

VOLUME 12

ISSUE 2

FALL 2015

REFUGE, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, CHANGE

REACH

REPORT



MY TIME WITH REACH

REACH recently bid a fond farewell to longtime advocate Muggsie Rocco, who worked with REACH for 11 years, many of them as a Civilian Advocate at the Burlington Police Department. We asked her to provide a reflection on her time with us.

Many survivors I have worked with have told me how sad they are to see me go and how ‘no one can replace me.’ Most of the survivors I have worked with didn’t have direct contact with the agency, because I was in an outpost in Burlington. So they see my philosophy and the way I do the work as being about me and my style. In fact I embrace the philosophy of REACH, and that is one reason I do the work the way I do. I have every confidence that they will get the same philosophy of the work no matter which REACH advocate they work with.

REACH uses a relational model of advocacy, which means we get to know the survivors we work with as people, not just as their problems. We take a very non-judgmental and accepting approach which helps people to open up to us about what is really going on. We also keep and respect confidentiality. This was especially important in my work at the police department because survivors learned they could trust me with their situations and with things they did not necessarily want to report to the police.

(cont. page 5)





IN THIS ISSUE

My Time with REACH	1,5
Blue State Coffee	3
Volunteer Spotlight	3
REACH in the Workplace	4
Holiday Gift Program	6
Upcoming Dates	7
Speaking for REACH	7



Laura R. Van Zandt

Photo credit: David Barron

WHAT LAURA IS THINKING...

I've been thinking a lot lately about virtual technologies—their potential to enhance learning and business, to make long-distance communication more immediate, to expedite decision making and consensus building. But at what cost? With the lack of close proximity to one another, are we losing our shared humanity? Forgotten who we're actually talking to and the emotions they feel? Neglected to hold one another accountable for behaviors that marginalize, oppress, and hurt other people? Sometimes I feel like we focus on the things that make us different rather than celebrating the humanity we share. It seems that social media is definitely here to stay. At REACH, we're trying to use it to connect people to learn more about domestic violence, create safer communities, and stand up for change.

Come check out my latest post on REACH's blog at www.reachma.org/blog for more of my thoughts on this topic, and to share yours.

PROTECTING ELDERS IN WALTHAM

REACH recently won a federal grant from the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) to lead a group of community partners in enhancing the safety of elders in the City of Waltham. Together with Springwell Adult Protective Services, the Waltham Police Department, the Middlesex District Attorney's Office, and the Dual Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Program at Newton-Wellesley Hospital, we have formed a group called Waltham Against Abuse in Later Life (WAALL).

We began the project by distributing surveys to elders and service providers which took stock of existing resources in the city and asked those directly affected where they saw gaps in services and what concerns they had. We have also attended two trainings by the OVW and the National Clearinghouse Against Abuse in Later Life (NCALL), designed to equip us and our partners to deliver trainings in our own community for law enforcement and service providers. We will conduct these trainings for law enforcement this fall and for service providers after that. Officers, service providers, and other community partners will then be able to identify and support elder victims of abuse, grasp the unique challenges they face, and understand why they might hesitate to involve law enforcement in their situation.

Eventually we will develop a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) Team to handle cases of elder abuse in Waltham. Similar to a High Risk Team model, this group of law enforcement, service providers, the courts and other community members who come in contact with elders will meet regularly to discuss cases and make sure that victims do not slip through the cracks.

We will be holding a kick-off event in the fall to officially launch the WAALL campaign and the Coordinated Community Response team. Follow us on social media for information about the event as it gets closer. If you work with elders in Waltham, we want to hear from you! Contact Pat Cooper, our Elder Services Project Coordinator and Advocate, at 781.891.0724 x118 to let her know how you'd like to be involved.



REACH CHOSEN AS SUPPORTED CAUSE AT BLUE STATE COFFEE

REACH recently learned of an exciting corporate partnership. Every six months, Blue State Coffee chooses four local organizations to support, based on customer suggestions. Each time a customer makes a purchase, they receive a token with which to vote for one of the four non-profits being supported at that store. Blue State then allocates the donation based on those customer votes. Blue State is also partnering with REACH by displaying some of our brochures and materials, and periodically giving us shout-outs on social media! We are very grateful for this support, and encourage everyone to stop by 155 Seaport Boulevard in Boston between now and December and use their token to cast a vote for REACH.

Blue State Coffee donates 2% of their sales to local non-profit organizations.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: SHARON WOLFE



Meet Sharon Wolfe, a volunteer who helps out in the REACH office.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I grew up in Brooklyn, NY where I met my husband, Ken. (In May we celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary.) I worked for several

years in NYC as a secretary before starting a family. Both of our children, Lauren and Kyle, were born in Kansas while Ken was managing the Kansas City Playboy Club. During their early years we moved often: eight times in ten years, covering five states! We now have four grandchildren and, unlike many families, live in fairly close proximity so we can share in their lives. With a little juggling of our schedules we have made it to baseball games, soccer practice and ballet recitals. We also enjoy having the children share some of their vacation time with us in MA. Both Ken and I are currently retired but still working part time—this seems to feel right for now!

Why did you get involved with REACH?

I've been involved in many ways over a period of more than 15 years. While working in Waltham at PRTM Management Consultants, I occasionally heard of the needs of survivors who were moving out of the shelter and starting a new life. I would see that this "wish list" was shared with fellow employees. This small effort often garnered several sought after items. For a time, we hosted monthly bake sales and gave the proceeds to REACH.

My basic contribution was simply "spreading the word" and sharing the mission of REACH with others. A few years ago, the company that I was working with planned a silent auction at their holiday party. I worked with several others on the planning committee and we were all amazed that this event raised approximately \$6,000 which was used to help furnish the then new REACH shelter.

What are some of the roles you've held or projects you've worked on over the years?

After the auction, several of us from PRTM worked with the committee that was responsible for furnishing the new REACH shelter. It was such an honor being a part of this large undertaking. After I found myself "retired" I started spending approximately one day a week in REACH's office. I see my role as helping where needed; freeing up staff to do the more important things! Working together has been very rewarding – it's a wonderful group of very dedicated, caring people. I've also participated in the *Reach for the Stars* event committee in the past. I've learned a lot and hope to continue to be a part of the valuable services that are provided.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about volunteering with REACH but not sure if they should get involved?

Visit www.reachma.org and see what events are coming up. If unsure of your time for a long-term commitment, start with a limited commitment. There is even the opportunity of shopping through smile.amazon.com and selecting REACH as the recipient of a percentage of your purchase. I've shared this information with several family members who are frequent on-line shoppers.

We thank Sharon for all her hard work and commitment to REACH.

REACH BEYOND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Did you know...?

According to Bloomberg's Bureau of National Affairs, each year worker absenteeism, increased health care costs, higher turnover and lower productivity due to domestic violence cost American businesses between four and five billion dollars.

The abuse survivors experience in their relationships can affect the workplace and their job performance in a variety of ways. At REACH it is our job to make sure survivors of domestic violence know they are not alone and that help is available. We want to partner with you to support your company and your employees to reach beyond domestic violence.

In August 2014, Massachusetts passed Chapter 260 An Act Relative to Domestic Violence which establishes protection for domestic violence survivors, including provisions for time off for employees dealing with the effects of abuse. The law requires that businesses of 50 or more employees provide up to 15 days of paid or unpaid leave to victims of domestic violence and their family members. The law requires employers to notify their employees of this benefit.

REACH can help by providing the following:

- Training to human resources and management about this law
- Support and consultation for creating and/or updating policies
- Training to employees about domestic violence and resources available
- Survivor Speakers who can share their story at a "Lunch & Learn"
- Materials to display in common spaces about the free and confidential services REACH provides
- Opportunities for employees to get involved through volunteering and training in the community throughout the year
- Recognition of leadership on this issue through sponsorship of our annual *Reach for the Stars Gala*

Please reach out to Jessica Teperow, Director of Prevention Programs at jessica@reachma.org to discuss options for tailoring programs and services that best suit your company's needs.

REACH HAS PARTNERED WITH MANY COMPANIES, INCLUDING:

ASTRAZENECA
BETH ISRAEL DEACONESS NEEDHAM
CHARLES RIVER
DAVIS HAIRDRESSING SALON
LAHEY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER
MFS INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT
SUN LIFE FINANCIAL
THE SURVEY GROUP
TRIPADVISOR
VISTAPRINT



MISSED OUR ANNUAL MEETING AND WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Please visit www.reachma.org/who-we-are/news for a recap of the meeting.

Left: Board Members
A. Miriam Jaffe (l) and Diane
Suda (r) with Laura Van Zandt,
Advisory Board member Audrey
Foster, and B. Minde Kornfeld

Top Right: Stewart Urist, Maureen
Gallagher, and Board Member
Leila Kern

Bottom Right: Voice for Justice
Award Recipients Debra Robbin
and Paul Crocetti with Laura Van
Zandt



Photo credit: David Barron

My Time with REACH (continued from front page)

I am so inspired by the survivors I have worked with. I was very touched by an African woman I built a special bond with over 11 years. One of the things that fascinated me in this job is that you meet people from very different backgrounds and culture from you, and yet because you are talking about domestic violence you end up having very intimate conversations. People tell you things they would not normally tell someone from such a different background. This woman wrote me a beautiful letter in which she said “ I want to let you know that you were much more than an advocate that gave me support, for me you were like the mother I can confide in, a sister I could tell my secrets to, a friend that was always there to give me a helping hand.” She has been through a lot in the 11 years I have known her and yet now she is doing very well and really does not need me very much.

I have worked with a number of survivors who were dealing both with domestic violence and substance abuse. We understand that substance abuse is often one of the coping mechanisms a survivor will use to deal with the domestic violence.

Last week one woman who I had not heard from in two years (who I knew had relapsed into heroin use and I was worried about) called me. She had gotten clean, received some good substance abuse treatment and is doing fabulously. She told me I made a difference because I always believed in her.

People, especially police, get frustrated because so often survivors go back to their abuser. I would often start working with a survivor who was not sure they wanted to end the relationship, who would be very ambivalent and would leave and go back again and again. Yet over time they would eventually get clarity and leave for good. I learned to recognize that this is part of the process. Part of what is great about REACH is that we hang in there with survivors as they are working through this. This is what REACH does; we believe in people, we believe in their power to recover.

“ *This is what REACH does; we believe in people, we believe in their power to recover.* ”

REACH never closes cases. There have been several times when I have worked with a survivor who got away from their abuser, and was doing well only to find themselves in another abusive relationship. Because they had already worked with us, they knew who to call, and usually recognized and got out of the abusive relationship much faster.

REACH is a wonderful agency, does fabulous work and really makes a difference. I am proud I worked there for so long and will continue to support the agency from the sidelines.

To read an extended version of this piece, please visit www.reachma.org/blog

REACH HOLIDAY GIFT PROGRAM

By Liz Carpenter, REACH Advisory Board

I have been involved with REACH for nearly three years, and am currently a member of the REACH Advisory Board. I am continually inspired by REACH's power to change lives for the better, and I am grateful for the opportunity to help bring joy to families, even in their darkest days.

My favorite of REACH's initiatives is its Holiday Gift Program. The winter holiday season, so joyful for many, can be a source of great stress and sadness for families who are broken up, financially challenged, and in transition. These families are in great need of holiday cheer and financial support—eager, yet often unable, to make their children's holiday wishes come true.

For the past few years, I have rallied my friends and neighbors together to donate to the REACH Holiday Gift Program. Many of us do the gift shopping with our own children - a great chance to get them involved with REACH, and to teach them the joy of giving.

While the Holiday Gift Program has been wildly successful, it cannot continue without many generous donors. You, REACH's supporters, are our best marketers! Please promote it to your own friends, neighbors and colleagues.

Who Participates in the Holiday Gift Program?

REACH donors provide gifts to the survivors we work with and their children. This includes families in our shelter, but the majority of the families are part of our Community Program and are in need of assistance. REACH provides gifts to more than 200 families each year.

How Does the Program Work?

REACH invites survivors to participate in the program, and asks them to provide a list of gift wishes for themselves and for their children. REACH provides the wish list to a donor, who may select the size of the family or families they wish to support. Lists are provided in November, and gifts must be purchased and delivered to REACH by mid-December, in time for the Holiday party. REACH distributes the gifts to families at the party, which is attended by survivors and their children, and staffed by REACH employees and volunteers.



Why is this program so important?

Survivors have acknowledged two primary benefits of this program—both the material support, and the emotional boost of knowing that people care. The financial impact of domestic violence can be long-lasting, and this program allows survivors to focus their financial resources on basic needs.

I had the privilege of volunteering at last year's holiday party. It was very moving to see the huge room full of gifts—an astounding display of generosity! The survivors, too, were overwhelmed, grateful, and joyful. It was truly uplifting to see their smiles when they received their gifts. One survivor said: "You have no idea what this means. Without you all, there would be no Christmas this year."

How can I help?

Please visit www.reachma.org for more information about the Holiday Gift Program, and email Deb Heimel at deb@reachma.org to get involved.

UPCOMING DATES

SEPTEMBER

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Waltham Neighborhoods Fall Festival

1:00-4:00pm

Waltham Public Library

Free and open to the public

Rain Date: September 27, 1:00-4:00pm



Fun in the Fall Festival photo booth

OCTOBER

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

- Consider organizing a paper goods drive for our shelter or community program. Contact courtney@reachma.org for details.
- Bring the conversation to your home, place of worship, or school. Invite REACH to speak in your community.
- Contact jessica@reachma.org to schedule a small group discussion, workshop, house party, or speaking event.

NOVEMBER

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Reach for the Stars Gala

6:30pm

Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel

Purchase tickets at www.reachma.org

DECEMBER

Holiday Gift Program

REACH collects gifts for survivors through our Holiday Gift Program. If you'd like to fulfill holiday wishes by providing gifts for a family, contact deb@reachma.org.

FEBRUARY

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Throughout the year there are many opportunities to get involved and learn more. To find out more about upcoming REACH events, please visit www.reachma.org.

SPEAKING FOR REACH, SPEAKING FOR ONESELF

Recently, members of our Survivor Speakers Bureau (SSB) had a great conversation. We took the opportunity of our bimonthly gathering to revisit the purpose of SSB, and asked the Speakers for their input on why they have chosen to participate. Some members have been with us since the program began in 2007, and others are brand new. We thought you would appreciate reading their words about why it is so important to them to be able to use their voice to speak about domestic violence.

I USE MY VOICE BECAUSE...

"...finally speaking up about what was happening in my home is how I saved my own life."

"...I want people to know they are not alone."

"...it helps me heal."

MY VOICE IS DIFFERENT BECAUSE...

"...it's become so much stronger since I started coming to REACH."

"...I have a voice."

"...I'm assertive for my situation."

“...it's ok to stand up for myself and demand respect.”

I USE MY VOICE TO...

"...share my story and help educate others about domestic violence."

"...educate and to help."

"...advocate for my self-care."

MY VOICE IS...

“...beautiful and powerful.”

"...my identity."



P.O. BOX 540024
WALTHAM, MA 02454

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
BOSTON, MA
PERMIT 58174

HELP US GO GREEN!

In efforts to reduce our carbon footprint one step at a time, please contact courtney@reachma.org to receive our mailings via email.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Heather Campbell, *President*
Hon. Lella R. Kern (ret.), *Vice President*
Ora Gladstone, *Clerk*
Mbaye NDiaye, *Treasurer*

Claire S. Bean	Christine Konyas
Kevin Duncel	Stephen R. Langlois
Barry A. Guryan	Diane Suda
A. Miriam Jaffe	David Weaver
Sandra T. King	Sylvia D. Whitman

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Laura R. Van Zandt, *Executive Director*
Deborah Heimeil, *Director of Operations*
Brianna S. Nadelberg, *Director of Development*
Maria Pizzimenti, *Director of Advocacy*
Lara E. Rice, *Director of Residential Programs*
Jessica L. Teperow, *Director of Prevention Programs*

Reach for the Stars

GALTA 2015

Celebrating our 10th Year

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7
RENAISSANCE BOSTON WATERFRONT HOTEL

6:30pm
COCKTAILS, ARTISTS PLATES AND SILENT AUCTION

7:30pm
DINNER, LIVE AUCTION, DESSERT AND DANCING

2 mce
KELLEY TUTHILL - WCVB-TV NEWS REPORTER

Go-Phair
DANA & DAVE LAZOWSKI
RACHEL & JIM SOLOMON

PLEASE JOIN US

Purchase tickets at reachma.org