic and sexual violence coming together in-person for educational and fellowship opportunities cannot be overstated. Build connections, learn new skills and expand your network of experts to call on when you're unsure of how to help your clients or even personal contacts.



**Thank you to Anthem for being a Core Sponsor of our 2023 Annual Conference!**

*There are still Core Sponsorships and one Lead Sponsorship opportunity available! If you are interested in supporting NCEDSV as we empower professionals, increase safety for victim-survivors, and center those who are most marginalized and oppressed in Nevada, please contact Sarah Slavenas at [commdirector@ncedsv.org](mailto:commdirector@ncedsv.org).*

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## AWARENESS

### NCJFCJ Interview with Darren Mitchell

*Written by Sarah Slavenas, Communication Director*

[Click Here to Watch Video](#)

On June 20, NCEDSV collaborated with Darren Mitchell, a Fellow with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges - Family Violence and Domestic Relations. Mr. Mitchell is also a consultant on domestic violence (DV) and other violence against women issues, with a focus on child custody and DV, firearms and DV, and more. This partnership focused on training 72 professionals across Nevada about how to protect victim-survivors, children, and communities from DV abusers' access to firearms in our state.

Our decision to consult with Mr. Mitchell was born out of the deep concern about the fact that for many years, Nevada ranked first in the country for DV homicides. We are also only second in the country for DV rates, just [behind Kentucky](#).

To review the slides, please [click here](#). Or, listen to the entire interview between our Communications Director, Sarah Slavenas, and Mr. Mitchell in the video above!

Further, in response to these *unacceptable and preventable* statistics, NCEDSV and our Program Members have decided to launch a statewide campaign this October that focuses on safety planning. We want *everyone* to get involved, including *you*. Look for more information about how you can be part of the solution as we approach the Fall!

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## Safety Assessments & Planning: A Vital Role of the Advocate

*Written by Sarah Slavenas, Communication Director*

Nevada consistently ranks high for domestic violence in the nation - a ranking all of us in the field would like to see lowered. In fact, [43.8% of Nevada women and 32.8% of Nevada men experience intimate partner physical violence, intimate partner sexual violence and/or intimate partner stalking in their lifetimes](#). The numbers are even higher in the LGBTQIA+ community. 54% of trans and non-binary people experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime. As a result, safety planning for an LGBTQIA+ survivor may include safety planning on how to come out to people in their lives.

The reporting numbers are equally high for Domestic Violence Homicide - NV ranked as one of the top 10 states for domestic violence homicide for 8 consecutive years. When it comes to the role of advocacy in preventing domestic violence homicide, NCEDSV believes that safety assessments & safety planning are the most vital and unique tools in any advocate's tool belt.



At a time where Nevada residents are reporting and experiencing domestic violence at alarming rates, not every client will be given a resource they can quickly or easily use. When shelters are full, basic needs closets are emptying, and federal grants are being cut, safety assessments & planning are the one resource that every advocate can provide to every client - so long as that advocate is trained and empowered to do so.

This year for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, NCEDSV in partnership with Anthem and agencies across the state, will be centering the conversation around safety assessments & safety planning: providing training, developing tool kits, and ultimately ensuring that Nevada advocates & service providers have what they need to support our state.

If you have questions or thoughts, or would like to participate in this year's campaign, please email NCEDSV's Communication Director, Sarah Slavenas at [commdirector@ncedsv.org](mailto:commdirector@ncedsv.org).

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## ADVOCATES CORNER

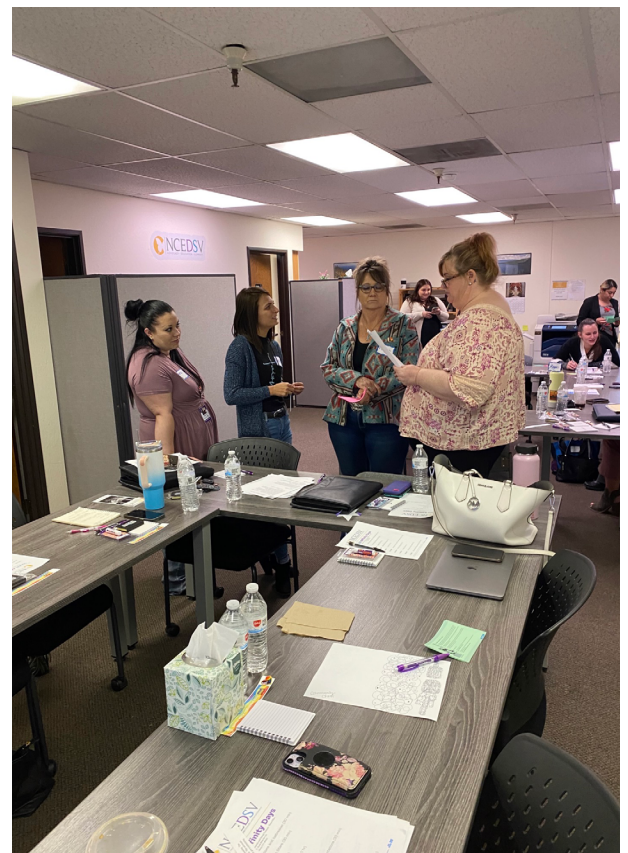
### The Victim Assistance Academy of Nevada (VAAN)

*Written by Sarah Sloan, Training Coordinator*

In partnership with The Division of Child and Family Services, NCEDSV is hosting two cohorts of The Victim Assistance Academy of Nevada (VAAN). The VAAN is a statewide, coordinated, comprehensive, academically-based training to build and strengthen victim-survivor service agencies. This 40-hour, self-paced virtual training is designed to:

- Strengthen advocates' knowledge and skills to better serve victim-survivors of crime
- Gain professional growth from VAAN's victim-centered curriculum and innovative adult learning techniques
- Create networking opportunities for victim-survivor service professionals across Nevada.

After completing the 40 hour training, participants are invited to a one-day, in-person Affinity Group where they have the opportunity to debrief, network, and learn with fellow students. The first cohort and Affinity Days concluded in early June with 33 successful graduates! The second cohort is in full swing with 35 participants. Victim-survivors across Nevada will benefit from their immeasurable commitment. Let us collectively celebrate each of these dedicated professionals!





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## ***MMIP Conference***

Osiyo (Hello),

Great Spirit, help me always to speak the truth quietly, to listen with an open mind when others speak and to remember the peace that may be found in silence.

I was honored to attend the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) Conference in May with our Executive Director, Elizabeth Abdur-Raheem. Hosted by the women of the Newe Waipaipian group, this Conference was presented with so much love, grace, and intention. The Conference was hosted in the traditional Native way, with song and prayer at the beginning and at the ending of each day.

A gap in resources was one of the common threads we heard through stories of impacted family members and presenters. Programs throughout the state provide various services such as domestic violence & sexual assault prevention and education, counseling, behavioral health services, and legal services. These services are crucial to addressing the MMIP crisis.

However, the lack of dedicated funding for victim services and programs, combined with a limited understanding of the needs of MMIP survivors and impacted family members, were identified as key contributing factors that have widened the gap between the demand for services and the capabilities of existing programs to provide those services.

By understanding the service gaps and unmet needs of survivors, communities may begin to develop coordinated community responses to address the needs of impacted survivors and families.

Over the past year, The Coalition has provided training on coordinated community response and will host a tribal-specific two-day training hosted by Redwind Consulting in October. If you are on your community's coordinated community response team, identify who needs to be added to the table and extend an invitation. It does take time and a village to bridge the gaps, and all voices need to be heard.

WADO (Thank you),

Misty Stewart  
Outreach Coordinator

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## **CELEBRATING 43 YEARS!**



## Commemorating 43 Years

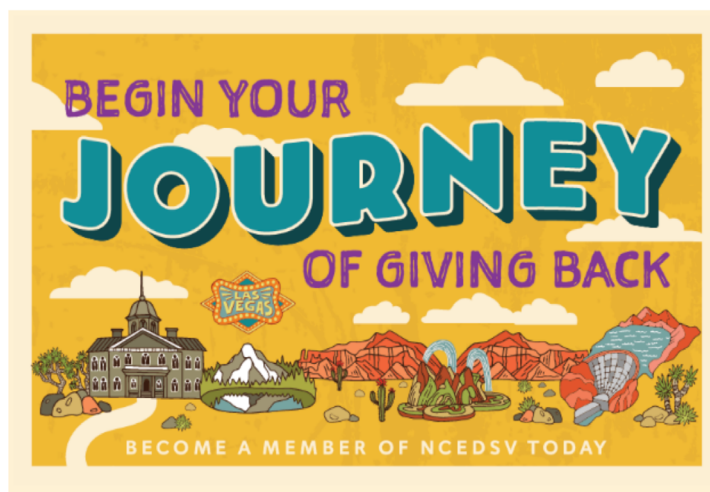
*Written by Amanda Bullard, Administrative Director*

This June, we celebrated 43 years of the Coalition. This marks the anniversary when a small group of passionate individuals saw a need and created the Network, now the Coalition, to help Nevada's communities respond effectively and creatively to the needs of domestic violence victims. Since then, NCEDSV has assisted in the growth and development of domestic and sexual violence programs throughout Nevada.

Some highlights since our inception include:

- Legislative advocacy for issues such as arrest and accountability, orders for protection, support for advocates and information for survivors, access to resources such as unemployment and housing, and much, much more.
- Education for communities including trainings for staff and volunteers; regional trainings focusing on prevention, improved services and increased attention to underserved communities; annual conferences bringing together national, state and local level work; and continuous development and distribution of educational materials.
- Supporting services with the development and distribution of resources throughout the state - Language Line access, Emergency Assistance Grants, LIFE Micro Loans and so much more.

As a membership-based organization, our members determine the direction of our work. Membership goes beyond receiving services such as trainings, customized technical assistance, and complimentary continuing education units. It also ensures a spot at the table when big decisions are being made.



We ask you to continue this movement with us and refer your family, friends, and colleagues to Begin Their Journey of Giving Back. ***In honor of our 43rd anniversary, we are discounting our membership to just \$43 for the entire year!*** [Join today.](#)

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## POLICY UPDATES

### NCEDSV Goes to Washington D.C.

*Written by Serena Evans, Policy Director*

In early June, NCEDSV's Executive Director and Policy Director joined the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) and the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NASEV) in Washington, D.C., for Advocacy Days! There, they worked alongside other domestic and sexual violence coalitions nationwide to elevate victim-survivor stories and the needs of direct service providers.

As part of Advocacy Days, NCEDSV had the opportunity to hit Capitol Hill and meet one-on-one with the esteemed members of the Nevada Federal Delegation including Senators Cortez Masto and Rosen, Congresswomen Titus and Lee, and Congressmen Amodei and Horsford. During these meetings, NCEDSV outlined the critical need for federal funding in Nevada and highlighted the outstanding work of our programs across the state.



While the future of federal funding and appropriations is unclear with the debt ceiling crisis, the Senators and Representatives were compassionate to the needs of programs and vowed to advocate for this deeply needed funding. While the Policy Team is back home in Nevada, they continue to advocate at the federal level and are watching the Fiscal Year 24 Appropriations closely.

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### Nevada's 2023 Legislative Session Comes to a Close

*Written by Serena Evans, Policy Director*

On June 5th, the 82nd legislative session adjourned. During the session, NCEDSV's Policy Team worked tirelessly to advocate for programs and victim-survivors statewide and holding systems accountable for trauma-informed prevention and intervention methods. As there were two Special Sessions immediately following the 82nd session, our complete legislative session is still in the works pending final approval from the Governor.



However, below are a few successes from the session that have been signed into law by the Governor:

- [Assembly Bill 163](#): Expands existing employee protections for victim-survivors of domestic violence to include victim-survivors of sexual violence. These protections include: (1) Up to 120 hours of paid or unpaid time off, at the discretion of the employer, to attend medical appointments, court appearances, advocacy appointments, or any other matter relating to their victimization (2) Reasonable employer accommodations for the overall safety of the victim-survivors (employee) and (3) Allows victim-survivors to qualify for unemployment benefits if they ultimately have to leave their job due to safety concerns.
- [Assembly Bill 51](#): Expands the timeframe of arrest for domestic violence from 24 hours to 7 days. It also includes clarifying language around the required training topics for victim advocates to claim privilege with their clients.
- [Assembly Bill 276](#): Allows Sexual Assault Nurse Examinations (SANE) to be conducted through telehealth.
- [Assembly Bill 356](#): Prohibits anyone from placing or installing a mobile tracking device on another person's vehicle without their knowledge or consent.
- [Senate Bill 382](#): Removes the provision that in cases of protection orders involving minors, the adverse party is granted automatic council during hearings ensuring an equal balance of power among applicants and adverse parties.
- [Senate Bill 129](#): Removes the statute of limitations for when a victim-survivor of sexual assault can pursue civil actions against their alleged perpetrator.

A full legislative summary will be released by the end of July.

While we celebrate the wins, the close of the legislative session also offers an opportunity to reflect on where there were shortcomings for victim-survivors and direct service providers. In May, the Governor vetoed [Assembly Bill 354](#), [Assembly Bill 335](#), and [Senate Bill 171](#), all of which would have enacted common-sense gun legislation. There are direct correlations between gun violence and domestic violence homicides; therefore, NCEDSV is extremely disappointed in this action by Governor Lombardo.



Additionally, as the final state budget was discussed, there was an anticipated \$2.3 million budget shortfall for the Victims of Crime Assistance (VOCA) Fund, which provides direct funding to victim-survivors of domestic and sexual violence (and other violent crimes). While the final budget ultimately addressed this funding stream, filling this budget gap was not top of mind, and no solutions were offered during the initial hearing. It is unacceptable to see such a vital funding stream lack prioritization. Thankfully, the successes outweigh the losses during this legislative session, and NCEDSV feels it was a productive session for victim-survivor safety and overall support.

The legislative session may be over, but policy advocacy never ends. The NCEDSV Policy Team is preparing for a busy interim to properly implement and roll out these legislative changes and begin prepping our policy agenda for the next legislative session. Follow along for updates on implementing these critical pieces of legislation or to learn how you can get more involved!

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## ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

### STAFF UPDATES

NCEDSV welcomes Danielle Mills to the Training Department as our newest Training Coordinator

### BOARD UPDATES

NCEDSV welcomes Amy Buchanan to the Board

### BOARD RECRUITMENT

We strongly encourage individuals who have been active members of NCEDSV to consider board membership. NCEDSV is committed to representing all survivors of domestic and sexual violence and strives to have a broad range of representation. Please contact the Administrative Director, Amanda Bullard, at [admin@ncedsv.org](mailto:admin@ncedsv.org) to obtain an application packet.

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## SUPPORTERS

### Thank You To Our Sponsors

Interested in becoming a corporate sponsor?

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

