

Community



PROJECT WOMAN
Protect Educate Empower

Newsletter
Winter 2019



Project Woman is committed to Survivor Transformation

Survivor Courage!

The following is shared anonymously. It is with love and courage that this survivor shares her story. I hope that those still struggling to begin the road to recovery will be inspired!

My story begins when I was 21 years old. I met a guy that seemed to be a good man. He was very friendly, which for me was the most important thing to have in a relationship.

We met in September and by the following January, we were living together. The abuse began immediately, he became very jealous and accused me of cheating on him with another man. I did not understand why he was treating me that way.

By the end of the month, I was pregnant and my baby was born in late October. I thought that my being pregnant would change him, but that was not the case, everything remained the same. The abuse continued. Every time he hit me, I would leave and go to my sister's or my mother's house.

I left him many times, but I always returned to be by his side. I loved him. Surely my love would help him?

Then one night in October, shortly after my daughter was born, he became very violent and kicked the crib. Fortunately, the baby was not in the crib. At that moment I began thinking: 'What would have happened if my baby had been in the crib?' I became so scared. That was when I made my final decision to leave him. I left so that he could not continue to hurt me or begin to hurt my daughter. I did not want her to live in a violent home and suffer the consequences. I love him. I left him. And this time it is forever.

Those who have been victimized are not to blame for what happened to them.

We are here to listen, to believe, and support.

In Peace,
Laura
Executive Director



"I thought that my being pregnant would change him, but that was not the case, everything remained the same."

You can recognize survivors of abuse by their courage. When silence is so very inviting, they step forward and share their truth so others know they aren't alone.

Jeanne McElvaney

AGENCY NEWS

Dochas House and Chrysalis Manor Ceremonies

In December, our emergency shelter was dedicated at Dochas House- meaning hope and a place for new beginnings. We also had a solstice blessing at Chrysalis Manor, our transitional housing. Chrysalis represents a place for transformation!



Nick Heimlich and Laura Baxter cut the ribbon at Dochas House



Rev. Donna Hohman provided a solstice blessing in the Serenity Garden at Chrysalis Manor

Pictured from L-R; Shelter Services Coordinator- Melissa Archambeau, Shelter Manager- Olivia Newland, Board Chair-Nick Heimlich and Executive Director- Laura Baxter

October was designated Domestic Violence Awareness Month and in support, we hosted several events:



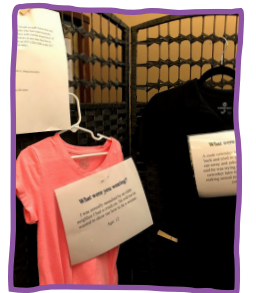
Laura Baxter spoke at our 5th Annual Candlelight Vigil



Guests at our 5th Annual DIVA Night Out, dressed for the 40's theme



Special Guest, Amanda Sue, livened up the crowd at DIVA Night Out



Our "What Were You Wearing" Exhibit was featured at Security National Banks



5th Annual Balloon Launch at Urbana University



Pampering Stations at DIVA



Project Woman staff wore purple to promote Domestic Violence Awareness

2018 Chrysalis Award Recipient

Dr. Brooke Wagner, Associate Professor at Wittenberg University, was presented the Chrysalis Award at the 2018 Candlelight Vigil



As Director of the Wittenberg campus Womyn's Center, Brooke has helped to build the Campus Advocacy and Support Service program (CASS). CASS provides support services for survivors of violence through a collaboration with Project Woman and funding through the Ohio Attorney General's Office. In 2013, Brooke worked with Project Woman and the Student Development Office at Wittenberg University to develop the Not Without Consent (NWC) training for incoming university students aimed to prevent sexual violence. NWC was selected by the Ohio Attorney General's Office as a Promising Practice in 2015. The Chrysalis Award was given to Brooke for "having the heart of an advocate." Brooke was nominated by students and colleagues who stated, "Brooke is an advocate in everything she does!", "Her passion for making sure the voice of others is heard is something I hope to achieve in my own life!" and "Brooke can see the unique, powerful and worthwhile story in all people's experience....it is what drives her to do this great work!" To learn more about Brooke, read our Wednesday's Woman blog at: <https://projectwomanohio.org/wednesdays-woman/>.

We thank you Brooke, for your dedication in ending gender-based violence and being an advocate for those that need it!

Made possible...by YOU!

Our spotlight of "THANKS" goes to Erin Patton and the State Farm Foundation!

We asked Erin a couple questions about her dedication to the community and Project Woman:

Why do you support the mission of Project Woman?

"Abused women and children shouldn't have to suffer in silence due to lack of resources. Everyone deserves to feel safe and without that support most would keep suffering and the violence will keep cycling through their lives. I want to support the efforts to give the resources to end the suffering of those affected in our community."

Why do you think it's so important to give back locally to our community?

"I know what it's like to have started somewhere other than where I am today financially and emotionally. There is a great peace and joy that comes from giving back to the community that sustains my business that provides for my family. I also, feel if you have the ability to help someone else you should. It really does feel better to give than to receive in my opinion."

Erin ended by saying "Broken children grow into broken adults."

Thank you Erin and State Farm for your endless dedication to giving back!



Erin Patton, Morgan Edwards of State Farm, Audrey Ferryman of Project Woman and Holly Powell of State Farm after a hygiene product drive by State Farm

We thank all of our 2018 Donors and volunteers!
Through your generosity, 20 survivors and over 50 children were provided Christmas assistance.
We raised \$148,000 through private donations, including \$4000 through our CrowdRise.
In 2018, volunteers provided over 560 hours, which equates to \$8,400 of volunteer time!!
THANK YOU!!!

The generosity of donations and support is essential for Project Woman to meet its goals and support survivors.
All gifts are significant; All service is deeply appreciated!

Learn more and get involved by going to www.projectwomanohio.org

Letter from the Director:

Hello friends!

I was talking with a friend recently and the #MeToo Movement became part of our conversation. We agreed that the movement has taken a bit of a backseat in recent months to politically charged events including the impasse of our government and the lack of intentional reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. As we were talking, my friend said "at times it has been difficult for me to get fully behind #MeToo even though I am a survivor myself." I asked how this could be and she replied, "It just seems to lump all men in to one category and there is no room for men who don't abuse." This was an interesting perspective that I thought a great deal about...

Alan Berkowitz, PhD wrote in the article *Responding Effectively to Sexual Harassment*, "With the cascade of revelations of sexual harassment and assault raising our awareness, many are asking 'Why didn't others do something?' and in particular 'Why didn't other men do something?' Although men may also be sexually harassed (usually by other men) the majority are not and most men rarely fear sexual assault. ... Because men who offend may respect and care about what other men think more than they do women, other men may have an advantage in interrupting sexism and violence against women. In other words, preventing sexual harassment and sexual assault can be considered as men's responsibility, although of course women have and will continue to take action."

After listening to Keith Edwards, Starvonsky Gibbs founded the Men Against Rape Society at the University of Delaware. He said, "[it] really was a much needed kick in the pants to realizing that I, as a man had a role to play in ending violence against women. ... It told me that men can be a part of the solution."

The #MeToo Movement cannot take a backseat and be moved to "yesterday's news" and by intentionally making space for men who are allies we can continue an open and honest conversation about the pervasiveness of violence against women.

Men have an essential role in ending violence against women. Women need to make and maintain room for them at the discussion table. Please join the conversation!

Peace,
Laura

For more reading: www.alanberkowitz.com and www.keithedwards.com



A Wittenberg student pledged support against gender-based violence

A SHOUT OUT of thanks to our sponsors, volunteers, donors, vendors and all who attended the 2018 DIVA Night Out!

What a great success! "Your generosity and commitment helps to change lives!"

Lead sponsors of the event included Security National Bank (Corporate Sponsor), Assurant (Diamond Sponsor), and PNC (Platinum Sponsor).

Additional sponsors can be found on our website at projectwomanohio.org/about/partners/.

SAVE THE DATE

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and we host many events in support of Sexual Assault survivors.

Be on the lookout for information regarding our April events, including our "What Were You Wearing" Exhibits!

**INHALE
CONFIDENCE.
EXHALE
DOUBT.**

Thank You Sponsors and Supporters!

