

Looking Forward...

- IowaMAN conference call, April 27 10-11:30, contact iowaman@icadv.org for more information
- It's About Time 5th Annual Fundraising Gala, May 14, 2011 7 p.m.-11 p.m. at the Knapp Learning Center at the Iowa State Fairgrounds. Buy your ticket today at www.icadv.org and click [DONATE!](#)



February and March Highlights

- ICADV's new website launched at www.icadv.org
- Iowa Men's Action Network (IowaMAN) website launched. Visit today at www.iowaman.org
- "Speak Up Iowa" Contest results
- Pictures from Lobby Day at the Capitol

The Year in Brief

From the Desk of Laurie Schipper, Executive Director



As we prepare for our 5th annual fundraising event, *It's About Time Gala*, I've been taking some time to reflect on the past year's accomplishments and some disappointments.

On September 30, 2010, ICADV's MUNA Legal Immigration Clinic closed its doors. This was in large part due to the loss of federal funding the clinic experienced. Our legal staff is now concentrating on training attorneys and advocates assisting with these cases; we are taking only emergency cases or cases that will have broader implications for larger numbers of victims; and lastly, we take cases when no one else will. It's no surprise that we have no shortage of cases and our legal staff remains

very busy.

This has also been a legislative session filled with many challenges. Like so many non-profits, we have been forced to monitor funding levels, attempt to hold on to services meant to reach and protect the most at risk and most silenced in our state. After getting the domestic violence firearm ban legislation passed and implemented last year, ICADV was hopeful we would continue to make progress and pass criminal dating violence legislation, a felony strangulation bill, and fair housing legislation for domestic violence victims. With the loss of our three Supreme Court Judges in November and the push to eliminate the Department of Human Rights, nothing has felt very stable for those of us working on issues related to violence against women, oppression, and poverty.

ICADV could definitely use a windfall to replace our building's roof and repair the water damage resulting from snow melt and rainfall. We are also seeking dollars to engage in more prevention work and to enhance our work with marginalized populations, such as the Skylark Program's commutation and re-entry work with women in prison.

In January, Governor Culver announced his decision to grant commutation to Sheila Schertz, a Skylark candidate. We were also able to secure education scholarships for 13 of our Skylark candidates from the National Network to End Domestic Violence. We assisted the women in writing their scholarship applications that ICADV submitted on their behalf.

We have begun new partnerships with the Brain Injury Association, Head Start, Upward Bound, and the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association and we are in the process of completing a Prevention Community Readiness Assessment Project with 11 of the local domestic violence programs in Iowa. In addition, we are working with the Iowa Department of Public Health on Project Connect to cross-train health care professionals and victim advocates.

In spite of the political climate and funding crisis, ICADV has continued to seek allies and move forward challenging the work we've done in the past and looking for meaningful and effective new strategies in ending violence against women. We hope that you'll join us in our efforts.

Public Policy Update From the Desk of Amber Markham



Our public policy department has only one announcement, but it is a very important one. On April 6, Governor Branstad signed into law House File 562, the bill adjusting the child abuse registry and the charge of failure to protect. The major relevant piece is:

"Section 2. Section 232.68, subsection 2, Code 2011, is amended by adding the new unnumbered paragraph:

"Child abuse" or "abuse" shall not be construed to hold a victim responsible for failing to prevent a crime against the victim."

This means victims of domestic violence should no longer be charged with child abuse or put on the child abuse registry simply because they (the mothers) were abused. It will make it easier for victims of domestic violence to come forward and seek out assistance because they will no longer have to fear losing their children simply for being a victim of domestic violence. The amendment is a big step for the fight against domestic violence.



ICADV had a great time at the Capitol for our lobbying day. ICADV's trifold (on right) and Zebulon Beilke-McCallum speaks with Cedar Rapids' Senator Hogg (on left).



REACH AmeriCorps Update From the Desk of Adam Stark



The REACH AmeriCorps Program is half way through its 17th and final year as an ICADV program. In December we submitted a new application to the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service and the Corporation on National and Community Service for a new program, The Skylark AmeriCorps Program. Skylark will recruit and place 10 formally battered, formally incarcerated women with member domestic violence programs to develop domestic violence prevention programs. While serving as prevention specialist with their program, each member will receive advanced training on domestic violence, develop skills to bolster their resume, gain self sufficiency and ultimately obtain full-time employment. We will recruit members through our collaboration with the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women.

State Training Update From the Desk of Kirsten Faisal



The year has begun with a headlong rush. Whatever happened to winter being a slow time because no one wants to travel?

I have now trained almost every cadet going through the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy for the past fifteen years. I missed a few classes to have babies or go on sabbatical but otherwise... thanks to everyone who has helped to provide that training over the years. I think it's a great opportunity to inform law enforcement early in their careers and mold the way they think about domestic abuse cases.

I've had a flurry of attorneys and clients calling to look for an expert witness. I did testify in a termination of parental rights case here in Polk County. Even though it's really just another kind of training only with an audience of one (a judge) or twelve (a jury), testifying is one of the scariest parts of my job. The stakes seem very high, I have limited control, and the process is adversarial. On the other hand, in my trainings there is no judge to tell someone to shut up or reframe the question, much less declare them to be in contempt, so really I should be glad not to be swinging in the wind on my own like usual. Then again, when I train, the person I'm talking about isn't sitting there crying in front of me while I dissect her actions and motives.

I still have hopes that we will get the strangulation bill passed this year in Iowa, but if not, I am working with a task force to address the issue anyway. We are putting together training for law enforcement, health care professionals, prosecutors, and advocates to increase awareness of the risks and symptoms of strangulation, documentation and response, and prosecution. About 15% of domestic homicides in Iowa are due to strangulation. A proactive response will get victims to appropriate health care to reduce the long term impacts of strangulation and intervene with perpetrators earlier before they escalate to lethal levels.

Communication & Development Update From the Desk of Andrea Fehring



My first few months at ICADV have been extremely busy. Before I fill you in on all my activities, I need to first acknowledge the great work of one of my new interns, Caitlin Feuer. She's a Junior, English Writing and Rhetoric & Communication Studies double major. This edition of the newsletter is due to her hard work and great design! Welcome and thank you Caitlin.

We have unveiled our new web site. Big thanks to our web site and new logo designs by Kristy Knapp of KGK Designs. Check out our new interactive state map to find your local program. This is the staff's favorite new feature. Work on the web site continues. ICADV's other intern,

Kelsey Tulon, an International Management and Spanish Major, is working on translating our site into Spanish for greater access. Welcome and thank you to Kelsey for her hard work.

Finally, we are deep into preparations for our annual fundraising gala, It's About Time, which takes place May 14, 2011 at the Knapp Learning Center at the Iowa State Fairgrounds. You can conveniently purchase tickets on our web site by simply clicking the Donate link. We also have some exciting new auction packages this year including an authentic Fender Stratocaster signed by Eric Clapton, a trip for two to Paris, France that includes airfare and hotel accommodations, and NASCAR Fantasy trip for two that includes time behind the wheel of an official NASCAR.

Prevention Update From the Desk of Tess Cody



It's been an exciting, but busy couple of months for prevention at ICADV. During the month of February, we hosted the first annual "Speak Up Iowa" Video/Radio Contest. We named John Anderson the winner of the radio competition for "[Giving the Blues](#)," Alexis Ahmed, Jade Doran and Ryan Woodson won the video competition with "[Textual Harassment](#)" and Lenna and Sarah were first runner-ups for their "[Have a Health One](#)" video. These videos, submitted by local high school students, are available for viewing on our new [Facebook Fan Page](#).

Other exciting prevention news includes the launch of the Iowa Men's Action Network (Iowa-MAN) website. Please check it out at www.iowaman.org. The website features action tips and resources for target audiences including fathers, mentors, coaches, educators, students, and more. The site also includes bios of group members. We hope that after reading the bios, men will be able to identify with IowaMAN members and the cause of ending violence against women. In the future, the group will continue to expand their website to include additional group resources and event opportunities. Please take a few minutes to look at the site and consider the Iowa Men's Action Network and their new website as a resource and place to direct community partners.

ICADV received funding for the third and final year of DELTA PREP. As part of this year's application ICADV received a small pot of funding to support the creation of electronic resources for member programs. In our application we proposed the creation of a "Prevention Materials Committee" made up of coalition staff and 3-5 people from local programs. Funding will go for mileage reimbursemen. We plan to have three in person meetings in Des Moines and a few webinars to review materials created. In addition to meetings, participants will also be expected to spend 3-5 hours a month writing/collaborating/editing materials. If you would like an application, please email Tess at tessp@icadv.org before the deadline of April 29.

From the Desk of Zebulon Beilke-McCallum



Happy Financial Literacy Month! Did you know that President Obama has declared April Financial Literacy Month? Here at ICADV, we are celebrating it with Financial-train-the-trainers in Spencer on Tax Day (April 15th) and in Atlantic on the 27th. For more information, please contact Zeb at zebb@icadv.org. In other news the HEAT Force has been busy working on the first ever HEAT conference, which will feature sessions focusing on Best Practices in Transitional Housing, Working with Landlords, and finding sources of funding for housing projects. The conference is tentatively set for the same week as the director's conference, September 19th, so save the date now. Finally, on next Monday, April 11th at 10 a.m. there will be a webinar addressing changes to HUD/IFA database reporting rules. If you receive ESG or CoC dollars, please join us for this call.

Domestic Violence and Traumatic Brain Injury

Report by,
Laurie Schipper, Executive Director

Recently, ICADV has been working more directly with the issue of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and with service providers that assist victims with TBI. It has become clear that the co-occurrence of domestic violence and traumatic brain injury is under identified and undertreated. To make the issue even more difficult, we know that only 1% of battered women are appropriately identified by the health care system (*Boss 1994*). We also know that greater than 90% of all injuries resulting from domestic violence occur to the head, neck, or face region. Yet brain injury remains unidentified in the majority of cases (*Monahan & O'Leary 1999*).

Assaults causing brain injury often occur when the victim is forcefully hit with objects, her head is smashed against a wall, she is pushed down stairs, being shot or stabbed in the head, shaking her, and obstructing her airway by strangulation, drowning, etc. A study of 53 women in a domestic violence shelter found, on average, that women experienced five brain injuries in the prior year and nearly 30% reported ten brain injuries in the previous year (*Jackson & Phillips 1998*). Of women seeking emergency medical care for injuries caused by domestic violence, 30% reported a loss of consciousness at least once and 67% reported residual problems that were potentially head-injury related (*Corrigan 2003*). In another study, 75% of the 99 battered women interviewed sustained at least one brain related injury due to an abusive partner; 50% sustained multiple partner related brain injuries (*Valera 2003*).

The real danger with these cases is that the damage is cumulative. The studies reveal a pattern of high frequency, repeated blows to the head in cases involving battered women. The events do not necessarily result in a single loss of consciousness, but may be cumulative over time.

It is important for service providers to have an understanding of domestic violence dynamics in order to identify and appropriately intervene and provide safe, effective treatment. Service providers should know that if she's living with an abuser, he may prevent her from accessing medical care or refuse to make adjustments to assist her. It is also important to understand that she may be suffering new brain injuries before her previous brain injury has healed. Survivors typically appear to be unmotivated, unfocused, poorly organized, unable to plan ahead, unable to follow a train of thought, and/or forgetful. This presentation is often misinterpreted as drug or alcohol impairment, post traumatic stress, memory impairment, other mental health related illness, or is attributed to societal stereotypes of battered women, i.e. don't want help, unmotivated, lying, lower cognitive functioning, etc.

Because of the high rate of co-occurrence, it is recommended that all domestic violence victims be screened for traumatic brain injury. Identifying domestic violence can help the service provider better understand the patient's experience and allows the service provider to take safety into account in planning how to help. For example, the service provider can choose to work with the victim on safety planning during rehab sessions. Perhaps most important is to work with domestic violence advocates to build in safety planning for living with TBI.

We know that it is imperative to ask patients more than once about domestic violence. There are a number of good reasons that a victim may choose not to disclose domestic violence on the first interview. She may not define her experience as domestic violence. She may be afraid that he'll find out she told. Her experience with past interventions may have only led to negative outcomes.

In summary, traumatic brain injury is typical in victims experiencing ongoing domestic violence. It may lead to increased cognitive, physical, and emotional dysfunction over time, and without intervention, these women become increasingly dysfunctional. It is imperative for health care professionals to do universal screening for domestic violence and to screen all domestic violence victims for traumatic brain injury. Unidentified TBI leads to intervention failure. For these reasons, both domestic violence advocates and professionals working with traumatic brain injury are beginning to reach out to each other and provide cross-training, resources and a more seamless response to victims of domestic violence.