

LIGHTLY EDITED FILE

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
(NRCDV)

The Pressure is On: Ready for DVAM 2017?

Remote CART

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>> Hello, everyone, thanks so much for joining us today.

If you joined us a little early, we'll be starting promptly at 3:00.

Feel free to take this time and start the conversation and introduce yourself in the public chat.

We look forward to going through today's webinar with you.

>> Welcome, everyone, we are ready to get started.

I am Ivonne Ortiz.

Thank you for joining us this afternoon.

First, I want to take a moment to tell you a few things about our webinar system.

You should be able to see the full PowerPoint screen and not have to scroll to see all the information.

If you cannot see the full PowerPoint slide image, click the box on the bottom right corner of the PowerPoint screen to change the size of the presentation window.

Please feel free to send a message in the public chat on the bottom left-hand side of your webinar screen.

In this case, it's at the bottom.

And the public chat is open and visible to everyone participating in this webinar session.

Please be careful not to share any confidential information in the public chat because it will be visible to all participants.

You do have the option to send a private message to the facilitators or to one another.

Just click on the tab marked "private," then select the person's name that you'd like to message, then type and send.

Remember, we have a chat box, so please submit any questions or comments you may have in the public chat and we'll be sure to get them out to the presenters at the end of the presentation.

And thank you for being a part of today's session.

Also, before I forget, feel free to tweet along at #DVAMprep.

We'll begin shortly.

Justine, are we ready to start?

>> Yes, I'm just going to take a moment to start the recording, and then we can begin.

All right, Ivonne, you've got the floor.

>> Thank you, Justine.
Good afternoon, everybody.

My name is Ivonne Ortiz, I am the training and

education specialist at the NRCDV.

Thank you for joining us today and welcome to this webinar session titled DVAM Countdown: Let's Prep for October 2017!

Yay!

I'm so excited, I will tell you, I remember when I was an advocate in a small town of Wilson, North Carolina, you know, this was the most exciting time of the year.

Not only because we get to go out and make new collaborations and talk about domestic violence and bring awareness to the cause, but just because it was a time that we came together as one, we had the same message, we were all excited to shed a light on what domestic violence is and what it looks like and how our community can come together and help.

So, how do we do this?

We're thinking, oh, my God, I work in crisis all the time, and I'm an advocate, I don't have time to plan.

But we are here for you.

I'm sure that today you'll be able to get some ideas.

We have amazing presenters.

And we'll be able to give you just that start, that little push that you need.

And how do we get this done in 68 days?

Well, we got it for you.

Our webinar today will offer tools and guidance for individuals and programs of all sizes across the nation on how to take part in raising awareness of domestic violence, even on a shoestring budget and with very little time.

We are lucky to have representation from two amazing organizations, the Women's Coalition of St. Croix and the Guardian Angel Community Services from Joliet, Illinois.

They will share their keys to successful event, the challenges they encounter, and the lessons that they learn along the way.

But before I introduce our amazing presenters today, I wanted to tell you a little bit more about what we do.

So, we are the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and we are a national technical assistance provider that offers organizations and individuals resources and information on the many issues related to domestic violence.

There are three strategies that frame the core of the NRCDV work.

One is technical assistance and training, research development, and the design and implementation of key initiatives that facilitate a deeper focus on a

particular issue or population.

Through our key initiatives and special projects, the NRC works to improve community response to domestic violence and ultimately prevent its occurrence.

One of these key initiatives is Domestic Violence Awareness Project, better known as DVAP, and the DVAP is a one-stop shop for domestic violence awareness, anything that you need you can find it on our website, from public education tips, free and downloadable materials, campaign ideas, webinar recordings, training tools.

I mean, a list of things -- we have even an online store.

We have a wonderful DVAM events database, you can go in, put your information and share with everyone.

People go there to see what's going on in their communities and they also go there just to get some ideas on what's working, what are the trends, what events are the ones that work in my community.

There are so, so many wonderful things.

And one of them is artwork and templates.

All of these are free, downloadable and you can customize them, putting in, when you print them, you put in your program's information and anything that you need.

We have all of these materials in different languages, including English, Spanish and Vietnamese. So feel free to go to our web page and get anything, any information that you need to make sure that the event 2017 is a success.

Another great resource that we have and we always like to talk about it is the talking points forms. And in order to successfully educate the public about domestic violence, we encourage everybody to take action through the media, to use the media.

But you know how difficult it is when you get that call from the news I can't, they want an interview, and you only have 20 minutes to prepare, they usually work like that, well, this is what we do, we provided talking points forms, they have several topics, I believe 13 in all, that you can go in and just fill in information.

Those talking points have statistical information on a specific topic.

They have other information, just to guide that conversation.

And we all know how hard it is to talk with the media.

So, all of this information is there for you to make sure that you're able to go into our website, to get that information and use it.

And I want to mention that there's also one that's a blank form that you can just go ahead and start filling it out right now so you can be prepared when that phone call comes in because they're going to call you.

So, before we start and I present our first presenter, I have a question.

I want to know how long have you been working to implement community-based DVAM events?

Is this your first time?

Has it been two to five years that you've been organizing events?

Five to ten years?

More than ten years?

You can respond in the feedback box to the left, just click on the one that represents the time that you've been spending.

Ooh, I see that 50% of our -- well, it keeps on changing.

So most of you have been preparing events in the past two to five years.
That's wonderful.

Give a couple more minutes to make sure that everybody answers.

Perfect.

So, still, the majority of our participants today have been planning events for two to five years. 31%, we have more than ten years, oh, my goodness, this is wonderful.

Thank you so much.

So, first, I'm excited to introduce to you Amirrah Abou-Youseff.

She has been with Guardian Angel Community Services for seven years and she began as a volunteer in 2010 in the Sexual Assault Services Program.

Today Amirrah serves as the program manager for the Groundwork Program.

Amirrah, an Illinois Certified Domestic Violence Professional, with a master's in marriage and family counseling, is a member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Illinois Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence Program Council, the 12th and 13th Judicial Family Violence Prevention Councils, Will County Take Back the Night Executive Board, Will County Interagency Council, Will County All Our Kids Network, and the Joilet Junior Woman's Club.

Welcome, Amirrah, and you have the floor.

>> Thank you so much, I'm so honored to be here today, and I'm going to say, even though the

presentation's been going on for nine minutes, I've already learned some things, resources, from the national resource center, so I'm already tickled and excited.

So I hope I can just add to everyone's understanding of ways to make our jobs easier and to promote ourselves as domestic violence advocates in our communities.

So, as Ivonne said, I am from the groundwork domestic violence program in Joilet, Illinois.

To give you an idea of where we're located, I'm going to jump ahead a slide, so, I don't know if anyone has seen the movie the Blues Brothers, two characters there, Joe yet, Jake, and Elwood Blues, that is all that Joilet is famous for is for our prison.

We are located about 45 minutes south of Chicago, so that maybe might give some people in the conference some idea of where Joilet is located.

Our program's been around since 1983.

So we've been around a pretty good amount of time. Guardian angel has actually been around as an agency since 1897.

We started as an orphanage and as a part of our changing needs of our community, seen that needing orphanages as much but reaching out to people who are

victims of crime, victims of violence.

We established the groundwork domestic violence program in 1983, our social services program in 1998, we also have a foster care program, a parenting program, a partner abuse intervention program, transitional living, we're very busy here, but I'm just so honored to be working for Groundwork.

Groundwork program might look very similar to some of the programs you're already doing, we have a 24-hour hotline, we provide emergency shelter, we have 30 beds in our shelter but we're often at 35 to 40 survivors with their children.

We provide legal and medical advocacy, we have group and individual counseling and we provide outreach.

And, so, like I said, I really think that we probably look like a lot of your own programs.

And, so, I want everyone on the phone to know that, you know, we're no one special.

If we can do it, I'm sure that you out there can do it, hopefully we can give you some ideas.

So, as I said, we're located in Joilet and we serve Will and Grundy Counties, but we serve many clients in the greater Chicago land area.

And we have people that come from out of state.

So we're here for everybody.

To talk about Will County, I thought it might be

helpful to talk about the demographics, a lot of Domestic Violence Awareness Month events are fund-raisers, so kind of what does our population look like?

So Will County is a mix of urban and rural areas. Joilet itself is a fairly large city of about 140,000 people and the population of the county is, you know, 677,000, so we have a pretty decent amount of people in the county.

The median household income is \$76,000.

But 6.6% of the population fall below the poverty line.

In Grundy County, Grundy County is located just west of Will County.

This one looks very different.

It's very rural.

So their entire population is about 50,000 people, so, again, to go back, Will County, 677,000, Grundy

County, 50,000.

And, So, Again, I'm Bringing This Up Because I'm Sure

There Are Some programs on the line that are very small programs and some that are more urban, so, we, I believe, successfully are able to provide programming and the DVAM events for both types of communities.

The median household income for Grundy County is \$64,000, so about \$10,000 less than Will County and about 7% of the population fall below the poverty line.

So that's kind of what we're looking at in our service area and who we reach through our DVAM events.

And I do want to say to say, please, don't hesitate to ask a question during my presentation.

I want to make sure I'm meeting your needs.

So, don't hesitate.

I would love to hear if I'm meeting your needs or if I'm way off base.

So we generally have about four major events during our Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

We do a purple light night event.

We have two Take Back the Night events in both counties and then we do a 5K walk/run.

So let's talk about purple light nights and I know there is enough people that I saw through the poll who, you know, maybe this is their first year doing DVAM events or they're in their second year.

What I really like about Purple Light Nights is even though it's July, you can still put on a very strong campaign through Purple Light Nights.

So it's an international campaign gathered towards

raising awareness during DVAM.

So that's what's really cool, it's not just a national, it goes across the world.

And the website has these really great planning guides.

Like I said, even if you're just getting started now or if you decide in September, wow, we really want to do this, their website, I have it listed on the slide, has planning guides to help you have a successful campaign.

They offer ideas.

It can be a fund-raiser, a memorial, a vigil and it's very flexible and easy to fit any agency.

Small agencies, large agencies, I think it's a great place to start if you've never done any sort of event before.

Because we're all busy, we're all serving clients.

Everyone in my program who helps with DVAM, they're working with clients just the same as they do every other day of the year, and throughout the other months, but they're adding this on top of their plate.

So this has been a very nice campaign that we've taken on.

So, we personally use it as a kickoff event each

October.

So, actually, last year we had it end of September because that's when we could fit it in.

As you can see, this is our sample flier.

What we do, we sell light bulbs at the event and throughout the month, just at a slight profit to encourage people to light up their porches, neighborhoods and businesses.

So, through the Purple Light Nights website, they let you know where you're able to purchase the purple light bulbs, they're actually technically black lights, but they do this really cool purple and you can buy them basically at cost and then they give suggestions on, you know, you're paying \$1.28 per light bulb but you can sell light bulbs at \$3 for one, two for \$5, and they really just map it all out for you to make it really easy to try to light up your neighborhoods and businesses.

Last year, probably my favorite thing of all of

October, we, in our community, lost a teenage woman, young lady, to domestic violence, her boyfriend had found her, shot her and her mother in their driveway when they were going to go to school.

And the daughter we lost, they weren't clients of ours at the time so I'm not breaking confidentiality, but the daughter was lost and the mom survived.

And mom decided to reach out to us, and she had come to a Purple Light Nights event two years prior to that.

And last year, she asked, can I sell the light bulbs?

And what she did was she pretty much bought our entire stock at cost, so we charged her what the retailer charged us and she went throughout her entire community of Romeoville and sold almost 300 light bulbs.

Because she wanted her community to recognize her daughter and to say that our community does not allow domestic violence and everywhere you see a purple light bulb means that we want domestic violence to end and we support survivors.

I mean, I have goose bumps talking about it now.

It's so touching and she just was so proud of herself

and I think it gave her a tool to feel like she's doing something and it was just the best, I just

loved it.

And it was easy.

So, sorry, goose bumps.

So, it was just very touching that she was able to do that.

And then for the night of our event, we had a guest speaker and we had a woman share her story of the

terrible domestic violence she went through and the gas lighting she experienced and it was just a great way to focus ourselves for the rest of the month to say, wow, this is our vision, this is what we're here for.

This is what we're trying to do.

And it's fairly easy.

And it doesn't take a lot of effort.

What we had to do was find a space at our old -- we recently moved.

We were at an old building.

We used to have it on our front lawn and we would light our agency purple and we would do the event right on our front lawn.

Our new location doesn't quite allow for that but we rent out a theater.

We set up information tables, have the guest speaker, we stole light our agency purple.

It's super easy much.

Next I'd like to move on to Will County Take Back the Night.

So this is actually not an event put on my guardian angel proper.

In Will County, there is -- did I have this on the other slide in it's an individual committee that is made up of professional women and they put on this

event every year, so our event in Will County is a rally, a vigil and a march.

We gather people from the community, we generally do it at a church or school or some sort of public location.

We get some sort of keynote speaker.

In the past, we've had speakers, motivational speakers.

This year we're going to highlight human trafficking in our community and have a speaker come from a local human trafficking agency.

And then we take time to read the names of women and children we've lost to gender-based violence in Will County.

We read their names and we have someone stand on stage to represent that person so we can honor the people that we've lost.

And then we end it with a march through our community saying, Take Back the Night, end the violence, we make sure it's in a really visible area around where we're doing our rally so people are aware.

We also use this event to get -- recruit sponsors and donations.

We sell merchandise.

And this isn't to raise money for Take Back the

Night.

It's to raise money for local agencies providing services to women and children.

So Guardian Angel does benefit from being a part of this event and there's another women's organization in town that benefits in our prairie state legal services and whom we can reach out to.

But another lovely thing we do with our money is provide scholarships for survivors to go back to school or to go to a trade school or, you know, to learn a new skill that's going to help them be more independent.

We've helped people get through, you know, learning how to cut hair and to be a hairstylist with money that we've raised from Take Back the Night.

So it's been a really great way to kind of tackle domestic violence from several different facets.

I think that's everything I have for Will County Take Back the Night.

So the next is Grundy Take Back the Night.

This is something that Guardian Angels puts on themselves.

Grundy is much smaller.

They don't have a large group of professional women to put it on, so, we decided, well, we need this out in Grundy county, too.

So, in Grundy county, we do a rally, we do it in front of the Grundy county courthouse, we get a guest speaker, we get resource tables and we do a balloon release.

And how we do this is, again, we never really truly do anything alone.

And I hope for other programs out there that they're not looking to tackle these things by themselves.

We get the state's attorney involved and the county clerk.

We have a longstanding relationship with these men and women and they're very supportive.

So they donate the front of the courthouse lawn and the chairs and the tables so we don't have to pay for renting any of that.

The state's attorney provides the balloons.

And the state's attorney speaks every year.

And I think it helps Grundy County see that their state's attorney is at the forefront of any domestic violence in their community and to know that it's really important to him and they've had some high-profile cases.

Will County has had high-profile cases, too, but it's been a nice way to get people together.

In past, we've gotten the high schools there with

their cheerleading squad and marching bands and things like that to get them to come out to their own community to promote ending domestic violence, so, it's pretty -- it's, again, it's pretty low-key, getting a speaker, it doesn't take a lot of planning. We do it every year.

And, so, again, it's very small, but it's digestible, it's something that if you haven't started planning your DVAM event, this might be something that's easily added in your community.

Finally, we do an Angels Against Abuse 5K Walk/Run.

This is our largest event.

We do do this as a fund-raiser.

We like to keep it family friendly and pet friendly.

And people are like, why pets?
Why does that matter?

Well, we know, as domestic violence advocates, that a lot of our survivors don't leave because they don't want to leave their pets.

They don't want to leave their dog at home because they know that their dog might be in danger or their dog might be their only support system.

So, you know, allowing that to come through in our events has actually been very very important to us.

As you can see, this is our flier from last year, it is an annual event.

This year will be our ninth annual, and I will say, the more that we do it, the more people look forward to it.

So we started small, we started slow, we just did a walk, maybe had, you know, 50 people, and now we're up to over 200 people.

And, you know, so you have to start somewhere, and what's been nice about doing the fund-raiser is that it's given us unrestricted dollars to maybe replace a refrigerator that broke, you know, what have you.

It's been pretty easy.

On this next slide, I show the different levels of sponsorship.

And, so, this has been an easy way to get people to donate money at different levels.

We gave them cutesy names.

We recruited from businesses and people we know.

If you have a car dealership in town, they love to put their names on things like this, doctor's offices.

And places like you frequent.

So if you have a great massage therapist you like, maybe they can be at the activist level for \$100, you know, be able to promote themselves.

Or if you can see in the in-kind donations box, maybe

they can't do \$100, but maybe they can donate snacks or give swag items to the bag, to your giveaway bag, or, you know, they can be the coffee sponsor.

So there's definitely little ways that you can get people involved.

Another thing that we like to do is raffle baskets.

We do these awesome raffles.

One year we had a football signed by many of the Chicago Bears players.

People I hadn't heard of, but I'm not a huge football person, but that was a hot ticket item and we raised almost \$2,000 just with that football alone.

So we were really proud of that.

And what I like about our event is it's a very easy running course.

So people like to come out for that.

But there's also the walking portion.

Which is nice because I don't like to run and, so, I always tell everyone, there's a walking portion and I saunter and I bring up the rear so no one has to worry about being last, it will always be me.

And it's just a nice, easy morning that people enjoy.

And if they don't even want to run or walk, they can help with the raffle baskets.

And what we love about this event, as exhausting as it can be to put on something like this, everybody

leaves that day feeling amazingly awesome, because it's so nice to see everyone come out and be supportive and be with your community and see the spark and the passion that everybody has that, you know, if you don't do any DVAM events for any other reason, do it because it's so awesome to see your community come together.

Finally, I just really recommend general Domestic Violence Awareness Month promotion.

So get on your social media.

Get on your Facebook or Twitter, your Instagram.

This picture is absolutely of my own fingernails.

Purple for DVAM on top of my lovely cat Simba. And I just posted it to Facebook.

It was just super easy.

Make an agency hashtag, you know, do whatever you can.

Throughout the month of October, I go on our local radio program every week to talk about statistics of our community, to talk about our event.

Wear purple.

I mean, super easy things that if you can't get an event going this year, you know, get a purple day going in your community, where everyone's supposed to wear a purple shirt and talk about it.

I am absolutely that nerdy person that if I see somebody wearing purple in the month of October, I go, oh, hey, are you wearing that because it's Domestic Violence Awareness Month?

And if they look at me like I have three heads, I then go and explain what Domestic Violence Awareness Month is and it gets the discussion going and that's the whole purpose of raising awareness, not just to wear but to talk about it.

And then again, be patient.

You know, this might be your first year doing a DVAM event, maybe you get ten people.

That's awesome.

That's ten people whose lives are better because they came to your event.

Ten people who are survivors and they know their community is behind them or ten people who are going to get the word out to somebody else.

You know, whatever it might be.

That's awesome.

And over the years, people are going to start looking forward to your events.

Just like with our 5K, this is our ninth year, I'm telling you, we had our event in October, by December, I was getting an e-mail, when is the 5K going to be this year?

We want to get it on our calendars at work, we want to get it on our city calendar, we want to start promoting it.

People start to look forward to what you're providing.

You know, because they find the cause important and they find what you put on to be fun and they really just look forward to it every year.

So, you know, give it a couple years and you're really going to have a great DVAM that you're going to be super proud of.

So, I really can't stress that enough.
Be patient.

But it's totally worth it.

And then, that's finally it.

So, again, my name is Amirrah, if you have any questions for me, that is my number, my e-mail, and the picture here is of our building lit up purple for purple lights night.

So that's what we do every year.

So thank you.

>> Thank you, Amirrah.

I believe in my heart that the key to a successful DVAM event is the passion that the person that is organizing has, and you can hear the passion,

Amirrah's passion, in her voice and you can see the quality of events.

So, I'm excited for you guys in Joilet, Illinois, I know that this year is going to be really really fun. You're going to be able to connect and to celebrate those survivors that are still with us and remember those that have left us.

And, you know, right now we are ready, we are excited to hear from Sheelene Gumbs, and she's a counselor. And Miss Clema Lewis, she's executive director for the Women's Coalition of St. Croix where she has been since 1982.

Clema has a master's degree in counselor education and is a nationally certified counselor.

She participates in numerous community and national groups, including as chair of the St. Croix Child Abuse and Neglect Task Force and Secretary for the Virgin Islands Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Council.

Clema is also a member of the Women of Color Domestic Violence Network Steering Committee and the American Counseling Association.

She has received many honors and some of them include the National Association of Social Workers Award for Citizen of the Year, Sunshine Lady Peace Award, and the Virgin Island's Women Hall of Fame.

Welcome, Clema and Sheelene.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

Good afternoon.

There's a little bit of an echo.

Can everybody hear us pretty good?

>> We can hear you great.

>> Yes, we can hear you.

>> Thank you.

Okay.

Okay, so the Women's Coalition of St. Croix was founded in 1981.

And we provide services like crisis intervention counseling for all victims and survivors of crime.

We have a 24-hour crisis line, which also means we go out in the community.

We have court advocacy, child advocacy.

We have emergency shelter, as well as transitional housing.

Only transitional housing in the territory.

We provide food, clothing and furniture assistance, and when we're able to get a special grant from United Way or the federal government, we're able to provide rental assistance as well and utilities assistance.

We run support groups for domestic violence and parenting classes and we do community training and education to the public and private sectors.

Our program consists -- some of our programs consist of our Sojourner house shelter, that's been in existence since 1994.

We got our first transitional housing grant in 2014. Closet to closet is a thrift shop that we're really proud of where you can get gently used clothing.

We have a home store where you can get used furniture and the Shabby Chic store where you can get upscale clothes for almost no money.

Alice Pfaelzer Children's Center is where we provide high school diplomas, teenage volunteers in the community, we run a summer program for six weeks for students to educate them about our work and what we do.

And last of all, well, I mentioned Project Link already.

So Sheelene will talk about us, where we are.

>> Good afternoon.

We are in the United States Virgin Islands.

The U.S. Virgin Islands is made up of four small islands, St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. Johns, and Water Island.

We happen to be located on St. Croix and we are

located between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.

Which makes us pretty much in the middle of paradise.

And we on St. Croix host the eastern most point of the United States, which is Point Udall.

As much as it's paradise, because of our geographic location, we're considered very rural, with a population of 51,000 St. Croix, according to our 2010 census.

And, unfortunately, most of our population, 26%, is under the poverty line.

Where we are in our beautiful island also means that access to services is very very limited because we're on an island.

And the options to flee an abuser would be solely by plane or by boat, which, of course, makes it very expensive.

Being a U.S. territory, though, we are easily accessible and many times used as a place for abusers to escape from the mainland.

So, we have a lot of people that fly down and we won't find out until after they've been here for quite a while that they're here and they've come here because you don't need a passport to come to the U.S. Virgin Islands, you can use your driver's license.

Being an island, we are also considered a border state, because less than a 20-minute boat ride from where we are is the British Virgin Islands and also gives us access to a lot of the other Caribbean islands, the eastern Caribbean train, so that opens us up to a large undocumented population and it makes us really prime for human trafficking because it's easy to get people in here and we have a lot of open waters around us.

So it does make us accessible for the good as well as the bad.

All right.

So, a little about DVAM an St. Croix.

We have our calendar of events from last year there.

As you can see, we have a lot of stuff that we do.

It starts out with the purple ribbon campaign, and we do that in conjunction with other agencies on the island.

And what we do is we give everyone those beautiful purple ribbons to wear for awareness throughout the community.

During this month, we also do more presentations, more trainings, more workshops, and we focus a lot on domestic violence in the workplace, in the schools and in the churches.

We even have the students wear ribbons in the schools

to promote and to bring awareness.

All our events are highlighted on TV, newspapers and radios, and we do just a whole lot more media awareness so we're on talk shows, we're on TV shows, we do a lot of social media events, stuff like that. We usually also have an open house, where we invite the entire community, the legislature, the government officials, private agencies to become more familiar with what we do.

And we usually have victims or survivors of domestic violence to be our guest speakers so that it brings home actually what's going on.

We also have two weekends where we hold our supermarket campaign.

This gives the community an opportunity to donate food, household items, for our crisis center and for our shelter.

And Clema said, we have a VI Purple Day where we have another opportunity for businesses to be able to show their support and stand in solidarity with victims of domestic violence in our community.

And it's usually one that's done so that everybody, including the men, they have an opportunity to wear their purple tie, they wear their purple shirts, purple socks which we've seen, which is very very

interesting.

>> I love the purple tie.

>> So those are some of the activities that we have.

I'm going to let muss Lewis continue on the next page.

>> So let's talk about DVAM, what some other things we do.

We are about Take Back the Night, silent march, which is similar to what the other program talked about. This is actually our 36th year doing this march.

And because St. Croix is made up of two towns, Christiansted and Frederiksted, and some people don't go to Christiansted and some people don't go to Frederiksted, so every year we rotate the march.

We march through the streets with our -- we started off with candles.

We got smart.

Now we use a little light, the little battery-operated lights now.

We ring the bell every seven to nine minutes to let them know that a victim somewhere is being injured or hurt.

We are escorted through the town by the police, which is interesting.

And it's usually done in evening.

We usually do it between 6:00 and 8:00 so it's dark.

We usually choose a victim, a survivor who we memorize for that event.

So we have a list of victims who died in domestic violence, which have included women, men and children.

So, every year we dedicate the march to a different victim.

And at the march, the family is presented with a plaque in their memory.

The family is allowed to talk about their loved one in their memory.

And other people can speak as well.

The program is very interesting.

To me, it's just as crucial as marching down the street.

We have speakers every year.

We have a different speaker.

We have men speaking, women speaking, and children.

But the title of the focus is always on some form of domestic violence.

But we've had youth groups dance and we've had people sing as well, as long as it's pertaining to domestic violence.

It's held the third Thursday of every year of October.

We always do it the third Thursday.

So, if it rains, we leave open the following week as a rain day.

We have a clothes -- I'm sure most of you are all familiar with the Clothe Line Project.

Where victims and survivors and family members write out their feelings of their victimization.

We always hang those up in the town so people can read them and they're visualized during the march.

During the late-night march, we present a shoe project, which I think you can kind of see it on the screen, is really exciting.

What we've done is we've taken shoes from our shop Closet to Closet and we lay them out and we put the names of the deceased victims in the shoe.

So, when the moderator, the emcee for the program calls out their name, we have people in our group who are volunteers that that pick the shoe up when they say the name.

And it's really interesting because we've used children to take up the baby shoes, men to take up the men's shoes, women to take up the women's shoes, and because we've been doing it for maybe about ten years now, family members now come to the event and ask if they can take a pair of shoes in the remembering of their loved ones.

The media loves it.

The shoes are highlighted all over the newspaper, all over TV.

For them it seems to be more of the highlight of the Take Back the Night march.

We also do something that we think is important, too.

We do a She/Hero Award.

And what that is, we try to find, it could be an

individual, an agency, a group, somebody in the

community that has done something special for

survivors and victims this particular year or maybe

the year before, and we bring them to the program, we

present them with a Hero and Shero Award and thank

them for being there for us and for being there for

victims, and it's also another way, again, to educate

the community and educate the victims and the

families and the agencies about what domestic

violence is.

We do a community countdown, I think that's

Sheelene's favorite.

She's usually the emcee.

We do a countdown with the end of the program, we

have everybody hold hands, go around and count down

the number.

It also gives us a chance to bring everybody closer

but also the opportunity for us to see how many people actually showed up to the event.

We usually have a deejay there that plays music that's relevant to the domestic violence event.

Do you want to add anything?

>> With the countdown, what's usually really good is that people are able to see how much a part of the solution they can be because they're there and we do the countdown and we get to sing, so it's kind of like our sing-along as well.

We've been singing One Love by Bob Marley, usually, and, so, that gets to be a very very happy time, open karaoke at that point.

>> And DVAM awareness month, there's some pictures, reflections of previous events.

As you can see, it's really big for us in the community.

And we've made it big in the community because we've been doing it over 30 years.

So, my agency is dedicated to the whole month of October, literally every week, almost every day doing something that reflects educate, talk about domestic violence in the community, get the word out.

We've had -- we've brought in speakers, as I said earlier, we brought in senators to try to win them over, to get them to understand what domestic

violence is.

But this is what we've been doing for over the last 30 years.

And it's critical.

So, if you have any questions, please feel free to ask us.

>> We also got into the modern ages, and we started doing our digital interactions like most people do.

We also do Put a Nail In It Campaign.

We do the Promote Peace Selfie Campaign.

The picture is up on your screen, and that's actually a translucent, so you can put your own face behind it.

So it has your picture and then it has promote peace over it and then we do our purple day selfie where we have different community organizations, different offices that will come in and they will take their picture and then they will post it on our Facebook page or they will send it to us so that we're able to utilize it.

So that the community involvement is a lot greater.

And we found that it's been very very successful because it gives people an opportunity to do stuff that they don't have to necessarily move from where they are but they can still be involved and they can

still show their support.

>> We're trying to do more outreach to the businesses.

I think we're going to try to do more and more to get the businesses to show more of their support of what we're doing in terms of domestic violence. But one year we had a young woman that actually went to the nail shop and she painted different things on people's names that have to do with domestic violence and it was all done in purple as well.

She had just graduated from high school and that was something she wanted to do.

So, we were completely open to it.

But I think we covered everything.

>> Yup.

So thank you so much.

We appreciate you having us here.

Thank you for the opportunity to be able to share with all of you.

>> And we're open for any questions or comments.

>> Thank you, ladies.

You've been very informative.

So I have a couple of questions.

I know that our participants are thinking about them.

Feel free to post them in the chat box and Joe will let us know if we have any questions that we need to

address.

I'm going to ask the three of you, first, I'm going to start with Clema, Sheelene.

We're going to talk about collaborations.

The three of you talked about amazing events. But one theme in common was collaboration, how you have engaged the rest of the community.

And this is important for domestic violence programs because then we have a better reach.

When we do it alone, it's not as effective.

So, working with enthusiastic partners, such as schools, health programs, churches, and other agencies, help us to have successful awareness events.

So, ladies, let's start with Clema and Sheelene, how do I engage my community?

If this is my first time.

My agency did some awareness events last year, they just hire me.

How do I engage my community?

What's the first step?

What would you guys recommend?

>> Well, the first thing I would do is try to -- whether it's agencies or community agencies that's well-known or pretty active in the community -- I

would contact them and ask them would they give me an opportunity to come and speak about domestic violence.

The other thing I found people like, even if they don't want to talk about it because maybe some going on in their life, they love the purple ribbon.

So, if you can invest in getting purple ribbons, even if people don't really want to hear it, can't talk about it, they will wear those purple ribbons, women wear them, men wear them.

As a matter of fact, we've gotten just about all our government agencies wearing them, to the point now where at the beginning of October, almost at the end of September, they come in, ask us, do you have my basket and my ribbons ready?

So, I found that's the easiest way to get the community engaged by doing something simple as, how about a ribbon and can I just come and talk to you about it?

What do you want to add to that?

>> I think that getting the young people involved as well.

So, like last year we did an essay contest so that we were able to engage the schools and stuff like that.

We go in to the schools and we do presentations.

But just starting out, that would be a good thing to

be able to do, do something that would involve the young people.

And the ribbons really are a tie-in, and then we also get -- of course you spend a little money, but Clema has been really good in getting the purple band, because that gives them something that makes them feel involved and they can wear it, it's a question piece.

So why are you wearing a purple band, why are you wearing a purple ribbon?

And it starts the conversation.

And that's been a very easy way to get people involved.

>> But also another way that's easy and it depends on what kind of community you have, but we've had a couple of dances.

>> Yes.

>> We've had parties that we call purple parties, so if you got a community that's in to purple parties, and it could be a fund-raiser, you know, they have to pay a little fee to get in, but they have to wear purple.

And everything in the event is purple, from the lights to the signature drinks, everything is done in purple and people seem to like that as well.

I think those are things that won't break your back and pretty easy to kind of ease in with the community.

>> Great, great ideas.
I had another question.

In your case, in St. Croix, which ones are the most influential organizations that you have been able to collaborate with or to engage?

>> The most influential organizations to engage, I would say the Department of Education, I would say the Virgin Islands Police Department, I would say the Department of Health, we have a relationship with them, the Virgin Islands Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Council, the Men's Coalition, and just some other government agencies, we've been able to get them involved just because they understand it is an issue.

So those were the top ones for us.

Don't let me forget the Department of Justice, where they prosecute DV cases.

We have them wearing ribbons.

We even have our superior court wearing ribbons during the month of October.

[Overlapping conversation]

Even marshals request ribbons, they wear ribbons, and the police, on their uniforms.

>> Wow.

Amazing.

So let's ask Amirrah.

Amirrah, how do I engage my community if this says my first time planning an event?

>> I think a really great place to start is to look for those social service groups that share the same mission that you do.

So, we're really involved in the women's clubs in the area, both general women's clubs, Junior Women's Club and Juniorette, and Juniorettes would be the high school level clubs, also the Exchange Club Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse, we have a really great relationship with them.

Zonta, Rotary, anyone that we can get involved because they're looking for events to be a part of, too, so, really, you're helping out each other.

And they generally have luncheons and meetings, and, so, just like they were saying before about, you know, hey, can I come give you some ribbons and talk at your meeting, that's a great way to get started.

I would say for us in both of our counties, we have great relationships with our state's attorneys and, so, in Will County, we actually have a relatively famous state's attorney, James Glasco, so, we have a

high-profile case out of our county for Drew Peterson, there was a Lifetime meeting, for those of you who watch Lifetime. And it wasn't a national story, so, he is a strong champion for domestic violence, so getting him involved pulls in a lot of people, of everyone that follows him and other lawyers and things.

So, he's been a great help.

Again, the police departments are huge because sometimes there is a little love/hate relationship when piece are involved with domestic violence for different reasons.

But to get everybody involved for DVAM shows unity.

I know that we've done ribbon magnets with our hotline number and our program name and we've given it to all the local municipalities so they can have it on their police cars.

So it's really kind of cool when you're driving around town and you can see what police car is marked with your own branding and getting them involved.

But even just reaching out to high schools for, like, the Honor Society kids, you know, clubs, where you're finding people that have the same mission as you and it makes it super duper easy and then, again, your local politicians, your representatives, you know, they want to be involved, too, they want to be a part

of it.

And, finally, one other thing we did a couple of times last year, especially with Take Back the Night, is that we had city proclamations, county proclamations, and we even had a state proclamation for our Will County Take Back the Night, it was our 20th year marching, so even to get a proclamation declared in our favor was a way of getting people involved and getting some notoriety and getting it in the newspaper.

So those are some things I suggest for networking and getting other entities involved with your cause.

>> Great.

And I want to give a shout-out to our DVAP web page. We have sample proclamations, anything you would need, it's already there.

I know that sometimes it's hard just to call your, you know, your elected officials and ask for that. When you send them everything already ready, you'll be sure for them to support you.

They're really busy and it would be really helpful for them to have all the information that they need. So our next question, let's talk about cultural considerations.

And the key to engaging the community is to infuse

your activities with elements unique to your community.

And doing that can help ensure that events will resonate with participants and potentially inspire them to take up the work of your program.

So, how do we identify our target audience?

Because, you know, we have several events and we can do that.

And what do you guys -- what tips do you guys have to engage different sectors of the community?

As an example, my community, the Latino community, or if you have a specific religious community that you want to engage, what have you guys done to engage that community?

And let's start with Amirrah, anything that comes to your mind, Amirrah?

>> It's probably the easiest is to reach out to your places of faith, a lot of congregations really like to get involved with the cause around domestic violence.

I think it's becoming more recognized, their congregation members are coming forward.

So that's a really great place to start.

In Joliet, we have a fairly large Latina community, and we've talked about, you know, this is probably long-term planning, to have an event specifically for

them that's all in Spanish so they can participate fully.

But even during our empowerment groups, our weekly support groups, we have them in Spanish and in English, and in the Spanish one we make sure to do a speak out, it's open to the public, it's not a closed group night, it's open to the public so they can share their story.

And, so, we started small with that community, and just kind of recognizing, look at your client base.

Where are your clients coming from?

What neighborhoods are they coming from?

What languages are they speaking?

We've noticed a large uptick in clients from India.

And, so, -- and that includes several different languages, how to reach out to them started to become a conversation.

We also have clients that are coming from French-speaking African countries, and, so, identifying where our clients are coming from and then how can we cater to them is probably the best place to start, I would think, if you don't know what kind of community you need to be reaching out to.

>> Wonderful.

Thank you, Amirrah.

How about Clema and Sheelene, how do we reach out to all of the sectors of the community?

How do we include them?

>> Well, one of the things that we found helpful is that we tried to make sure that, especially in terms of reaching larger audiences, we go on the community -- the cultural base radio program.

So we'll do Spanish TV because we have a very large Latina and we have a very large Caribbean community here.

So we will --

>> People of color live here.

>> Right.

So we would go to the Spanish-speaking radio station, we'll go on the Spanish-speaking television program and we will reach out to them that way so we know that we're getting to that population.

And then we do a lot of the other media stuff as well.

We've used a lot of our advocates to actually reach out to each other as well and reach out to the community that they're in.

>> But we also go out and speak.

So during that month, that's an opportunity to get to churches, talk about domestic violence, give out ribbons in the church.

We go to housing communities, talking to housing communities about what's going on, what services are available, give out ribbons in the housing community. Because we're a small community, as we said early, and predominantly people of color, we pretty much get the culture nuances because that's all about us. So, we haven't had an issue in terms of what we're doing that's culturally appropriate and now in the beginning, we started, of course, when we started in 1981, they weren't too crazy about an agency that's starting up that's fighting for women, but I'm saying 36 years later, the community has become a part of this agency.

>> Wonderful.

Thank you so much, ladies.

A little while ago, we had a question in our public chat that we already answered, but I wanted for us to have a conversation about it, I believe it was Mickey, and she was telling us that they cannot fund-raise during DVAM, during October, because one of the funding sources, you know, doesn't allow it. That's one of the restrictions that they have.

And what I answered to her was that I remember when I worked in a local program that we had the same issue and what we did, we could not fund-raise, of course, but what we did, we asked for, in a very, I would

say, you know, simple way, we asked for donations in clothing, also food for the safe house and any other resources that they wanted to donate, even if it was a ride to a doctor's appointment, anything that they could give, their time.

So one of the things that worked really really good for us was to think about DVAM and beyond, not to just think about October.

So, we would integrate ideas, well, you know, December is coming, the holidays are coming, and we have always a number of children that have to spend the holidays in the safe house, so, we started collecting toys, so by the time December came, we had more than enough for the children that were staying in the safe house, and for the children that were attending our children's services program.

What ideas can you give for those programs that cannot fund-raise during October?

And let's start with Amirrah.

>> I think it's -- if you can't fund-raise during October, maybe just plan on your fund-raising for the holidays, I mean, besides just the materials, maybe you can get enough materials during October, being able then to make January, February more of your fund-raising time or maybe pick a different month.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month so that's outside of the fall fund-raising campaign for United Way.

So maybe that's more of your heavier fund-raising month.

So maybe link up to a different campaign.

>> Wonderful.

How about Clema and Sheelene?

>> Well, you all gave some wonderful ideas.

We would just reinforce and say that we do fund-raising all year-round.

And we used to be a part of United Way that didn't want us to do it either between, like, August and December.

We're no longer a part of them because we didn't feel it was worth it.

They wasn't giving us enough for us to stop fund-raising during those particular months.

But I would suggest to her that they do their fund-raising before or after and do the supermarket stuff, donation things like we do, two weeks out of the month we help people, we get a lot of donations.

We get food, clothing, money, people give money, but it's all donations so they can't say it's an issue. That's what I would focus on if you can't do it in

October.

That's only one month.

>> Thank you so much.

So, any questions, Joe, that we missed?

Okay.

So I wanted to give a shoutout to --

[missed the name]

She is with the National Latino Network, and they have amazing resources, if you're thinking of reaching out to a Latino community, and she's joining us today as a participant so thank you.

>> I have some other exciting events that we want to promote.

And at the beginning, we had mentioned that the Domestic Violence Awareness Project has many many resources and activities for you to take ideas.

And one of them that I'm really excited about is our National Call of Unity.

And as you can see on the slide, this is a 45-minute call where a lot of organizations come together.

We have government officials, we have local domestic violence programs, we have survivors, survivors'

families, everybody gathered together, and we listen to messages, inspirational messages.

Last year we had an amazing survivor that spoke and shared her, you know, her struggles, her life and her

successes.

Ramona, we were blessed to have her.

The call has been going on for, I believe, seven years now.

So, it's a great way to start DVAM.

It's always on the first Tuesday of the month.

So, this year's National Call of Unity will take place on October, the 3rd, at 3:00 p.m.

We have a lot of organizations that stop what they're doing, they join the call as a group, sit down and listen.

Because, you know, as advocates, we're working in crisis and sometimes we don't take that time to self-care.

So just sitting down, listening to, you know, to our speakers, and usually we have around 12 speakers, to come on and tell us what we have accomplished, you know, at the national level, to give messages of gratitude, you know, just center thoughts, and help us understand and remind us why we're doing this work.

And maybe you were asking, how was this all started?

In 1995, our organization convened several national organizations to launch a new effort.

And that's how the Domestic Violence Awareness Project started.

This collaborative effort became what we have today, and we're so excited about the Domestic Violence Awareness Project, or DVAP.

So the purpose of the DVAP is to promote local advocacy networks and public education efforts through public awareness strategies and material.

So, I hope that all of you can join us for the National Call of Unity.

It's going to be amazing.

And if you're not able to join, you can also, it's going to be recorded.

So you can also plan to sit down as a staff, maybe during your staff meeting, and listen to a portion of a call.

It's a great, a great, I believe, time for us to come together.

And feel like we're not working in isolation, that we're a part of a movement.

And that's important for all of us.

And, also, we have -- we have this other event that we're very excited about, we're calling for stories of why I'm an advocate.

The NRCDV has a radio station that we're very excited about, and it's called NRCDV radio, and Joe is heading this effort and we're calling for advocates

in the field to tell us, in writing, why you're an advocate or why did you become an advocate.

We believe that sharing our stories is really valuable.

It will encourage other advocates just to continue to work and for us to share why we do this work, why we are so excited.

Like our presenters today, you could hear the excitement in their voices.

So, we are looking for stories that respond to the prompt as a strategy for shedding light on the value of advocacy and the movement to end gender-based violence, the strength and perseverance of advocates in the face of challenging times, the invaluable role of advocates in supporting survivors as they move along their healing journey, the power of storytelling as a strategy for raising awareness and inspiring change, and the great thing is that if your submission is selected for production, you will be invited to read your story aloud, accommodations as needed, for a recorded podcast and this would be, you know, shared nationally and everybody will be able to hear your story.

So, we are very excited.

There's some information and the dates, the submissions are due Monday, August 21st, as you

can see, in Word format, e-mail them to
NRCDVTA@NRCDV.org, with the subject line, Why I'm an
Advocate.

This is very exciting and I'm hoping that a lot of
you are able to send your stories.

So I want to check one more time to see if there's
any questions.

While we wait for those questions, I'm going to open
the floor for our presenters to share any last
thoughts, anything that you want to share, you want
to promote an event, go ahead.

Let's start with Clema and Sheelene.

>> I mean, I think we've pretty much said it all what
we do.

We're getting ready to go into our National Day of
Remembrance for Murder Victims, which is September
the 25th that we do every year.

So we kind of get bogged down and tied up between the
National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims and
Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which they both
have some tie-ins.

But I believe that the more we do this, the more we
promote this, I think the more people we're reaching
in the community.

The last couple of years, though, it has been kind of

a struggle because of Breast Cancer Awareness in October.

So sometimes one of the challenges is we find ourselves either bumping heads or running into some of the same events that the breast cancer group. So, what we've done is tried to meet with them and see how we can kind of join the two groups together. And my big message is, why can't we wear purple and a pink ribbon?

So I don't know if that's the issue for anybody else anywhere, but it is becoming more and more part of our community during October.

Want to add anything?

>> Not necessarily.

I think for agencies just starting out, social media is an amazing way to get the ball up and running. Everybody has a phone, everybody has Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, if you kind of start pushing the digital, you'll reach a lot of people and if you put your numbers on it, it will help with a lot of safety because we're getting a lot of clients that are calling in or reaching out because of social media. So, if you do that as well, it will help not only promote your agency but it will get the word out about the cause.

>> Thank you, ladies.

Amirrah, any last thoughts?

>> Again, I just want to thank everyone for participating today.

It was really fun.

And remember that, really, the purpose of Domestic Violence Awareness Month is, you know, to bring your community together, to let survivors know that they're not alone, to offer help, to let your community know that this is an issue.

No matter how you get that done, if it's just a post on Facebook, if it's getting on the radio, if it's having a small Purple Light Nights event, you know, whatever that is, that's awesome.

You know, just be proud of yourselves, you know, try some things out, some things are going to be great, some things are going to be not so great, but that's life.

But, remember that it's an awesome thing to be a part of and as tired as you're going to be by the end of October, it's so worth it. It reenergizes you, it reenergizes your staff, the program, the community, you know, you never leave October feeling unhappy.

You feel amazing because you've done so much and you do it for your survivors.

And it's totally worth it.

So give it a go.

You know, keep doing what you're doing, if it's awesome.

You know?

It's all worth it.

So I really just can't encourage you to participate more.

>> Thank you, Amirrah.

And just a final note.

Our National Call of Unity will take place on October 3rd at 3:00 p.m. Eastern time.

And I see that we have a question.

Can the stories, Why I'm an Advocate, can they be anonymous?

And I'm thinking yes.

They can be anonymous.

And, of course, Joe will have more information on that.

So we'll reach out to you.
Any other questions?

I don't see anything else.

So I want to thank our amazing presenters.

Ladies, you've done an amazing job.

And the way that I found this group of ladies was through our DVAP database.

I went in and I said, let me look for organizations that have done, you know, wonderful events, successful events, and that have been going on for more than two years.

And, as you can see, the Women's Coalition for St. Croix has an event that's been going on for 35 years.

So these are programs that are doing it and doing it well.

And their events are successful.

I want to encourage everybody to reach out to them directly if you have more questions.

They're there for you.

We're going to share with you their contact information.

So thank you, Amirrah, thank you, Clema and Sheelene, and all of the staff at the Women's Coalition of St. Croix.

I heard you guys back there.
So thank you so much.

And for all of you guys joining us today, I want to thank you for joining today's session.

Please make sure to visit the DVAP website.

And also at the end of our session you will receive a brief survey.

Please respond to it, let us know how we're doing.

And I hope for you guys to join us at a future event.

Thank you so much and have a great afternoon,
everybody.

>> Thank you.

Bye-bye.

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