

REVOLUTION

TEXAS ASSOCIATION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

TAASA Newsletter | Winter 2017

rev•o•lu•tion (rev'loo sh n) n. a sweeping and momentous change

CONTENTS

TAASA News

- 2 Executive Director Update
- 3 TAASA News

Policy & Advocacy

- 4 Working the System: A Basic Guide to Political Organizing
- 6 Capitol Day

Prevention & Social Justice

- 7 Unpacking Consent: A Sex-Positive, Social Justice, and Human Rights Approach

Education & Training

- 8 A Foot in Both Worlds: Engaging Law Enforcement & Advocates in Collaborative Conversations

Awareness & Outreach

- 10 Providing Equal-Opportunity Support and Healing
- 12 Campus Sexual Assault & the New Administration
- 14 The Courage to Resist & Rise: One Billion Rising

WORKING THE SYSTEM: A BASIC GUIDE TO POLITICAL ORGANIZING

TED RUTHERFORD

As we enter into the Texas' 85th Legislative Session, TAASA is supporting a number of bills on behalf of survivors of sexual violence in our state. As always, our goal is to ensure our state's laws make Texas safer and provide survivors with a less restrictive path to justice. We know the opposition, at times, will be fierce. While we are fully prepared and well positioned to fight for our legislative agenda, we will not be successful alone. We need Texas citizens who support our mission and agenda to personalize and amplify our efforts through some easy-to-do and highly effective political organizing strategies.

Don't let the term "political organizing" scare you. We are looking for Texans to let their voices be heard in their communities and down at the Capitol. Our elected officials face the monumental task of making legislative decisions on behalf of their constituents. They represent us, our values, and our opinions. What we have to do is make sure we share those things with them through the various channels we have available to us. As the old saying goes, "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." Political organizing is really about employing strategies that amplify your "squeak."

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 4]



Whether you are looking at 2017 with a sense of dread or a sense of optimism, what is clear is that our efforts to support survivors and prevent sexual abuse continue. The contentious presidential campaign season may now be behind us but the fallout of the often ugly and divisive rhetoric impacted many of the people we serve on a profound and personal level and as we move forward I am hopeful we can be rational, passionate and respectful communicators and advocates for our cause.

When TAASA signed on to host the National Sexual Assault Conference (NSAC) for 2017, perhaps we didn't fully appreciate the tight 10 month planning timeline, the concurrent statewide legislative session, our commitment to a full set of grant deliverables, and additional critical factors in that equation however our staff is up for the challenge. This is an unprecedented opportunity to welcome advocates, activists, and responders from across the country and allow us to showcase some of the amazing people and incredible work being done across our state. We are confident NSAC attendees will leave Dallas on June 9th feeling it was worth every dime and minute spent with their magnificent peers. Our goal is to energize and challenge every participant and dare I say give everyone a chance for a little well-earned fun as well.

Between now and June TAASA has a very full agenda. This legislative session is shaping up to be a handful! Already, we have seen Texas' first "bathroom bill" filed. The threat of sexual assault has been used as a rationale for this bill. It is critically important

that we do not allow the issue of sexual assault to be co-opted as the rationale for this law. Transgender adults and children are not assaulting women and children in restrooms. That is a disingenuous and dangerous fable. On the other hand, there is clear evidence showing that transgender individuals are at a dramatically higher risk for victimization. We need to be careful consumers of information and deliberate in our efforts to correct misinformation.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you in February at Advocacy Day (February 14th) the Leadership Conference (co-sponsored with TCFV) on February 15-16th in Austin. What an interesting and relevant line-up! We know your time is precious and work very hard to make every segment worth your while. That goal isn't just about conference schedules but about our work in general. Only through your honest feedback and active participation can we adequately meet your needs. Please know that we earnestly want you to communicate your opinions, dreams, and disappointments. We will occasionally fall short of your expectations and would appreciate the opportunity to do better, be better, and exceed your expectations.

Onward Together!
Annette



ABC

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE

The Executive Directors' Conference is just around the corner and we are looking forward to seeing all of the executive leadership folks there. The dates are February 15-16 at the AT&T Executive Education & Conference Center in Austin. If you haven't registered yet you can do so at: tcfv.org/trainings-conferences.

Some highlights of this year's conference are:

- New ED Educational Roundtable (designed for executive directors with 3 years or less tenure)
- Standalone Sexual Assault Programs (Sexual Assault Executive Directors/Chief Executive Officers)
- Board Governance (open registration)

Questions?

Visit www.tcfv.org/ed-conference or

- **Conference sessions:** Rita Flores at rflores@tcfv.org or 512-685-6304
- **Registration:** Crystal Tabony at ctabony@tcfv.org or 512-685-6311
- **Lodging:** Anoush Crane at acrane@anoushcrane.com
- **Capitol Day:** Esmeralda Flores at eflores@tcfv.org or 512-685-6366

2017 UPSAT CONFERENCE

The 2017 UPSAT Conference will be held on June 7th - June 9th, 2017 in Dallas once again. This year's UPSAT will look a little different than previous years. UPSAT will take place as part of the National Sexual Assault Conference that TAASA is hosting. There will be a track specifically designated and geared towards Campus Law Enforcement. In addition to that

track, UPSAT attendees will also have access to the other workshops as part of the National Conference.

We will still provide per diem, travel, and hotel expenses for all attendees, so stay tuned for more details after the holidays and the new year. Registration will open February 1st and there only 100 spots available. We look forward to seeing you there!

NEW STAFF



Courtney Clark is TAASA's new Member Liaison. Courtney is an Austinite who thrives on being involved in things going on in the city. Her background is in art and graphic design, with a focus on community engagement projects. In her free time, she enjoys going to the Boss Babe's ATX meet-up - a regular networking event for self-identifying women in the creative industry. Additionally, she is a part of the food blogger duo "Phat Foodies," in which they explore the local flavors of Austin's culinary experience. When she is not eating all the food, or working on a creative venture, she loves spending time with her

cats, going to concerts, art galleries, or whatever festival the city has thought up within the year, from the Ice Cream Festival to the Pecan Street Festival.

Courtney's goal at TAASA is to explore how to best help our members and to listen. She would like to partner with our members so that we can continue to improve communication between TAASA and aligned organizations and individual members. Her favorite question is "How can I help?," so don't hesitate to share your answers with her at cclark@taasa.org or give her a call at 512-474-7190 x37.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TAASA will hold our annual Membership Meeting on June 6th in Dallas, TX. TAASA members, both Individual and Organizational, will have the opportunity to learn about and vote on all resolutions put forth by our membership. This is your opportunity to guide our work, and we welcome your input.

To be eligible to vote, your membership must be current as of Friday, May 5th 2017. If you don't already know, take a moment to go to taasa.memberlodge.org and view your profile to see when your annual membership expires. If your membership expires prior to May 5th, 2017, you will need to renew in order to attend and participate in the Membership Meeting. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact our Member Liaison, Courtney Clark, at membership@taasa.org.

There are many ways to go about ensuring your voice is heard. Some are more effective than others, but doing something is better than doing nothing, and the more you do, the louder your “squeak” becomes and the harder it is to be ignored or dismissed. This article focuses on three tried and true tactics for getting the attention of the people that represent you. These tactics are taken directly (with permission) from our friends at the Texas Freedom Network.

You can find this information and more by visiting www.tfn.org.

Writing a Letter to the Editor

Studies show that Letters to the Editor sections are among the most-read parts of a newspaper. You can be sure that elected officials or their staff members read those sections regularly. In addition, letters to the editor are free and relatively easy to submit to newspaper editors. As a result, such letters can be effective ways of influencing public opinion (and the votes of policymakers who pay close attention to public opinion).

Don't be discouraged if your letter isn't published. Numerous letters on a particular topic can alert editors to the importance of a particular story and improve the chances that at least one of the letters on that topic will be published.

Writing Your Letter

- Follow the newspaper's guidelines for length. Ideally, keep your letter shorter than 150 words.
- Focus on one point and state it clearly at the beginning of your letter.
- Make sure your letter is timely. Try to tie your point to a recent news item, editorial, letter or event.
- If you are responding to someone's comments, don't waste your limited space by repeating them. Focus on your own point.
- Keep it simple. Avoid using complicated sentences and big words.
- Avoid personal attacks, offensive language and political name-calling (e.g., “far right,” “extremist”). Such language will turn off the average reader.

Submitting Your Letter

- Newspapers typically list on their editorial pages or Web sites the postal and email addresses for submitting letters to the editor. Submit your letter by email (preferred) or by fax. If neither is possible, send by mail as soon as possible to less-

en the time between possible publication and the event about which you are writing. If you don't find an address, you can call the newspaper's main number for the information.

- Include your contact information (daytime and home phone numbers, address and email, if available) so that the newspaper can verify that you sent the letter.

After Publication

- Clip your letter and the header of the page on which it is printed including at least the name of the newspaper and the date. Then photocopy the letter and header together on one page and fax your copies to your elected officials. Include a personal note indicating that you are a constituent.
- Let the staff of the Texas Freedom Network know that your letter has been published.

Contacting Your Representative

Contacting an elected official through correspondence or phone calls can be a very effective way of advocating for an issue or piece of legislation. You can find your representative by visiting www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/ and entering in your information.

Below are the most frequent types of contact that constituents have with their legislators, in order from most effective to least effective:

1. Handwritten letter or typed, original letter (on personal stationary)
2. Phone call
3. Fax
4. Form letter/fax
5. E-mail
6. Electronic petition

While personal communication is obviously best, any contact is worthwhile, even if you only have a minute to sign an electronic petition.

Guidelines for your correspondence or conversation

- Stick to one subject. Don't dilute your main point by discussing multiple issues.
- Be brief. Limit your note to one page.
- Include the specific bill number and title (if possible).
- Get personal. Describe how the legislation impacts you and your community.
- Be political. Explain the relevance of the issue to your hometown, district or state.
- Ask for action.



- Be courteous and appreciative. A written “thank you” when deserved gets attention with elected officials. Follow the issue after you write and send a letter of thanks if your legislator votes your way.

Visiting Your Representative

Meeting in person with an elected official (or his or her staff member) is a very effective way to convey a message about a specific issue. Below are some suggestions to consider when planning a visit to your official, whether in your district or at a state office in Austin.

Before the Meeting You Should

- Plan carefully. Be clear about what you want to achieve and remember that your representative probably splits time between district and state offices. If you cannot meet with your representative, identify the staff member you need to meet to achieve your purpose.
 - Make an appointment by contacting the representative’s office. Explain your purpose and why you want to meet. It is easier for staff members to arrange a meeting if they know what you wish to discuss and your relationship to the area or interests represented by the member.

At the Meeting You Should

- Be on time for your appointment, be patient and keep the meeting reasonably brief. Because of a legislator’s crowded schedule (particularly during a legislative session), it is not uncommon for him or her to be late or for a meeting to be interrupted.
- Be prepared. Whenever possible, bring to the meeting information and materials supporting your position. It is help-

ful to provide information and examples that demonstrate clearly the impact or benefits associated with a particular issue or piece of legislation.

- Stick to one subject. Don’t dilute your main point by discussing multiple issues.
- Be political. Officials want to represent the best interests of their district. Wherever possible, demonstrate the connection between what you are requesting and the interests of his or her constituents.
- Follow up the meeting with a written “thank you” that outlines the different points you covered during the meeting. If additional information and materials are requested, include this with your “thank you.”

An engaged and vocal constituency helps elected officials best represent the views of the people when crafting policy. Far too often individuals remain silent on things that matter – things like policies that have a direct impact on the lives of sexual assault survivors. When we are silent, we are leaving those decisions to chance. That typically ends in decisions that fall along party lines. We frequently say that sexual assault is NOT a partisan issue, it is a people issue. It happens to and has an impact on all people. An astonishing 6.3 million Texans have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime (and those are just the ones we know about). People that you know and love have seen and felt the devastation in the wake of sexual violence. Now those same loved ones and countless others need all of us to share our thoughts on the policies being considered at the Capitol over the next few months.

For more information about TAASA’s Legislative Agenda visit our website at taasa.org/about/public-policy.



2017 CAPITOL DAY & RALLY

hosted by the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault & the Texas Council on Family Violence

Tuesday, February 14 – 9:00am-1:00pm

Texas Capitol—South Steps, 1100 Congress Avenue, Austin, TX 78701

Take a stand with us as we call for FULL FUNDING of sexual assault programs and domestic violence shelters!

We invite you to join us in Austin for our biannual TAASA/TCFV Capitol Day and Rally for support services. As our lawmakers finalize the state budget, this is your chance to let them know the importance of funding crucial support services for survivors. Right now, victim services grants from the OAG are projected to be cut more than \$6.5 MILLION. We need to urge lawmakers to maintain level funding for our programs, and nothing makes more of a difference than YOUR senator and representative hearing directly from YOU.

On February 14, we'll kick things off on the south steps of the Capitol by hearing from key lawmakers and survivors. Then, we'll gather nearby for free lunch and a briefing with TAASA and TCFV staff on funding priorities. We'll also distribute materials that you can share with your representatives and, as always, we'll have folks on hand to walk you through the basics of advocating

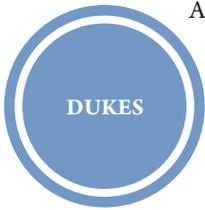
at the Capitol. Finally, we'll spend the afternoon meeting with legislators and staff about the issues that matter to survivors and the programs that serve them.

The facts:

- 6.3 million adult Texans—1/3 of Texans—have experienced rape or sexual abuse in their lifetimes. That's 2 in 5 women and 1 in 5 men.
- 413,000 adult Texans were sexually assaulted in the past year.
- Rape crisis centers in Texas served more than 104,000 survivors in 2016.
- Only about 9% of sexual assaults are reported to police.
- Tens of thousands of survivors fall through the cracks every year, even with current resources. Survivors cannot afford further funding cuts!

We hope you'll join us in Austin! Please contact us if you'd like more information, and consider registering online at www.tcfv.org/trainings-conferences/capitol-day/.

UNPACKING CONSENT: A SEX-POSITIVE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH



DUKES

As many in Texas are working to legally expand the definition of consent, we also strive to raise awareness that consent means something much deeper to our society. We acknowledge that the ability to give or not give consent is a social justice issue that may not fit nice-and-tidily into legal definitions. We find that most legal definitions under-validate the experiences of many survivors. Often legal definitions teach us that consent (or lack thereof) is determined by a verbal “yes or no” or if a person exerts physical force to reject someone. Clearly, definitions like this are short-sighted as they do not consider instances where there are threats, coercion, a culture of expectations and obligations, power disparities, or lack of access to health and reproductive autonomy.

And while laws attempt to set a legal standard for the crime of sexual assault or a legal definition of consent, they struggle to encompass the less concrete indications that consent is absent from an encounter. Do laws account for that uncomfortable feeling in the pit of one’s stomach or the ways fear sometimes causes us to freeze in the moment? Do laws understand our multiple cultural identities and socialization stories or how these affect our understanding of consent or accessibility to give or not give it? Do laws help us facilitate the creation of safe spaces to process those uncomfortable feelings with our partner(s)? The answer to all of these, of course, is no.

As Preventionists, we take a holistic approach to consent. We work to help society unpack the interpersonal dynamics at play when navigating sexual encounters and negotiating consent. We define consent through a social justice lens and strive toward a world where we all have equal opportunities to give consent (or not give it) and equal opportunities to explicitly communicate consent and any other thoughts, feelings, and concerns. We work toward a world where people see consent as a critical part of sexual health and reproductive rights, where we more readily discuss consent in a positive context, and consent is treated as something exciting and pleasurable -defined by the mutual butterflies in our stomachs. Consent as in “yasss”. Consent that understands kink. Consent that is loving. Consent that respects!

We also look toward a multitude of sex-positive and sexual health concepts and models to fortify our movement. Currently, the World Health Organization defines “sexual health” with a working definition. This working definition helps us acknowledge that as society furthers a trauma-informed dialogue on sex with a social justice lens, we will start to unravel some of the pains, shame, and trauma that we have woven into our sexual culture and work to address the root causes of sexual disparities and inequities. The current form of the WHO’s working definition of sexual health, taken from www.int/topics/sexual_health/en, is as follows:

“...a state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.”

Seeing sexual health through this lens captures that holistic approach. It gives a shout out to the sex-positive movement and sheds light on the Declaration of Sexual Rights. This Declaration was born as a proclamation by the World Association for Sexual Health at the 13th World Congress of Sexology in Valencia, Spain in 1997. Since 1997, the Declaration has been revised and ratified. While the 5th point in the Declaration of Sexual Rights states that all should have, “the right to be free from all forms of violence and coercion,” this monumental declaration has informed many movements across the globe - even outside the anti-violence movements. This 16-point Declaration is cited in LGBTQIA rights movements, reproductive rights, women’s rights, youth rights, as well as HIV treatment and prevention strategies.

Thus, as we strive as a state to expand our legal definition of consent and the consequences for violations, we hope to integrate and educate on sex positivity and see a society that embraced sexual rights as human rights.

For more information, please check out the World Association of Sexology, World Health Organization, CDC’s definition of sexual health, and the United Nations.

A Foot in Both Worlds: Engaging Law Enforcement & Advocates in Collaborative Conversations

JENNIFER THOMPSON

Law enforcement officers and advocates are sometimes described as being “on opposing teams” yet others might say they “ultimately have the same goal.” They can be seen as being on the same side or working against each other. Like much in life, the divide between law enforcement and advocates can be bridged with a little collaboration.

The professional roles and obligations to a survivor for a law enforcement officer will be different than those of an advocate. Law enforcement officials tend to focus specifically on a criminal event and advocates on the emotional well-being of the victim/survivor. There may even be times when their professional roles and obligations seem to be in direct conflict with each other, but understanding these roles before we begin is a first step towards making sure that we all put a survivor, who is entering the criminal justice system, first.

More and more we find that an emotionally supported survivor tends to remain engaged with the criminal justice system longer and is better able to provide information which results in stronger criminal cases. We all have a role to play in supporting survivors as they engage with the criminal justice system. It is about understanding how and when our individual and professional missions intersect and overlap. Understanding our roles and those of others with whom we may work while serving the needs of a survivor is a crucial first step in building collaborative partnerships.

To be effective in a collaborative partnership, we must start with clearly defined roles, boundaries, and expectations – never forgetting that a victim’s rights while engaging with the criminal justice system remain paramount. The good news is that the best training resource is already available to you at no cost! It starts very simply with your willingness to establish, develop, and invest in relationships and partnerships. Working collaboratively with other stakeholders is one of the single greatest ways that we can all work to restore the dignity of victims and hold offenders accountable.

The ultimate goal we all have is for there to be an effective criminal justice response. However, we may define “effective response” differently. Different doesn’t have to be bad. Different doesn’t mean

that one is right and the other is wrong. Different simply means that there are varied perspectives – and that is ok. In the end, what must be agreed upon by all involved is that the decisions for what is best for a specific survivor should be answered by the survivor.

Getting to the point of being comfortable with differing perspectives and differing professional obligations requires full-faith participation, understanding, engaging in brave conversations, and a willingness to sit with the awkwardness that can arise when not everyone sees things as we do. Some of the types of questions we suggest starting with when engaging colleagues in collaborative conversations are:

- What are the needs of your victims as you see them?
- What are the barriers you encounter in achieving your professional mission?
- What would make achieving that mission easier for you?
- Do you understand the professional obligations of others with whom you are working?
- Are roles clearly defined (mine and those of colleagues) and do we know what to expect of one another?

If we do not understand the rationale or professional/ethical obligations a colleague may have for their course of action, it will be difficult to make sense of the resulting tension that can develop when missions potentially compete. Tensions sometimes manifest when people have conflicting opinions on what is “best.” Undoubtedly there will be times when decisions are made that frustrate us all. Being able to answer for ourselves how and why decisions were made will be crucial to creating and maintaining effective collaborations and partnerships.

Making sure that a survivor is given the support, tools, and resources within the community that they need to begin healing serves the mission of everyone. For law enforcement officers, a victim who is supported will often mean a victim who is more able to engage with the long and arduous process of moving through the criminal justice system. And we must be mindful of falling into the trap of thinking that we can serve victims solely as a mechanism to keep them engaged with the criminal justice system. We must work together to define with our communities what an effective criminal justice response means. We hope that an effective criminal justice response will be one that is victim centered and allows for survivors



to be supported in making the choices which are best for them. Even if at times, some of those choices appear to counter our mission.

We understand that this may be new and even a little bit frightening for some but we'd also like to offer this piece of advice "just remember at the end of the day both cops and advocates are human beings." We are more similar than we are different. Sometimes we get tied up in the identity of our professional roles, but the bottom line is that we all want to deliver the most victim-centered response in the most trauma-informed way that we can. We believe that achieving this goal is possible when we come to see where our roles intersect within the criminal justice system, where they diverge, and how we can work collaboratively.

We at TAASA are hoping to foster these courageous and collaborative conversations by extending an invitation to our partners in the law

enforcement community to share your needs and suggestions of how we can help you. Also, be on the lookout in the coming months for an opportunity to sign up to receive quarterly updates containing information on a variety of resources, trainings, free webinars, etc. which we hope you will find useful in your work. Of course, we are always here and available to discuss training opportunities or be of assistance. For those of you who have law enforcement partners, we would encourage you to start that collaborative conversation and to share this news with them. Encourage them to reach out to us at jthompson@taasa.org or kfarbo@taasa.org (Kim Farbo - TAASA's Law Enforcement Training Specialist) and let us know how we can be of assistance. We know these conversations are ongoing and can be difficult, but we want you to know that we will be here. We look forward to hearing from you!

Providing Equal-Opportunity Support and Healing

LARAMIE
GORBETT

There are lots of questions when it comes to immigrant survivors of sexual assault. For instance, what happens when those who need services are the most afraid to access them? What happens when our outreach efforts to marginalized communities are over-shadowed by increasingly hateful rhetoric about people who are different from “us?” What happens when people who spew hateful rhetoric have a national platform? Sticks and stones break bones, but we know words are weapons too. When a person experiences violence at home, and in their community, they are in need of refuge. They need support and a safe place to heal, draw strength, and channel their inner peace and resilience. This process does not happen if they are too afraid or ashamed to seek help. It does not happen if they do not know that services exist or that services exist for people like “them.” What if asking for help means that not only could you be turned away, but also, the safety and security of you and your family were further jeopardized by the deportation process?

As advocates and leaders in the anti-violence field, we have certain expectations of our organizations and institutions within which we operate. We expect that everyone has equal access to services, that justice is blind, and that our laws and legal system are designed to help every survivor. We may have started out with these expectations, or we may have known from the very beginning that it does not work that way. We have come to know that justice looks different to every survivor and that we are working against institutional

oppression. We find that those most vulnerable to gender-based violence are also the ones least likely to seek help and justice through the “system.” Many of our clients experience secondary trauma as a result of trying to navigate the incongruous network of services and systems. As advocates, it is our job to prepare those we serve for this arduous journey and make sure that we remain victim/survivor-centered throughout this process. It is also our responsibility to educate ourselves and our staff about the realities of “others” and to make sure we are working from an anti-oppression perspective and that our organizational culture, policies, procedures, and leadership embody the intersectionality of this movement.

Below I have compiled examples of organizations that are leaders in the movement. They are doing work in their communities to provide outreach and services to the most vulnerable populations, and strive for intersectionality and equity from within their agencies. These are the change makers that inspire us.

Asian Women’s Shelter in San Francisco makes intersectionality a priority linking forms of oppression and violence. www.sfaws.org/home.aspx

Anti-immigrant sentiment and homophobia are rearing up in the forms of frightening policies and national attitudes every day. Conditions that contribute to intimate partner violence (IPV) are deepening and spreading. Asian & Pacific Islander (API) LGBTQ people, particularly those who are immigrants or refugees, already tend to be among the most invisible and underserved in our society.



AFSSA
ASIAN FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES OF AUSTIN

When experiencing violence, they have few, if any, places to turn. Their marginalization is compounded - not only as an immigrant or refugee but also from the existence of their LBQT relationship itself.

Since its creation in 1991, Asian Women's Shelter's Queer Asian Women and Transgender Support (QAWTS) Program, one of the first and only programs of its kind in the nation, has been at the forefront in addressing intimate partner violence in the LBQT community. In addition to providing comprehensive services for queer survivors of violence, QAWTS works on innovative programs and prevention strategies.

QAWTS utilizes a two-part prevention model. The overall goal is to shift socio-cultural norms from those that justify or allow violent behavior between intimate partners to new norms that promote non-violent, healthy relationships. API queer immigrant and refugee leadership are integrated throughout the program so that the program is by and for the community. The two program components include:

Chai Chats, which supports API LBQT community members to practice and promote healthy relationships through a 10-session cycle of community-centered training, dialogue, and skills-building. Each session focuses on concrete skills for modeling, nurturing, and promoting practices of healthy relationships. Chai Chats offers a safe space to explore the complex issues surrounding queer relationships. This year, due to popular demand, we expanded Chai Chats to the East Bay.

Homophobia Busters - Homophobia and transphobia are major barriers to seeking help and resources for queer relationship violence. Homophobia Busters trains and activates cohorts of anti-homophobia allies within API immigrant and refugee communities. These allies, many of whom are heterosexual, directly address homophobia and heterosexism in their social networks, reducing the isolation of API LBQT individuals and relationships, creating increased social support for the API LBQT community and reducing the incidence of IPV.

Refugee Services of Texas www.rstx.org/

Founded in 1978, Refugee Services of Texas (RST) is a social service agency dedicated to providing services to refugees and

other displaced persons fleeing persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, and/or political opinion and also to the communities that welcome them. Through the agency's home office in Dallas, RST provides services to hundreds of refugees, asylees, survivors of human trafficking and related vulnerable populations from over thirty different countries of origin each year via service centers located in Amarillo, Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth and Houston. Each of RST's five service centers has programs uniquely designed to assist refugees, asylees, survivors of human trafficking, and related vulnerable populations, helping them gain self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. Our programs are also tailored to meet the needs of the host communities as they welcome these newcomers.

Survivors of Trafficking Empowerment Program (STEP) RST Austin is the leading agency in Central Texas providing services to survivors of human trafficking. Working closely with law enforcement agencies and the Central Texas Coalition against Human Trafficking, RST provides 24-hour support to identified survivors. This support includes short- and long-term services to ensure the survivors' safety and long-term success.

Asian Family Support Services of Austin, or AFSSA (formerly SAHELI) is a nonprofit organization based in Austin, Texas, that provides assistance to Asian and other immigrant families dealing with domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking. Our mission is to promote abuse-free Asian communities through advocacy, support, awareness, and access to social services. AFSSA envisions healthy, abuse-free Asian communities.

AFSSA specifically addresses the cultural and language needs of Asian and other immigrant families affected by domestic violence. Our values and mission are reflected in our programs, which integrate culture and language specific direct services, educational programs, and community-based initiatives and advocacy.

These are just a few of the organizations working to make services available to immigrant survivors and hold space for a more culturally responsive conversation about our work. We will continue to fight for diversity of services, survivor leadership, and trauma-informed practices that are just the beginning to providing equal opportunity for support and healing.



CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT & THE NEW ADMINISTRATION

RICK GIPPRICH JR.

By the time this article will have been published and made its way to your mailbox, a new presidential administration will have taken over. For some, that comes with a sense of hope for better things in our country. For others, it brings fear and concern that programs funded by federal dollars to address social issues will disappear. For many advocates and survivors, one of those concerns is sexual assault on college campuses. Since the 2011 Dear Colleague letter was sent to colleges and universities across the country, significant efforts have been made to address and prevent sexual violence. While some campuses clearly have a lot of work to do still, others have paved the way and served as models for how the response should and could look. So, what happens next? What will this administration do? Will they continue and enhance the work that's already been done? Or will they dismantle the current system?

None of us know what the new administration will do when it comes to keeping entities like the Office on Civil Rights (OCR) which, as you may already know, is responsible for investigating the mishandling of sexual assault reports on college campuses across the country. Although we've gotten glimpses from recent confirmation hearings, it is still too early to tell what will happen.

That said, it's important to remain hopeful about the progress over the past ten years, and diligent about using our role as advocates to ensure that no survivor gets left behind. Now more than ever is a time for us to strengthen our ties with those working towards the same goal.

What will happen to funding and programs?

Is it fair to wonder if the future of campus sexual assault initiatives, grant funding for investigations and victim response and prevention, and Title IX regulations could potentially be threatened? The answer is simple. Yes.



Remember that the previous administration looked to Title IX regulations as a way to enforce compliance with federal law, and hold campuses accountable for how they respond when a sexual assault complaint is filed. This course of action was a direct result of hearing the stories of many students who experienced sexual violence and reported that their campus mistreated them, mishandled their report, or simply did nothing about it. Those stories are what helped shape new policies, compliance, and response guidelines, and enacted new changes in the Campus SaVE Act and the Violence Against Women Act. The question remains as to whether or not new leadership will continue to uphold these policies or gut them completely. And yes, that question also applies to the grant funding that helps campuses meet current regulations. A 2017 budget could see drastic cuts to services for survivors. It will be tough for them to do without a fight, but the threat and the potential are there.

So, what happens next and what can I do?

With the anticipation and threat of a complete defunding of programs and entities, like the OCR, being shut down, it remains now more than ever, a time for advocates and survivors to continue being vocal about what is needed to keep our students safe and our campuses accountable. Meet with your campus administration and Title IX offices. Remind them of the importance of policies that address response and prevention. Engage in conversations about what future efforts would look like should current guidelines and regulations be weakened or eliminated. Encourage them not to roll back or turn away from the progress they've made, but continue along the path to setting an example for their students, and the community in which their campus lives and thrives.

To join the conversation or to learn more about efforts being made to protect Title IX, go to www.endrapeoncampus.org, or Google #DearBetsy.



THE COURAGE TO RESIST & RISE: ONE BILLION RISING

When we resist, we rise. When we rise, we resist. We resist the urge to get caught up in the hate, the greed the corruption and the violence. We rise above poverty, exploitation, and oppression. How do we do this? We do this every time we resist the false notion that we “asked for it” or “because you are a girl” or that “boys will be boys.” We resist the idea that we are less, even if we have heard that lie our entire lives. We resist that idea that we are less because of who we are, what we have, where we come from, the language we speak, the religion we practice, and who we love. We resist the urge to return the violence that has been done to us by the people and institutions that are supposed to protect us. We resist the notion that love is pain. We rise above the stereotypes, the labels, and the prejudice. We resist by staying alive to fight one more day.

Gender-based violence has impacted every single one of us, and we all have personal resistance strategy. Resistance strategies that inspire, sustain, and galvanize us to continue the work that is so desperately needed. We rise above the statistics, the police reports, and the obituaries. We resist, we rise, and we thrive against the odds.

One of the largest displays of public resistance of gender-based violence is the One Billion Rising campaign that takes place all around the world and in a community near you. One Billion Rising (OBR) is the largest

demonstration and call to action to end gender-based violence in recorded history. The first demonstration was on Valentine’s Day 2012. The inspiration for this event was the appalling statistic that 1 in 3 women will be victims of gender-based violence at some time in her life. Now think about the fact that there are around 7 billion people in the world. If you do the math, this adds up to more than one billion women and girls that have experienced rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and so on. People from all over the world were called upon to express their outrage in defiance of the injustices women suffer, and show their solidarity for survivors everywhere.

On February 14th 2013, V-Day’s 15th Anniversary, I had the pleasure of standing on the steps of the Texas Capitol and inviting the crowd of activists, students, advocates, survivors, and change-makers to rise against violence. Rallies across the country and around the world invited one billion women, and those who love them, to demand an end to this violence.

One Billion Rising was created by V-Day - a global activist movement to end violence against women and girls while raising funds and awareness through benefit productions of Eve Ensler’s award-winning play “The Vagina Monologues” and other dramatic works. Thousands of V-Day



1 BILLION RISING

REVOLUTION

SOLIDARITY AGAINST EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN

benefit events are organized by volunteer activists in the U.S. and around the world. When I first performed in the Vagina Monologues in Lubbock, TX, in the spring of 2002, I had no idea what an impact it would have on me or my life as an advocate and activist. Fifteen years and thirteen V-Day productions later, I know that these are more than plays. The performances are resistance through art. They are a vehicle for a movement that educates millions of people about the reality of gender-based violence; a reality that too many of us know from first-hand experience. These plays give us a dialogue, a space to start conversations, and change consciousness. V-Day plays provide a place for community, a platform for healing, and strength to resist the monsters of misogyny that try and consume us. To date, the V-Day movement has raised over \$100 million, developed international educational media and PSA campaigns, re-opened shelters, and funded tens of thousands of community-based anti-violence programs and shelters in Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Kenya, South Dakota, Egypt and Iraq. Over 300 million people have seen a V-Day benefit event in their community.

On 14 February 2014, One Billion Rising for Justice spotlighted the issue of justice for all survivors of gender violence. The campaign focused on unequal access to justice and systematic violence. We brought to light the intersectionality of poverty, racism, war, and the destruction of the environment and its resources. We spoke out on the connection of capi-

SOAPBOX is an outlet for TAASA members to express their opinions on current events, social justice issues, and the national and local political climate. The views expressed in SOAPBOX do not necessarily reflect the opinions of TAASA, our board, members or affiliated agencies.

talism, imperialism, and patriarchy to gender-based violence.

In 2015, One Billion Rising “Revolution” was an escalation of the demand for justice. Millions of activists in over 200 countries gathered to rise for revolution. Our mission was to shift the paradigm by demanding accountability, justice, and systematic change for all survivors. In 2016, the theme of Revolution continued with a call for marginalized women to move from the margin to the center of the movement to inspire national and international momentum and awareness of all women’s struggles.

On February 14th, 2017, we are rising in solidarity against the exploitation of all women. There is a new series, called “Rising Solidarity.” This edition highlights stories of inspiring activists from around the world as they share their stories of resistance and acts of true solidarity. “Rising Solidarity” provides context for much-needed intersectionality by harnessing a deeper understanding of why it is imperative that we all join in the battle against systems of oppression and exploitation. Will you join? Will you share your story of resistance and resiliency? We need you. It takes all of us to rise together to overcome violence, and it just might change your life. To learn more or get involved in One Billion Rising, V-Day, and the global movement to end violence against women and girls, visit www.vday.org or www.onebillionrising.org/



LARAMIE
GORBETT





6200 La Calma, Suite 110
 Austin, Texas 78752
 www.taasa.org (512) 474-7190

Mission Statement: The Texas Association Against Sexual Assault is committed to ending sexual violence in Texas through education, prevention and advocacy. In the meantime, we desire to support survivors on their paths to hope, healing and justice. TAASA is the voice of the sexual assault movement in Texas. We are a unifying force bringing together parties involved in and affected by sexual assault as a catalyst for change.

TAASA BOARD

President Lori Bunton <i>Abilene</i>	Immediate Past President Stephanie Schulte <i>El Paso</i>	Treasurer Brandi Reed <i>Amarillo</i>	Region A Norma Luginbyhl <i>Borger</i>	Region C Selma Johnson <i>Weatherford</i>	Region E Cesar M. Campa <i>El Paso</i>	At Large Cynthia Catchings <i>McAllen</i>	At Large Haleh Cochran <i>Frisco</i>
President-Elect Nicole Martinez-Minton <i>Austin</i>	Secretary Kim Stark <i>Lubbock</i>	SANE Representative Donna Neel <i>Lubbock</i>	Region B Jennifer Tristan <i>San Antonio</i>	Region D Charmin White <i>Huntsville</i>	Region F Gloria O'Campo <i>Brownsville</i>	At Large Sayama Turner <i>San Antonio</i>	At Large Karla Payne <i>San Angelo</i>

TAASA STAFF

Executive Director Annette Burrhus-Clay	Non-Profit Leadership Specialist Christina Coultas	Web Content Specialist Alyssa Foegelle	Graphic Designer Michael J Harrell	Prevention Program Director Tim Love	Human Trafficking Specialist Alexander Perotti
Accounting Specialist Angelica Aguero	Membership Liaison Courtney Clark	IT Specialist Shelby Foegelle	Non-Profit Financial Specialist Mark Hernandez	Primary Prevention Specialist Denise Loya	Evaluation Manager Maya Pilgrim
Systems Change Advocate D'an Anders	Primary Prevention Specialist Dukes	Prisoner Advocate Erica Gammill	Training Program Director Wende Hilsenrod	Deputy Director Rose Luna	Communications Program Director Ted Rutherford
Staff Attorney Elizabeth Boyce	Men's Engagement Specialist Emiliano Diaz de Leon	Regional Support Program Director/ Campus Sexual Assault Specialist Rick Gipprich, Jr.	Policy Analyst Elia Inglis	Chief Operations Officer Elizabeth Morris	Program Assistant Dina Yup
Regional Support Specialist Shelli Collins	Law Enforcement Training Specialist Kim Farbo	Human Trafficking Specialist Laramie Gorbett	Director of Public Policy/ General Counsel Christopher Kaiser	Events Manager Cecilia Perkins	