

REACH *Report*

REFUGE, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, CHANGE

VOL. 5, ISSUE 1 • SPRING 2009

Speaking for REACH, Speaking for Oneself *Speakers' Bureau Brings the Voices of Survivors to Our Communities*

REACH is excited to present the Survivor Speakers' Bureau, a program that brings survivor speakers to community-based organizations and schools in MetroWest Boston. The Speakers' Bureau was created in early 2007 as a direct response to inquiries from survivors seeking to describe and share their personal stories. For many years, REACH sought a way to train and support survivors wanting to speak publicly about their experiences not only with domestic violence, but with the services REACH provided along their journeys. After a year of preparation and curriculum development, the first participants in the Survivor Speakers' Bureau were trained in the Spring and Fall of 2007. Seven ongoing participants have spoken publicly in the past six months about domestic violence and how REACH is helpful to them and their families. Two new trainings will take place this coming Spring and Fall.

The Survivor Speakers' Bureau twelve-hour training combines writing prompts, public speaking preparation, and personal exploration in a supportive environment. Moreover, the group meets monthly for ongoing supervision, writing development, and training. The goal of the Survivor Speakers' Bureau is to enable participants to develop written pieces that can be spoken publicly while maintaining their own emotional safety. The program is coordinated by Joanne

Patterson, Outreach & Education Coordinator, and Maureen Ferdinand, Community Advocate. REACH is also grateful to have a professional writing coach and editor, Toni Amato, to help with this undertaking. One of the program

coordinators accompanies the

speaker to each engagement, and makes follow-

up contact within a day of the

engagement to ensure the speaker is

supported throughout the process. Feed-

back we have received indicates that this

program is beneficial both to REACH as an

organization and to the speakers involved.

Having speakers enhances community ed-

ucation, as well as empowers participants

to discover talents for writing and speak-

ing that have been dormant for years! One

participant commented, "this has given

me a safe and caring environment to look

at myself and share my experiences."

One of the objectives of the program is

to raise awareness of domestic violence in

MetroWest Boston by providing public

speaking and education to youth and

adult audiences. To date, our trained

speakers have presented at high schools

and colleges, hospitals, REACH's annual

meeting and fundraisers, on film and at

public vigils. We continue to seek oppor-

tunities for speakers to share their experi-

ences and to educate the community on

domestic and relationship violence. Please

consider hosting a house party for REACH

or sharing your contacts for community

education presentations by contacting

Joanne Patterson at 781-891-0724 x 105

or jo@reachma.org.

"I Lived in a Gilded Cage"

An excerpt from one speaker's story

I could tell you about all the little things he did, one by one. Little things at first, nothing to really get upset or make a fuss about, just laying the groundwork. Slowly destroying my self-esteem and calling into question everything I'd ever done; slowly eroding my confidence while gradually making it more and more difficult for me to leave. I was a trusting person. I would never have dreamed that while I was fighting off all the little branches in my path, I was being led deep into the dark, dark forest by the ogre I thought was a prince...

...When I was still married, I'd have friends or acquaintances come over and people would look around and tell me how lucky I was. How nice it must be to live in such a beautiful home, with two beautiful children, married to a dashing Englishman. I'd smile. What could I say? Would they even believe me? After I left him, I found a way to describe my life. I lived in a gilded cage. But, the door is open and I've flown out. I am free to be me. I am not a victim. I am a survivor.

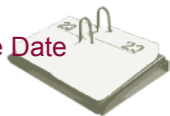
*I could tell you about all the little things he did,
...slowly eroding my confidence
while gradually making it more and more difficult for me to leave.*

HOTLINE: 800.899.4000

www.reachma.org

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Save the Date



April 13
Jane Doe Inc.'s Legislative Advocacy Day, Massachusetts State House

June 1
REACH Beyond Domestic Violence's Annual Meeting

October
Domestic Violence Awareness Month

November 5
6th Annual REACH for the Stars... Transform a Life Artist and Celebrity Plate Auction

November 7
6th Annual PAVE Youth Leadership Summit

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Letter from the Executive Director

Laura R. Van Zandt



As you can imagine, in these economic times, the need for shelter and services is greater than ever. Jobs are being lost, benefits are being cut, and friends and family are less able to offer support

or assistance to families struggling with fear and violence. Change takes courage. And it needs a little help along the way. Reaching beyond domestic violence is a process – a process that is happening every day.

We hope that you will take the time to read through this issue of the REACH Report. On page one, we have exciting news about the Survivor Speakers' Bureau program. With written and spoken words, survivors share their stories to help raise awareness about domestic violence. We hope that you will consider inviting a speaker to your church, synagogue or mosque. Organize an event at your office or school. Host a house party for REACH and engage your friends and neighbors in the work to end domestic violence.

We are so grateful that we continue to receive wonderfully generous gifts to The Campaign to REACH Beyond Domestic Violence. With several gifts at the end of last year we are getting very close to our \$2.5 million goal. There is still time to help us close the Campaign! Wonderful naming opportunities are available. Read about the "Go Getters" who will help us furnish our new shelter – perhaps you would like to join in?

There are so many ways to get involved. Sign up for volunteer training – we need caring, fun people to provide childcare during support groups. Encourage your kid's school to invite our Peers Against Violence programming into your community. Become a holiday gift sponsor. Your efforts, big and small, are all part of this work.

Together we will reach beyond domestic violence.



Leadership Giving Circle Program

For nearly 30 years, REACH Beyond Domestic Violence has played an important role in changing lives of people in our community. Last year we established new leadership giving circles to recognize donations made within a fiscal year of \$1,000 or more. We need to continue to provide excellent services to survivors of domestic violence and critical outreach and education to the community-at-large to help break the cycle of violence. Please help us by joining one of our giving circles.

Circle of Refuge

Gifts of \$1,000-\$2,499

Circle of Education

Gifts of \$2,500-\$4,999

Circle of Advocacy

Gifts of \$5,000-\$9,999

Circle of Change

Gifts of \$10,000+

For more information please contact Brianna Nadelberg, Director of Development at 781.891.0724 ext. 109 or brianna@reachma.org.

Come Inside!



An update on *The Campaign to REACH Beyond Domestic Violence*

We launched a \$2.5 million capital campaign to double our capacity to shelter families and to enhance our programs for survivors of domestic violence. The plans for the new shelter are so thoughtful – designed for maximizing comfort, safety and durability for many families of different sizes and capacities. Over the last six months, we have been working hard to finalize the specifications for the shelter, and we are pleased to report that *we recently received our building permit.*

As we move into Phase II of this important campaign, we are excited to think about the inside of the shelter. At the beginning of this process, we were so pleased to connect with Senofer Mendoza who has provided her services pro bono. A partner in Mendoza Designs, a firm specializing in interiors, architecture and graphic design, Senofer worked with REACH staff to develop a vision for the interior of the new house.

Now we are ready to start the “go-getting” process. Go-Getters are enthusiastic people who will help secure the finishes, furnishings and appliances for the new shelter by going and getting! We also need people and groups to “sponsor” rooms. Sponsoring a room is different than naming one. Sponsors receive a wish-list and color palate (along with some interior design consultation) and they do the shopping.

If you, your family or friends, your church or temple, your book club or class room would be interested in becoming a “getter,” let us know! Feel free to contact Laura Van Zandt or Brianna Nadelberg, our Director of Development, directly. They would be happy to meet with people who want to join us in this work to create safe spaces and healthy communities.



Senofer Mendoza of Mendoza Designs and Laura Van Zandt, REACH's Executive Director, review plans for the new house.

What does it mean to be a Go Getter?

If you like to shop – or maybe you like to encourage others to shop – then this is an opportunity for you to help us make connections to secure in-kind donations for the new house. Specifically, we are looking for:

- *Moving and storage companies* to help us store the donations until the house is ready to move everything in.
- *Building materials suppliers* for lumber and windows. You name it – we need it!
- *Furniture stores* to help furnish bedrooms, living spaces, offices and meeting rooms.
- *Appliance stores* to help equip two kitchens and several laundries.
- *Office supplies* for two offices with four advocates, and residents working on lots of housing applications! We need paper, pens, staplers and ink for printers.
- *Fence retailers* to enhance and enclose the private yard.
- *Security system retailer* to ensure everyone's safety.
- *Décor:* We are thrilled to have two very generous and talented artists who will create murals for the children's play-spaces. Other artwork for the house would be wonderful!

REACH's Rising Star

On November 13, 2008, Joanne Patterson, REACH's Outreach and Education Coordinator was honored with the Germaine Lawrence Rising Star Award. Attorney General Martha Coakley presented the award to Joanne at the 7th Annual Women of Excellence Breakfast which recognizes young women in the early stages of their careers who have displayed excellence in leadership and accomplishment in the social service field. Joanne was selected from among her peers for her exemplary leadership skills and commitment to improving the lives of young women.

In her 4 ½ years at REACH, first as a social work intern and now a member of the senior team, Joanne has worked tirelessly to promote prevention and education to reduce the impact of domestic violence in the community. Joanne founded Peers Against Violence (PAVE), a dating abuse prevention program that has engaged more than 5,000 Massachusetts teenagers through

community based training and an annual leadership summit. She is an active member of several Domestic Violence Coalitions, including the GLBT Domestic Violence Coalition, and is Co-Chair of the Jane Doe Inc. Education & Training Group. Joanne continues to be an instrumental figure in providing prevention education across diverse communities on both the state and national level. Joanne holds a MPH and a MSW from Boston University. REACH congratulates Joanne on her many accomplishments.



REACH's Joanne Patterson receives award from Attorney General Martha Coakley

5th
ANNUAL

REACH *for the Stars... Transform a Life*

Raises More Than \$320,000 for REACH Programs and Services

Our deepest thanks to all who helped make our 5th annual *REACH for the Stars... Transform a Life* Artist and Celebrity Plate Auction our most successful fundraiser to date! On October 30, 2008, with more than 350 people in attendance,

we nearly reached maximum capacity in the Waltham Westin's grand ballroom! Some of our high-profile celebrity plate designers included Bruce Willis, David Ortiz, Keith Lockhart, and sculptor Nancy Schön.



Auctioneer Paul Zekos engages the crowd while Troup and Alex Parkinson, with Mark Flaherty, enjoy the show.



REACH Board Member Rep. Peter Koutoujian, First Lady Diane Patrick and REACH Executive Director Laura Van Zandt



Committee member Beezie Childs encourages the audience to bid on a plate designed by Tiffany and David "Big Papi" Ortiz.



REACH for the Stars event co-chairs Vin Miles, Heather Campbell, and Chris and David Konys.



Plate artists Nancy Schön and Emily Corbató.

Photos by Helene Norton-Russell.



Marie McConnell, McConnell Design and Marilyn Tannenbaum, Data Associates.



Len and Joan Shulman, REACH Board Member Joanne Segal and husband Bill, and Alice Schwartz enjoying the evening.



REACH Board Members Claire Bean, Barry Guryan, Sandra King and MBaye NDiaye.

Mark your calendars! Our REACH for the Stars committee is already hard at work for this year's event, which will take place on November 5, 2009 at the Waltham Westin Hotel. You can help: If you would like to become a member of the Stars committee, donate an auction item, or learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Courtney Opalka, Development and Special Events Coordinator, at courtney@reachma.org or 781-891-0724 ext. 104.



REACH supporters Amy Etherington and Patricia O'Connor at the silent auction.



Rachel Fieber, Nancy Foster, Jim Foster, REACH Board Member Audrey Foster, and Deborah Knight.

Participants Celebrate PAVE[2008]

5th Annual PAVE Youth Leadership Summit a Success

On November 1, 2008, over 85 youth and adults representing 14 schools and organizations from across the Commonwealth gathered at Simmons College for PAVE[2008]: Peers Against Violence. The annual leadership summit is part of REACH's teen dating violence prevention program and is designed for youth ages 14-18 who are committed to preventing dating violence in their communities.

REACH hosted the first PAVE youth leadership summit in April 2005. The event grew from REACH's commitment to expand our teen dating violence prevention program and provide professional training to teen leadership groups. Since its inception, the event has reached over 320 Massachusetts teens and youth workers, serving over 30 schools and organizations in the state.



Vincent Vue of LUK Inc. listens to the morning speaker

ity building, including information and skills-building, is essential for health promotion efforts to prevent violence. PAVE[2008] provided a day of free interactive workshops led by youth and adults on youth violence prevention, peer engagement, media literacy, and art activism. Students praised the day, noting that

With 2007 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey data indicating that 1 in 10 high school students have been physically or sexually assaulted by a date, and that similar rates of teens have experienced or witnessed family violence, domestic and dating violence is a pervasive issue that is negatively effecting our state's youth.

Public health practice recommends that individual and group capac-

the workshops and discussions were "very helpful" and "educational."

This year, REACH also debuted the new Peers Against Violence

marketing campaign: Do You Ostrichsize? Participating students received a community action toolkit and PAVE campaign materials, including "I don't Ostrichsize" stickers, water bottles, carabineers, and flash drives. Additionally, PAVE[net], REACH's new teen dating violence prevention website (reachma.org/pavenet) and Facebook page were introduced. REACH plans to use these tools to encourage thoughtful social networking and connect youth leadership groups across the state.

As REACH expands our Peers Against Violence program, delivering school and community-based health education classes through PAVE[education], fostering social networking with PAVE[net], and encouraging healing for teen survivors through our PAVE[support] school-based support group program, we commit to continuing our PAVE[summit]. We hope that you and your peer leadership group join us for PAVE[2009], November 7th at Simmons College.

For more information on PAVE[2009] and other Peers Against Violence programs, please contact our Outreach & Education Coordinator at 781.891.0724 x105 or jo@reachma.org.

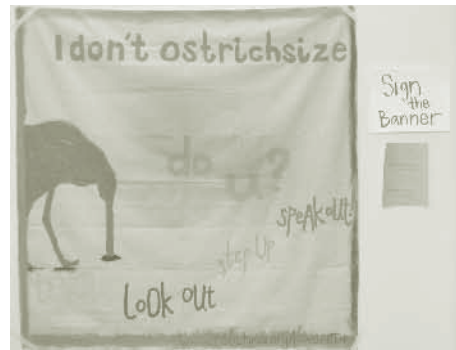
REACH thanks the following organizations for their support of PAVE[2008]:

Our hosts Simmons Institute for Leadership and Change with help from Simmons' Betsy's Friends Peer Education Program

Our sponsors Tufts Medical Plan and Target

Our photographer Jessamyn Mayher

Our volunteers Boston College



Feedback from youth and adult attendees:

So much fun!

This program is amazing!!

Good instructors

Very upbeat and informative

This was so fun and educational!

**Loved conference,
will attend next year,
THANK YOU**

**Thank you all
for putting this together AGAIN!**

**VERY
educational**

Excellent Summit!

I loved it!

Holiday Gift Program Supports Nearly 200 Families

Our annual Holiday Gift Program matches sponsors from the community with families who are utilizing REACH services, whether through our emergency shelter, individual advocacy or support group program. Thanks to the generosity of our

community, this year 199 families' holiday wishes were fulfilled!

We are always amazed, not only at the number of families we are able to support through the holiday time, but at the care and attention to detail that is given to each family member. REACH staff members encourage adult participants to create a specific and detailed wish list for themselves and their children. Items have included twinsize Dora the Explorer sheets and



Gifts for 199 families await pick up.

comforter, solid blue flannel pajamas with buttons, and a hospital or police station Lego set. The details might seem trivial to some, but for many people this is one of the few times that their wishes have been taken into consideration and fulfilled. We are so grateful that together this year, even during tough economic times, that we were able to grant so many wishes.

At our annual *REACH for the Stars* fundraiser, one woman described the impact the Holiday Gift Program had on her.

"I had been urged by a REACH advocate to write out a Christmas list. I reluctantly fell for the line, 'do it for the children.' I was encouraged to be specific and detailed. So despite my shame, I wrote down on what page my daughter had circled her gifts on the Toys 'R' Us catalog. I even wrote down hard to find specialty items for my child with complex medical needs. Therapy toys you could only get on the internet. Only then did I write my own detailed list. It felt frivolous and scary. Frivolous because I lived in scarcity, where I could not justify the purchase of slippers and toys or sweetly scented candles. Scary because I feared the judgment of others.

Despite all these imaginary charges against me, my children and I did receive gifts. All requested items from our wish list had been provided. All of them.

...The final straw was being handed wrapping paper and tape. This crushed me. How attentive. I just crumbled. I understand now why I burst into tears when I picked up the gifts. They were picked with thought and care. And you hadn't even known me. Had you known I have gone most of my life not getting my needs met? Did you know I needed to be reassured that I mattered? Did you know I was holding my breath? Cringing and waiting. Waiting to receive the shame and hurtful proclamations. And instead I received generosity. ...These gifts far outweigh their monetary value. They give me the sense that people do care, that I am important, that people value other people. That I may be valued."

— Survivor, mother of 2

Childcare Volunteers Needed

Throughout the year, REACH offers a variety of support groups to our participants. Currently, we are in need of childcare volunteers to help support these important groups. Childcare volunteers have a unique opportunity to mentor a child by providing a safe, fun environment in which they can play and learn, while their mothers attend a weekly support group. The groups take place on weekday late afternoons/evenings in multiple communities including Burlington, Newton and Waltham, and we provide supportive childcare to children from 9 months to 12 years old.

All childcare volunteers are required to complete a mini-domestic violence training.

Please consider making a commitment in 2009 to end domestic violence by volunteering to support survivors and their children. You can make an impact in the lives of survivors and the movement to end domestic violence.

For more information on how you can donate your time and skills, please contact Joanne Patterson, Outreach & Education Coordinator at 781.891.0724 ext. 105 or jo@reachma.org.

As part of the Holiday Gift Program, REACH hosts a party for families. There are crafts for the kids, a visit from Santa and a big buffet dinner with lots of wonderful food and drinks. REACH thanks all of the committee volunteers and companies who helped make the dinner possible including:

*Dunkin Donuts, Watertown
Hannaford Supermarket,
Waltham
Icing on the Cake, Newton
Kinnealy Quality Meats, Milton
Omni Foods, Weston
Roche Bros., Wellesley
Russo's, Watertown
Shaw's Supermarket, Waltham
Star Market, Waltham
Star Market, Wellesley
Stop & Shop, Watertown
Trader Joe's, West Newton
Whole Foods, Wellesley*



Committee volunteers Joan Heilbronner and Amy Favat prepare the table for dinner.

The following are excerpts from survivors' personal stories. The individuals who wrote these stories are participating in REACH's Survivors Speakers' Bureau. Turn to page one to read more about this innovative new program.

"I acknowledge that success is not an end-point, rather a daily honest

inventory of my attempts to live life well, to the benefit of everyone who

"Reach out for help and

connects to me, and therefore to myself."

you will be surprised and

comforted at what you will

find in the kind hands of

"Listen to them. Give them a safe place to speak and be heard.

people who care."

Don't tell them, "we can't talk about that." They need to be heard,

for themselves and for all those wounded out there, remembering.

Few of us escape unscathed. **Listen."**

Your Dollars at Work: 2008 in Review

Thanks to your continued support, REACH was able to once again assist thousands of people in our communities last year. Specifically, we:

- provided nearly 3,000 nights of safety to 48 adults and children.
- answered more than 2,500 hotline calls.
- provided individualized play therapy to 40 children and adolescents.
- offered support groups and individual advocacy (in English and Spanish) to more than 300 survivors.
- supported nearly 400 individuals through our partnership with the Burlington, Billerica and Lexington Police Departments.
- provided legal advocacy services to 250 people.
- provided presentations to over 2,500 youth and adults in community and classroom-based settings.



REACH
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