

WOMEN'S Center



Protect, Educate, Advocate, Counsel and Empower

Summer 2017

AFWC 2017 AWARD ANNOUNCED

PROSECUTOR KAREN BAHRMAN RECEIVES AFWC 2017 HONOREE AWARD



"Justice does not happen swiftly. I reassure clients that the best possible person there could ever be there for them is now their strongest voice." Laura Travis, Alger County Coordinator for the Women's Center said in her introduction of Karen Bahrman, Alger County Prosecutor. Ms. Bahrman was honored at this year's 4th annual **Alger Friends of the Women's Center (AFWC)** luncheon held at the Brownstone Inn on May 24, 2017.

For 30 plus years, Karen has been an advocate for women and families in Alger County. She has counseled, advocated and fought for those seeking justice. She has prosecuted many domestic violence and sexual assault cases, always advocating for fairness and justice. The AFWC wanted to thank Karen for her many years of service assisting so many people in the area.

Keynote speaker, Judge William Carmody, talked about domestic violence and sexual assault in the criminal justice system as it relates to Alger County. He said, "The embarrassment factor.... self-blame....self-esteem... all these issues come into play and prevent victims from coming forward." But, he reassured the group that these times are changing, especially with advocacy through agencies like the Women's Center and the local volunteer group, AFWC.

Both Prosecutor Bahrman and Judge Carmody thanked the many friends who help support victims of domestic and sexual violence by fund raising for the Women's Center and by offering their silent support during courtroom sessions. AFWC volunteers wear scarves of teal for sexual assault or of purple for domestic violence into the court room to show their support to the victim. Their silent presence is a strong message to all that they are watching the court system and expect justice. This advocacy helps victims know that they are not alone in their fight for justice.

The AFWC was formed to support the services of the Women's Center in Alger County. For more information on the AFWC or how to join in their efforts, contact Laura Travis at 906-235-0543; she can put you in touch with a representative from the group.

*Pictured: Sandy Ehler/AFWC, Laura Travis/
Alger Coordinator Women's Center,
Alger County Prosecutor Karen Bahrman; Vicki
Balas, Marcia Cox & Deb Molitor/AFWC*





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Summer 2017

We love the spring and summer!

Many local foundation grants are awarded April through June. This year we are pleased that the following local foundations have chosen to support us.

- *Alger Regional Foundation awarded the Women's Center, Inc. \$1,500 for Alger County clients and their needs.*
- *The Frazier Foundation awarded the Women's Center, Inc. for five years \$10,000 each year.*
- *The Louis E. Kaufman Endowment Fund awarded the Women's Center, Inc. \$2,000 for 2017.*
- *The Marquette Community Found awarded the Women's Center, Inc. \$1,500 to be used for upgrading security at the Women's Center building.*
- *The Reynolds Foundation awarded the Women's Center, Inc. for three years \$10,000 each year.*
- *Superior Health Foundation awarded \$4,100.46 to the Women's Center, Inc. in Marquette. SHF provided \$2,100.46 in funding with a local donor matching the other \$2,000 to purchase security doors for Harbor House.*
- *Western Marquette County Health Foundation awarded the Women's Center, Inc. \$5,000 for one year for marketing materials and emergency medical funds for clients.*

Summer in the UP is delightful with lots of outdoor activity like swimming, boating, kayaking.... I could go on and on. Our summers bring back our seasonal residents and many tourists to the area. Are there seasonal effects on violence?

The U.S. Department of Justice notes that rape and sexual assault rates are significantly higher in the summer than in most other seasons. Intimate partner violence exhibits regular seasonal fluctuations as well, with rates highest during the summer. Our shelter, Harbor House is and continues to be full. Winter weather did not slow down our census for the shelter. We are seeing an increased demand for our services. In some cases, when we are full, we have to refer victims who need emergency shelter to the closest shelter that has room available.

The timing of our collaboration with Dial Help, Inc could not be any better. Women's Center, Inc staff have spent time getting out new flyers on the new texting service that was made available to victims in the Upper Peninsula in April. The texting service is part of the Rural Grant that was started on January 1, 2017. We have particularly attempted to cover Alger County in places like the bathrooms of bars, restaurants, and public places to get the word out. With a National Park in Alger County and the recent publicity for Marquette drawing an increasing amount of tourism to the area, we know that rates in sexual and domestic violence may increase as much as 12%. We want to be there for victims that need our services. Help us spread the word by letting others know of our new texting service. Thank you again for your wonderful and generous support. We cannot do it without you.

HARBOR HOUSE SUMMER UPDATES

Summer's here! Harbor House shelter has been experiencing an unusual number of victims needing safe shelter this summer. Staff has been busy providing advocacy and counseling at a higher rate than usual. This summer the survivors and children in shelter are experiencing healthy recreational activities such as gardening, hiking, theatre, the YMCA and the Children's Museum.

We are so grateful for all the donations that we have received. Your support has helped us fulfill personal hygiene needs, food, shelter and clothing. With the high volume of woman and children we are always in need of: paper products, cleaning and laundry supplies, green city garbage bags, hair products such as brushes, hair conditioner, mousse and hairspray. We are also always in the need of shower caddies, totes and laundry baskets. Our gratitude goes out to community in all that you do for our organization.



GOT ??? ALGER COUNTY NEEDS YOU !!

Summer 2017

Many of us think nothing of possessing the daily life skills to go about our everyday lives. Whether you are a professional career person, a business owner, or a stay at home mom or dad, you most likely know how to tackle many tasks throughout your day.

Imagine if you were raised in a home where you were never taught any of the skills to live on our own. Then visualize yourself going right into a marriage or relationship where you were never allowed to have any opinions on any aspect of living within a relationship, taking care of a home, or even being employed outside the home. Every aspect of your life was controlled by someone else and anything you may have attempted to do, you found yourself being told that you did it wrong, that you are an idiot, and that you are useless. This is the reality of the domestic violence clients that end up seeking our services.

Over the years that I have worked here, I have been able to tap into the wonderful skills that the numerous residents of Alger County have when I have needed something for a client. It dawned on me, why not capture these people resources and offer their expertise to survivors?

We came up with a new initiative called *Empowered Independence* for Alger County.

The concept is very simple. We are asking women to contact us if they are interested in assisting a survivor with a skill they have. The skill may be cooking, sewing, resume writing, job interviews, writing, financial skills, anything!. The volunteer list is made available to a survivor to review and choose where they desire skills assistance.

We currently have seven volunteers signed up and they are offering the following skills to our Alger clients: resume building, job interview techniques, dressing for an interview, grocery shopping on a budget/bridge card, balancing a checking account & finances, parenting skills, basic automotive care, seeking free or low cost entertainment that is fun and healthy, babysitting so that they have a few hours out in the community, cooking and photography. Their assistance may be a one-time meeting to teach a survivor to sew on a button. It may be assistance over several months teaching a client how to gain financial freedom by living within a budget.

We are excited to get this going! If you would like to be added to our *Empowered Independence* list, please contact me at the Alger office, M-F 8-4 @ 906-387-4554

Laura Travis, Alger County Coordinator



THE WOMEN'S CENTER, INC. HAS NEW SERVICES AVAILABLE

The Women's Center, Inc. is partnering with **DIALHELP** in Houghton to provide 24/7 access and support through text and instant messaging. There are now more ways to reach out. Contact us today if you are being affected by domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking.

All services are free and confidential.

- ♦ 24/7 Text Messaging
- ♦ 24/7 Instant Messaging
- ♦ Sexual Assault Advocacy
- ♦ To Access Text, 906-356-3337
- ♦ To Access Instant Messaging, www.dialhelp.org
- ♦ To Access Sexual Assault Advocate, call 906-226-6611

S.A.N.E. TRAINING IN THE U.P.

When I started my position at the Women's Center in the fall of 2015, I discovered that the Upper Peninsula lacks trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (S.A.N.E.). The only registered S.A.N.E. in Marquette was retiring (she did so in 2016) and Dickinson County was the only other area that had another S.A.N.E. We needed to do something about this.

A S.A.N.E is a nurse who has been specially trained and is registered to provide comprehensive care to sexual assault patients. They have demonstrated a capacity to conduct a medical/forensic exam and have a skill set to be an expert witness in the prosecution of sexual assault cases. They are essential to a comprehensive Sexual Assault Response Team (see page 7 article) and the missing component for the Women's Center Sexual Assault Response Team.

Two NMU nursing students who were interning and volunteering at the Women's Center in 2016 helped introduce me to Melissa Copenhaver, an NMU Nursing Professor. Melissa and I began to meet and began our research on what it would take to bring a SANE training to Marquette. What we found, in addition to the S.A.N.E. in Dickinson County, was that War Memorial Hospital in Sault Saint Marie, Michigan did have a nurse coming from Ontario to do exams at the hospital. There was also another nurse in the UP working on her training, but she had not completed it. That was it for S.A.N.E.s in the U.P. As we talked with other agencies in the U.P. about the lack of S.A.N.E.s in our region, we had an outpouring of support because these professionals are so desperately needed here.

We received a \$2500 Grant from Superior Health Foundation for training that was written by the Caring House shelter in Dickinson County. The Diane Peppler shelter in the Sault Saint Marie, Michigan sent \$2500 to further support the training. With their support, we were able to meet our goal of reducing the cost of registration from approximately \$500 to just \$50 per nurse!

Through this collaboration, the Upper Peninsula now has 19 trained S.A.N.E. professionals to help provide a multi-disciplinary response and informed patient care to those who are victims of a sexual assault. This could not have been done without the efforts of Melissa. She spent a considerable amount of her own time arranging the instructor and the logistics. It had been ten years since the last S.A.N.E. training in the UP, so all of this was new territory. We thank you Melissa for all the time and energy you put into this training, it would have been much harder without you.

This is the list of the areas and numbers of nurses that were trained: 5 from NMU School of Nursing; 2 from UPHS-Marquette; 4 from Mackinac Straits Health System including 2 from Mackinac Island; 5 from Dickinson County Health System; 1 from Lake Superior State University; 1 from Helen Newberry Joy Hospital; and 1 from Keweenaw Bay Indian Community.

Michelle Fortunato, Sexual Assault Program Coordinator

A Simple Gift Changes Lives

A bequest is one of the easiest gifts to make. With the help of an advisor, you can include language in your will or trust specifying a gift be made to family, friends and The Women's Center. It's as easy as: "I, [name], of [city, state, zip], give, devise and bequeath to the Women's Center [written amount or percentage of the estate] for its unrestricted use in changing the lives of vulnerable women and their children." It's best to include our Tax ID number as well, which is 38-2340624.

A reminder that the ME Davenport Foundation is again providing a match this fiscal year for the Women's Center. Any gift that the Women's Center receives will be matched dollar for dollar up to a total of \$20,000. Show your commitment to Women's Center programs by making a donation today! Thanks!!





PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT



The Women's Center kicked off the summer season by honoring our volunteers with a luncheon and gift. Our volunteers are a vital part of our organization, perhaps enough to consider them the Women's Center's heartbeat. Volunteers with the Women's Center give freely of their time, talents and patience to ensure that our organization continues to run smoothly. We truly would be at a loss without them!! So, what do our volunteers do?

- ♦ Harbor House Shelter Coverage – These volunteers go through an extensive training and provide coverage at the shelter. The volunteers answer the crisis line phones, provide direct advocacy and support to survivors, crisis intervention and safety planning.
- ♦ Domestic Violence Advocacy Team (DVAT) and the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) – These team members provide emergency crisis intervention and direct support services to survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Members of DVAT/SART respond to victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault at the hospital or any of the local law enforcement agencies. They provide support and advocacy for the victim at the time of crisis and work closely with the domestic and sexual violence programs at the Women's Center to ensure continued support.
- ♦ General Maintenance and Repair – These volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and help with general upkeep of the Harbor House and the Women's Center buildings.
- ♦ Court Support – The Court Support volunteers show their support for the Women's Center by silently attending court hearings in support of the survivor. They sit on the side of the survivor throughout the court hearing to show the survivor they have support present. At the same time, the jury also recognizes that there is support for the survivor.
- ♦ Pak Ratz – The Pak Ratz volunteers assist Pak Ratz employees in sorting and processing donations, organizing the store and cleaning.



If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with the Women's Center, please pick up an application packet from the Women's Center at 1310 S. Front Street, Marquette, MI. Once the volunteer application packet is complete and turned back into the Women's Center, there is approximately a two week processing time. We would love to have you!!



Alisha Young, Program Director

DONATING YOUR IRA DISTRIBUTIONS TO A CHARITY

Qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) have been permanently extended.

When an IRA holder is age 70½ or over, they are eligible to make a charitable distribution to qualified charities (QCDs). There are some key benefits to donating, such as tax benefits, Adjusted Gross Income, and lower taxation of Social Security benefits.

Making a QCD provides an opportunity to make a charitable contribution that you might otherwise not have been able to make and/or receive potential tax benefits for charitable contributions that you are already making.

You should consult with your tax advisor and estate-planning attorney about your situation.



THE HUNT IS ON!!

The Women's Center, Inc. partnered with Andrew Rickauer of Marquette to host a children's **Easter Egg Hunt** on April 15th at Presque Isle Park. Andrew organized this fun-filled event ~ we assisted him and used the venue as opportunity to promote the services that we offer.

We highlighted our SASAWIN project that assists in finding a safe foster home for a survivor's animal(s) while they move to a safe place to live. We featured Pak Ratz, our resale shop, where all proceeds go to support our programs. It was a wonderful opportunity to make many more people aware of the services available to them, should they need them.

We want to recognize Andrew and thank the following businesses for their support: Zach Quinnell, Econo Foods; Thrivent Financial; Aubree's Pizzeria; McDonald's Marquette; Dia de los Tacos; HotPlate; Ore Dock Brewing Company; White's Party Store; Dead River Coffee Roasters; The Dry Dock Bar and Grill; Buffalo Wild Wings; Superior Lanes; Thomas Theatre; Super 1 Foods; Serendipity Salon; Marquette Food Co-op; Frosty Treats; 387 Restaurant & Beer Parlor; Pictured Rocks Cruises; Falling Rock Cafe & Bookstore; TuliVesi Yoga; Panara Imports; Lakeshore Bike; Sports Rack; 906 Sports Bar & Grill; Border Grill; Yoop-Phoria; and Oliver Hardy/Simple Beauty Photography.



APRIL ~ SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH



Participants from Alger and Marquette Counties in this past April's campaign for **SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH.**



WHAT IS SART???

The Women's Center, Inc. staffs a 24/7 Crisis Line for domestic and sexual violence victims. Did you know that we also have a trained team of volunteers who respond to calls of sexual assault at any time of the day or night? These volunteers are part of a multidisciplinary team that implements a comprehensive, sensitive, coordinated system of intervention and care for sexual assault victims.

SART serves two essential purposes:

- ♦ It organizes the process of intervention
- ♦ It organizes the community response to sexual assault

SART recognizes that the victim of sexual assault and the criminal justice system have two distinct sets of needs. Sometimes there are inherent conflicts between these two sets of needs. Through professional collaboration by sexual assault crisis centers, health care providers and law enforcement agencies, both sets of needs can be accommodated and divisiveness avoided. However different the needs may be, all involved professionals agree that victim safety is first and foremost.

SEXUAL ASSAULT **AWARE RESPECT SAFE EDUCATION**
EMPOWER COUNSEL COMMUNICATE
WHAT IT IS **REPORT WHAT TO DO**
WHERE TO GO SUPPORT



Gail Albright	Ginny Kilpea
Vicki Ballas	Dana Koerner
Nancy Barnes	Carol Margrif
Amy Bilodeau	Maggie Morgan
Cori Bodeman	Pam Miller
Melissa Boniface	Nancy Pearson
Sharon Brady	Debbie Potts
John Centko	Sarah Redmond
Marcia Cox	Brianna Renn
Courtney Ely	Sheri Richard
Sharon Ely	Amy Richmod
Melissa Erkkila	Missy Rife
Nancy Feliciano	Shannon Rogers
Melanie Flanigan	Carol Rose
Marc Grove	Theresa Sardini
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Women's Center

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Newsletter Printed and Mailed Thanks to a Generous Donor

Editor ~ Peggy Jensen



Women's Center

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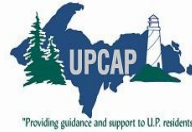
24/7 Toll Free Hotline: 1-800-455-6611

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PakRatz

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SERVING MARQUETTE & ALGER COUNTIES

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or 1-800.455.6611

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