

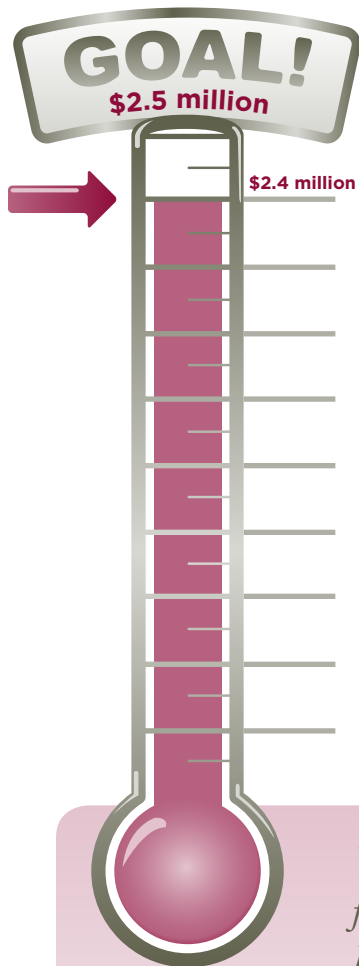
REACH *Report*

REFUGE, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, CHANGE

VOL. 6, ISSUE 1 • SPRING 2010

We're in the Home Stretch!

Help us raise the remaining \$100,000 to meet our \$2.5 million goal



It has been five years since REACH embarked on a \$2.5 million capital campaign, for the purposes of doubling our shelter capacity, expanding our community advocacy services, and ensuring our long term viability through an endowment that would also help sustain our Independence Fund for survivors.

Construction on our new shelter is now well underway—the addition is built, with stairs that reach from the basement to the third floor. We have a new roof and new windows, making this house much more efficient than our current shelter. Each of the eight bedrooms is taking shape, including a bedroom and bathroom that are handicapped accessible. There is a lovely play space adjoining the first floor kitchen that has lots of light and space for kids to play while dinner is prepared. And a spacious dining room where families can sit and eat that meal—together. We can see the

community rooms that will offer quiet spaces for job and house searches, reading and crafts, groups and meetings. What was once a cramped third floor is now bright and roomy, with space for three families to feel safe and comfortable.

We are thrilled to report that we are now within \$100,000 of reaching our goal! We are in the home stretch of the Campaign and we would be honored if *you* would help us make it to the finish line. Your gift will have a lasting impact—it will help ensure that even in these economic times, no one is forced to stay with an abusive partner because they have no place to go. There are still naming opportunities available, so feel free to contact Brianna Nadelberg, Director of Development at 781.891.0724 ext. 109 for more information or to discuss any aspect of the Campaign.

We are so grateful for everyone's continued support. Please consider joining us today with a gift to *The Campaign to REACH Beyond Domestic Violence* and participate in this important chapter in the life of REACH.

There are still many ways you can help furnish our shelter and make this new house a warm and inviting home. Please consider underwriting one of the following remaining spaces:

Help create a fully-stocked playroom with age-appropriate toys, games and books. This space borders the first floor kitchen, so will be used throughout the day. (\$6,000 value)

Underwrite the purchase of a new deep freezer to help store frozen goods that we obtain through the Greater Boston Food Bank and help families create their own family meals. (\$800 value)

Furnish the remaining bedroom in the house. Help to create a comforting sanctuary for a family while they are getting back on their feet. (\$1,500 value)

Outfit our new computer room, which will be designed for job hunting, housing searches, and homework. (\$5,000 value)



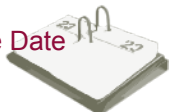
For more information about making one of these rooms or another space in the house a reality, please contact Kathy Spellman, our Go Getter Chair at kyka@comcast.net.

HOTLINE: 800.899.4000

www.reachma.org

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Save the Date



April 20

Jane Doe Inc. Legislative Advocacy Day, Massachusetts State House

June 15

REACH Beyond Domestic Violence Annual Meeting

October

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

November 4

7th Annual REACH for the Stars... Transform a Life Artist and Celebrity Plate Auction

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- Laura R. Van Zandt, *Executive Director*

Letter from the Executive Director

Laura R. Van Zandt



As this newsletter was coming together, REACH joined Jane Doe and other Massachusetts agencies, along with legislators, DAs, police, broadcasters, advocates, heads of state agencies—and the Lieutenant Governor too—in observing White Ribbon Day 2010. In an auditorium at the State House, men and boys stood up and sat down, spoke out and listened. They were there to call for change. The White Ribbon pledge is part of an international campaign to end violence against women. The pledge asks men and boys to be part of the solution to ending violence against women. As an agency providing services to all survivors, we know that victims can be male and perpetrators can be female. But we also recognize that for too long, we have looked to women to lead the domestic violence movement. The White Ribbon Campaign recognizes that men must be part of this work—just as women must be part of it. We all have a role to play.

At REACH, men are Board members, staff and volunteers. Regardless of gender, those involved with REACH come together to demonstrate their commitment to supporting healthy relationships. They volunteer in the shelter and provide a safe place for survivors—adults and kids—to live and heal. They volunteer as support group facilitators, leading groups through educational and challenging conversations as they talk about abuse and safety. They volunteer in courts where they offer some solace, important information and referrals

to victims seeking protection from harm or guidance on reaching beyond domestic violence. They volunteer in their community to do outreach and education—posting information in libraries, churches, synagogues, offices and schools. They answer the hotline when someone sees that poster and reaches out for help.

What is your role in the work to end domestic violence? Every man and every woman plays a role. Holding perpetrators accountable is not only the role of the criminal justice system. It is the smaller actions that happen early on as young people learn about respect in relationships; as schools help teens take the bullying education they got in elementary school and bring that to new and exciting dating relationships. It happens when we model respectful behavior with our partners and with our children. It happens when we talk about the messages that the media is sending to kids. It happens when we answer tough questions about what does it mean to love someone? And what should it feel like to be loved?

As we celebrate the final stretch of this *Campaign to REACH Beyond Domestic Violence*, we remain committed to reducing the need for these shelter rooms by increasing our ability to offer support in our communities and together hold accountable those who perpetrate violence. With support from companies like our *REACH for the Stars* sponsors, Verizon and Blue Ribbon Barbecue, collaborations like the high risk response teams coming together across the state, and volunteers of every kind—offering time, money and expertise—we will reach beyond domestic violence.



Lt. Governor Tim Murray (top) and Middlesex County District Attorney Gerry Leone (bottom)



White Ribbon Day, March 2

Speaking for REACH, Speaking for Oneself

Speakers' Bureau Brings the Voices of Survivors to Our Communities

In describing the cycle of experience, Roman philosopher Seneca said it all: "Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end." As we begin 2010, the members of the Survivor Speakers' Bureau share their take on beginnings: both in the context of their abusive relationships and today, as they begin new relationships and explore new opportunities.

This year, as you talk with friends and family members about your involvement in REACH, contribute to our volunteer and fundraising efforts, and help us provide educational programming in our local communities, we hope that you take the message of beginnings with you. Our mission is to end domestic violence. Your support and your voice, along with the voices of survivors, are the means to create a new beginning for our families, our friends, and our communities. The following are excerpts about beginnings from our Speakers' Bureau participants.

MY JOURNEY OUT OF ABUSE has been a long road of growth, understanding and commitment with a lot of guidance and direction. Being surrounded by support from REACH certainly helped me in my travels toward a better way of living and taking care of myself. Today my life is full of friends, travel, theater and lots of new and interesting adventures. I look forward to many more journeys.

Leaving the geography of the domestic abuse behind has been a difficult trip down a bumpy road. No matter what the obstacle was, REACH helped me to find the best available route to wholeness and wellness. Picking up the phone and calling to report to an advocate or dialing REACH to talk with a social worker or even just sitting in a group setting provided direction and guidance during a time of need. —*Kayla*

“WHAT DO I DO NOW, now that I can do anything I want to?” That line from a song has special meaning for anyone who has survived domestic violence. It seems a simple question, but it isn't if you have spent years trying to please your partner and anticipate his needs, wants or whims in order to avoid his wrath. What you want to do has nothing to do with it. What you need to do to survive has everything to do with it. I will forever be grateful to all the people here at REACH who have helped me leave and recover from years of abuse. It has taken awhile to rediscover myself, but now I can hear that line with joy and think to myself, what do I want to do today? The possibilities are endless! —*Lesley*

The Survivor Speakers' Bureau was created in early 2007 as a direct response to inquiries from survivors seeking to describe and share their personal stories. This program brings survivors to community-based organizations and schools in the Greater Boston area, to raise awareness of domestic violence. To learn more about the Speakers' Bureau, or to arrange a speaking event in your community, contact Joanne Patterson, Director of Education and Prevention Programs at jo@reachma.org or 781-891-0724 x105.

THE SEED I AM NURTURING is one of trust and faith, in people and God. I gain confidence every day as time passes. I put the past farther behind me; leaving behind the memories, living in the present, and looking to the future, which I still don't see too clearly.

I daydream. I want a future in which I can buy a condo for my kids and take them skiing on February breaks. My dream is sitting in the chair lift with both my kids and connecting with them in their very busy world. I picture them both as busy as they are, always moving, getting their physical energy out by going down a slope and then sitting in a chair lift with me as they recuperate. They will sit still; we will all love one another, feel charming and grateful for one another, and for this time together, as short-lived as it is. As I struggle through the financial burden my ex-husband left our family with, I think that I may never own a piece of property or a ski pass, but I get the intangible love and affection of my children and of life itself. —*Tina*

AS I STOOD AT THE COUNTER mixing the batter for my son's birthday cupcakes, I had a sudden realization. I was in a new kitchen, in a new home and in a new relationship. It was a new life! I had moved on from the memories trapped within the walls and rooms of the other house. In their place fresh memories were forming, new experiences, lighthearted moments slowly replacing the old feelings of being stuck. And then it hit me. I was truly happy, and at genuine peace for the first time in over 20 years. Salty tears slid down my cheeks. —*Lisa*

MY BEGINNING IS A NEW HOME where there is peace, security, and predictability.

A home where people say what they mean, mean what they say, and don't say it meanly. A home where a child is told the truth and not given a distorted reality. A home where a child is allowed to express his or her feelings and not beaten down into submission. A home where the parent is not constantly on the defense against the next verbal attack. A home where the children upon returning from visitation do not need a couple of days to stop verbally abusing the parent. A home where children are allowed to make mistakes and do not have to be perfect. —*Natasha*

Sixth Annual

REACH for the Stars... Transform a Life

Raises More Than \$310,000 for REACH Programs and Services



Thank you to all who participated in the Sixth Annual *REACH for the Stars... Transform a Life* Artist and Celebrity Plate Auction, held at the Waltham Westin Hotel on November 5, 2009. With more than 300 guests and 25 volunteers, the event was a huge success! Some of the event's celebrity artists included Tom Brady, Gisele Bündchen, Mark Wahlberg, and Ming Tsai. Big auction items included a home plate signed by multiple Red Sox players, a luxurious trip to Sonoma Valley, and a day on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.



Event Co-Chair Amanda Kennedy (center) with Gina Cohen and Amanda Henshon



REACH Executive Director Laura Van Zandt tries to convince Dom Dinardo to bid on the Red Sox home plate



Event Committee members Jim and Audrey Foster and Patti Salem



Sun Life Financial employees Kaitlin Berry, Michelle Christian, and Maggie Van Delft



Red Sox General Manager Theo Epstein enjoys the live auction



*Shelter volunteer Bill Segal encourages guests to bid on a *This Old House* package*



Charlie and Marcia Cormay, Steve and Lisa Brown (REACH volunteer), Jane and Chris White



Event Co-Chairs: Amanda & Sam Kennedy, and David & Christine Konys



Volunteers Luisa Hamilton (left), Bonnie Marett (second from right), and Brenda Helies (right) with Joe Hamilton, Carlie Friedlander, and Michael Abelson



Advisory Board Member Robyn Tice with Beth Favaloro and Dawn Tice

Save the Date!

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

November 4, 6-9 pm

The Westin Hotel, Waltham

Planning for this year's event is underway, and we are currently looking for new committee members. If you would like to help plan this fundraiser, join our fun *REACH for the Stars* Event Committee. You can also participate in the event in other ways: Help facilitate a celebrity plate artist or an auction item, ask your company if they'd like to learn more about event sponsorship opportunities, become a development volunteer in the REACH office, or volunteer during the evening of the event. To learn more, please contact Courtney Opalka, Development and Special Events Coordinator, at courtney@reachma.org or 781-891-0724 ext. 104.



Advisory Board members Carolyn and Stephen McCandless with Suzanne Caton (center)

Photos by Helene Norton-Russell

Holiday Gift Program Brings Joy to 200+ Families

Many thanks to everyone who made REACH's 2009 Holiday Gift Program a tremendous success!

Every year, REACH provides holiday gifts and an evening of fun for families who have used REACH services, whether through our emergency shelter, individual advocacy or support group program. This is accomplished in large part through the generosity of individuals, businesses and religious communities. Thanks to the generosity of our community, this year 214 families' wishes were fulfilled. That's 725 individuals!

With this program, we find sponsors who will fill the holiday wishes of each family. Each adult fills out a wish list for themselves and each of their children. Staff members encourage families to be specific with their requests: a large pink hooded sweatshirt, Spiderman walkie-talkies or plates with blue flowers. 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.

REACH staff and volunteers also organize a holiday party for the families. It is a night with a full buffet dinner, a visit from Santa and holiday activities for the kids. It is also an opportunity to discreetly give gifts to the adults while their children are occupied. Volunteers help bring gifts to cars while kids create snowflakes or decorate sugar cookies. 327 adults and children attended the holiday party and enjoyed the festive atmosphere and delicious food. Please see article below to learn more.

The entire holiday program is made possible through the time and energy of our volunteers. Approximately 100 people donated 500 hours of their time in order to make the program



A sled filled with holiday gifts for a family

happen, which doesn't include the hours our sponsors spent shopping and finding the perfect Spiderman walkie-talkies. It takes a lot of time and effort, but the thankfulness of the families is immeasurable. Some of the messages shared with us in thank you cards include:

"Thank you so much for all the help this holiday season. I was very sick this year and the gifts you provided saved my Christmas. It is so nice to be able to count on someone. I could never thank you enough."

"Thanks for the Christmas help again this year. I so appreciate you remembering me and my family. Your hard work helped make it a great Christmas."

"So, so happy that my daughter and I have been invited to this holiday party, it's our big event for the year. Thank you all."



Holiday Gift volunteers Joan Heilbronner (left), Amy Favat (center) and REACH Director of Operations Deborah Heimel (second from right) with Blue Ribbon Barbecue Owner/Pitmaster Geoff Janowski and Business Development Manager John Kennedy

Support from Blue Ribbon Barbecue

Each year, a dedicated team of volunteers puts the REACH Holiday dinner together with entrees and side dishes they prepare at their homes. When the planning for the Holiday Gift Party began last fall, volunteer Joan Heilbronner approached local favorite restaurant Blue Ribbon Barbecue to ask for a donation of corn bread and rolls for the dinner. Not only did Blue Ribbon come through with the corn bread, but they offered to donate a major portion of the food for the evening, and opened up their commercial kitchen so our volunteers could prepare the meal together! Our volunteers enjoyed a fun evening of working together for a great cause, and our party guests enjoyed a delicious buffet of pulled pork, salmon, mashed potatoes, and of course, corn bread! A special thank you from all of us at REACH to Blue Ribbon Barbecue for giving back to the community and adding to the holiday experience for families who have been through so much.

REACH Receives \$10,000 Verizon Foundation Grant

This past fall, REACH was the proud recipient of a 2009 Verizon Foundation Massachusetts Domestic Violence Solutions Award. We were honored to be one of only thirteen nonprofit agencies in the state to be recognized for our work in combating domestic violence. The funds will help support new information technology needs for our education and prevention efforts.

In the past three years, Verizon has awarded approximately \$500,000 to nonprofits that focus on domestic violence in Massachusetts. "Domestic violence is a problem that affects all members of families and tears at the basic fabric of our society," said Verizon New England President Donna Cupelo. "These funds will go a long way in helping to educate Massachusetts residents about abuse, the steps needed for prevention, and assisting those people who are trapped in abusive relationships to get help and restore their lives."

The check presentation took place at Heritage State Park in Holyoke in October, as part of a Domestic Violence Awareness Month event hosted by Holyoke Mayor Michael Sullivan.

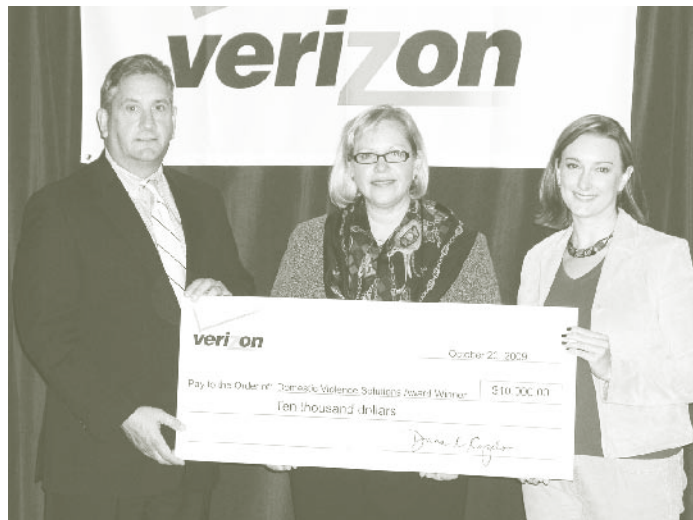


Photo caption: Stanley Usovicz, Verizon Regional Director of Public Affairs; Donna Cupelo, Verizon Region President of New England; and Kim Priore, REACH Development Officer

Teaming Up to Prevent Homicides

In January, REACH joined agencies including RESPOND, Inc., Transition House, and The Guidance Center, as well as Middlesex District Attorney Gerry Leone, DCF Commissioner Angelo McClain, and Police Chiefs from Arlington, Belmont and Cambridge to announce the formation of the new Cambridge, Arlington, Belmont High-Risk Assessment and Response Team (CAB-HART), which aims to reduce domestic homicides. Based on similar successful programs in Newburyport and Framingham, the model seeks to strengthen existing relationships between police, courts, and service providers in these three cities. By identifying predictable traits of abusers and sharing information, law enforcement and service providers can review high-risk cases and take preventive steps to avoid homicide.

CAB-HART was initiated in response to the escalating number of domestic homicides in Massachusetts. There were 25 such homicides in 2008 and 23 in 2009. Since March 2006, approximately 174 domestic violence cases from Cambridge, Arlington, and Belmont were flagged as having a high risk for lethal violence.

At a press conference announcing the new program, DA Leone said, "We know that effectively combating domestic violence requires a comprehensive approach and that means bringing together partners like we have today, working on the front end to prevent tragedies before they occur. I'm pleased to be joined by so many stakeholders in our efforts to combat domestic violence."

We are pleased that REACH is part of a community-wide effort with other sister programs and local providers. Executive Director Laura Van Zandt commented that "Sitting at the table with police, lawyers, counselors, advocates, therapists, as well as probation, parole and the DA's office makes a powerful statement: these communities will come together and do what is necessary to support survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. This is the work that stops the cycle of violence."

REACH is currently part of efforts to replicate the high risk response model in several communities that we serve, once again in partnership with providers, police and others throughout Middlesex County.

Calling All Volunteers

Would you like to learn more about the impact of domestic violence in your community? REACH will be hosting a six-hour training on two Wednesdays: May 5th and 12th, 6:00–9:00 p.m. All community members, service providers, and prospective volunteers are invited to attend. This training is also a requirement for individuals interested in volunteering as a Support Group childcare provider.

Volunteer Spotlight:

Support Group Childcare Volunteers

As we support adult survivors, we also support our survivor families. Childcare volunteers provide care for children whose parents attend our weekly day and evening support groups. Childcare takes place on site while adults attend group, and volunteers assist in play and mentoring. Because childcare needs may vary each week, this is an on-call position in which volunteers sign up to cover one two-hour childcare shift each week.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities, please contact Joanne Patterson at 781-891-0724 x105 or email jo@reachma.org.

YOU WAKE UP AUTOMATICALLY 10 minutes before the alarm is set to go off at 6:00 a.m. It is the same every morning. The elegantly decorated bedroom is dark, quiet, still. Your eyes open immediately and are drawn to the angular slope of your husband's back; drawn to his calm, rhythmic breath. You silently pray that he is still asleep and will not realize that you are awake, until you have had, please, just a few moments to arouse your brain. You hold your breath in your pounding chest, hoping that the change in breathing pattern and heartbeat won't be detected and arouse his suspicion.

Holding your breath, you think of your powerful, intelligent, beautiful daughter on the day she left home for Columbia

University and her soccer career, describing life with her father. "You know the mines are there," she confides. "You know they are going to blow your leg off. You just don't know when."

Holding your breath, you recall the taut lines in his face, his shark eyes narrowed to slits, and replay his 23-year old mantra. "If you ever even think about getting out of this marriage, I will take all of the money and all of the children and you will have nothing." You know he is deadly serious—you have become his hostage.

Exhaling, you quietly get out of bed, put on your bathrobe and slippers, walk softly to the kitchen to make breakfast for the children and for him. —Mary *Read more survivor stories on page 3.*

A Special Thank You to our Sixth Annual REACH for the Stars Corporate Sponsors

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