

SPRING 2017

The Laurel Center Newsletter



“Working together to stop the cycle of domestic and sexual violence.”

Mission Statement

Incorporated in 1983, The Laurel Center serves Winchester City, Frederick and Clarke Counties and provides services to sexual violence victims in Warren County.

The Laurel Center empowers victims of domestic and sexual violence by providing emergency housing, advocacy, support services, and education. We reach out to our community through education and awareness programs.

This newsletter is published twice a year and sent to supporters, community organizations, and allied professionals.

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Letter from the Executive Director

Ten years ago, The Laurel Center launched a Capital Campaign to build a brand new Center in the midst of an economic downturn the world still has not fully recovered from. As many of you know, it has been a long road. The exterior of the building on Cameron Street was completed in 2013. For several years thereafter, the Campaign languished. Over the past eighteen months, everywhere I go in Winchester people ask me, when will the new building be finished? I have received dozens of letters and emails expressing enthusiastic support, many with slightly pessimistic postscripts; this is going to be hard, people told me. Trying to raise \$3.5 million to complete the project in this financial climate, in such a small town may not be possible, they said.

The truth is, yes, it has been, and I dare say, will continue to be, a challenge. But the difficulties we have encountered during our Capital Campaign pale in comparison to those problems many Northern Shenandoah Valley families face each day. Like waking up wondering, “Will this be the day he finally kills me?” Like discovering your child has been sexual assaulted by someone you trust, which will affect the rest of his life. Or, having a baby as a teenager and being forced to stay in a relationship where you are abused in order to support that baby. Finding affordable housing that would allow you and your children a safe place to live when you only earn minimum wage. Or even, maintaining steady employment without the benefit of reliable transportation.

When we weighed our options – trying to raise money in a small town during economically tough times against turning people away who needed our services because we haven’t grown enough to accommodate them – it was an easy decision for the Board of Directors and me to agree to proceed against all odds.

Now, as we plan to launch the final phase of construction on May 1st we do so with the belief that the generous folks of this community will rally to our cause.

The Laurel Center has experienced unrepresented growth over the past year. We view this growth as an opportunity to become a “big tent” organization addressing domestic and sexual violence from a full continuum of intervention services and far-reaching prevention strategies for women, children, and men.

For me personally, managing the tension points of our rapid growth over the past year has been a creative process. Although we honor, respect, and hold sacred the long history of work performed by those that have gone before us, we recognize the future is inevitably about change.

If I could put my finger on the most significant change, I would point to the extent to which more people now see us as “center” to solving the problem of domestic and sexual violence. We have long been the go-to resource in the region for direct services and intervention. That aspect of our organizational work has been well understood. We now look toward the future by expanding our services to include more community-based prevention service, clinical therapeutic services for child victims of sexual assault and services designed to specifically meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence.

Centering the organization toward the goal of domestic peace and personal safety has deepened the dialogue with individuals, collaborators, donors, and community members. It has enriched our work with teens, young adults, and most recently children. It has also created the space for more people to say, “Wow, I want that for myself.”

(Continued on Page 2)

April is

Sexual Assault
Awareness Month

Letter from the Executive Director (continued)

While thinking about this vision of “Centering,” I have to ask myself, what is it that so many of us want? Whether directly impacted by domestic or sexual violence or not, many of us desire to have safety, respect, understanding, support, and equality, not only in intimate relationships, but in all relationships – with children, friends, family members and our communities.

Speaking to this desire presents an opportunity for us at TLC to not only have a “big-tent” approach to what we do, but actually fill the tent increasingly with people who understand the intersections between domestic and sexual violence and the “power over” paradigm of coercion, intimidation, and violence that is impacting our world on multiple levels.

To that end, as we move forward, we are forever committed to engaging with more and more people who feel passionate about our cause, and who can help us do more good with passion!”

Now begins the task of maintaining our momentum. We plan to analyze our existing programs to ensure they are the best they can be; we also plan to improve those programs which could serve more people with greater success. It’s amazing how reaching one goal leads to setting more goals!

To our friends, families, community members and particularly The Laurel Center’s board members, we offer a deeply felt thank you for your continued support during our Capital Campaign and beyond. We look forward to sharing our successes with you in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Kaye Harris,

Executive Director

Restoring Hope from the Inside Out

In February 2016 we resumed the Capital Campaign in earnest, forming a new steering committee and working with the counsel of Hartsook Companies. We are pleased that our efforts in the past year have produced results. Thanks to generous donations and pledges, an updated contract from Howard Shockey & Sons, and community support, we are excited to announce May 1 will begin construction to complete our new center! Barring any delays, we should be moved into the new building around the first of the year.

The new Emergency Shelter and Outreach Center will provide the space we need now and in to the future. The new facility will double our capacity and provide private and safe living facilities for a minimum of 400 women and children annually and provide meeting rooms, offices, and counseling space for clients, staff and volunteers. This space will ensure that endangered women and children have a safe and supportive place to turn to when in fear or danger of domestic or sexual violence.

The new handicapped accessible center features:

- Eight individual bedrooms (32 beds total) that will give families the privacy of their own rooms
- A large kitchen and living area where individuals and families can gather
- Cheerful play areas indoors and outside for both older and younger children
- Private counseling rooms and support group meeting rooms
- Conference and meeting rooms for educational programs and training
- Space on the 3rd floor to house our children’s program providing services to children who have been exposed to domestic violence.
-

Please consider a donation to our Capital Campaign. Gifts to the Capital Campaign are held in a separate reserve account and will be used for all building and campaign expenses. To support the campaign, please write “Capital Campaign” on your check.

Upcoming Events

Hope and Resiliency—Survivors' Stories Through Art

Bright Box Theatre

April 20, 6:00—8:00 pm

This FREE art show is for survivors of sexual violence to share their stories and raise awareness of the issue.

“Remembering Your Strength” Mother–Daughter Girls Night Out

Polka Dot Pot

Wednesday, May 10, 6:00—8:00 pm

The Laurel Center is hosting this FREE event for Mothers (or Mother figures) and girls 11 and up to spend a fun night out together painting pottery and communicating about what makes them strong. Light snacks provided. Seating is very limited and pre-registration is required. Call Leslie to register at 667-6160.

“Finding Your Balance” Girls Night Out Paint Night

The Studio-A Place for Learning, 105 E. Main Street, Front Royal

Thursday, May 18, 5:30-7:30 pm

Hosted by the Laurel Center, this is a FREE event for adults. Participants will spend the evening exploring the idea of keeping balance in their lives. Seating is very limited and pre-registration is required. Light snacks provided. Call Trish at 540-305-1083 to register. No artistic skill necessary.

BBQ Blast

Ruritan Grounds at the Frederick County Fairgrounds, Clearbrook

May 20, 11:00 am—6:00 pm

Presented by the Top of Virginia Building Association to benefit The Laurel Center. Advanced tickets are \$5 and \$10 day of the event and can be purchased at Handy Mart, Jim Stutzman Chevrolet, Total Image, and the Floorshop. Go to www.tvba.org for more information.

Power of the Purse

Valerie Hill Winery

June 2

Come out with your friends and enjoy some wine as you bid on fabulous purses! More details will be available soon on our Facebook page.

The Laurel Center Staff

Kaye Harris, Executive Director

Angie Davis, Executive Assistant

Cindy Marzullo, Development Director/Volunteer Coordinator

Jean Verasammy, DV Program Coordinator

Kelly Camp, DV Counselor

Elisa Dove, DV Counselor

Kasey Greene, DV Victim Advocate

Shirley Guzman, DV Counselor, CIC On-Call

Donna Hogan, Criminal Justice Coordinator

Kia Pugh, Housing Program Manager

Ashley Stanley, DV Services Coordinator

Leslie Hardesty, SA Program Coordinator

Tesa Brody-Wrye, Child Sexual Assault Therapist

Leigh Cheatham, SA Victim Advocate

Trish Kerns, SA Victim Advocate, Warren County

Katie Moffitt, SA Prevention Specialist

Adriana Myers, SA Prevention Specialist

Lisa Herbaugh, Children's Program Coordinator

Brianna Lauffer, Children's Project Victim Advocate

Lynda Perry, Children's Project Care Coordinator

Louise Dixon, Shelter Manager

Sabrina Johnson, Shelter Manager

Vivian Kahl, Shelter Manager

Lauren Segovia, Shelter Manager

Maeve Gerboth, CIC On-Call

Barbara Huffman, CIC On-Call

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

This year's national theme, "Engaging New Voices," builds on the idea that we are stronger together, and that new partners and community members are needed to expand sexual assault prevention efforts. We can all help the next generation foster attitudes that promote healthy relationships, equality and respect.

Nearly one in five women and one in 71 men are victims of sexual assault (Black et al., 2011). We all have a role to play in preventing sexual violence in our community. Our actions, big and small, have a ripple effect on those we teach, guide and influence. From modeling healthy behavior to addressing inappropriate conduct, everyone can make a difference.

Here are some ways you can help:

Parents of young children:

- Respect your child's right to make choices about their body early on. For example, don't make them hug someone they don't want to.
- Encourage your child to respect the choices of others. For example, tell them to ask their friends if it's okay before hugging, holding hands, taking pictures, etc.
- Teach your children correct names for all their body parts, including their genitals. This information empowers children to know their bodies and better understand development.

Parents of young adults:

- Talk openly about sexuality and development. Say things like, "It's normal to have a lot of questions. It might feel uncomfortable at first to ask but I'd rather you hear the information from me."
- Practice how you could respond to questions that might make you uncomfortable. For example, what would you say if your son/daughter asked about birth control?
- Look for opportunities in pop culture to continue the conversation about healthy relationships. An example might be when you're watching TV together, point out examples of positive relationships.
- Talk frequently about consent. You can say, "Consent should be freely given. If you pressure someone, that isn't consent-even if they haven't said 'no.' That applies in real life, online and in texts."

Community/Social Media Community members:

- Believe and support survivors. For example, thank survivors for sharing their stories in their comments or in person.
- Respond to victim-blaming, rape jokes, or other problematic comments on social media by posting responses like, "Sexual assault is never the survivor's fault." Or by refocusing accountability on the individual(s) who committed sexual abuse.
- Explore and address your own personal biases. Ask yourself how your behavior might perpetuate bias or violence against others. For example, do you believe that women are raped because of the clothes they wear?
- Link to an educational resource about sexual violence programming(nsvrc.org, rainn.org, etc.).
- Encourage your church or organization to train staff, volunteers and congregations to model healthy behavior and boundaries with adults and children and to develop victim-centered policies.
- Collaborate with and support your local rape crisis center(volunteer, host trainings, post contact information on bulletin boards, attend trainings and events, etc.).

Coaches/Teachers:

- Set clear expectations for players/students and staff. For example, have a code of conduct that outlines consequences for catcalling or players using gender or sexual orientation as an insult.
- Address inappropriate behaviors and turn them into teachable moments.
- Encourage team members/students to recognize and confront hurtful behavior, even if it comes from teammates or friends.

Survivors:

- Remember everyone heals in their own time and their own way and the path isn't always a straight line.
- Read or share messages of encouragement with other survivors.
- Join an online or In-person survivor group.
- You are not alone. Connect with your local rape crisis center for resources and support.

Get engaged this April during Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Join us in embracing your role in ending sexual assault. Use your voice to change the culture.

(Adapted from nsvrc.org/saam)

News from The Laurel Center

Children's Program

The Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) awarded a grant to fund The Laurel Center Children's Project through the Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) New Initiative funding. The Children's Project is housed at an off site location and provides services to children ages 5-17. Services include Care Coordination, Victim Advocacy, Court Accompaniment, therapy, and curriculum based educational groups. Lisa Herbaugh has been hired as the Children's Project Program Coordinator. Lynda Perry is the Children's Project Care Coordinator. Brianna Lauffer is the Children's Project Victim Advocate. To date, 11 children have been enrolled in the project.

Welcome to The Laurel Center!

Tesa Brody-Wrye joined The Laurel Center team in October 2016 as the Child Sexual Assault Therapist. She has worked as a mental health professional for 10 years in various roles and levels of care, including: crisis intervention and counseling, acute in-patient counseling, adolescent residential treatment, and clinical administration. Tesa has received continuing education in Brief Solution Focused Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Personality Disorders, Collaborative and Proactive Solutions, and Trauma focused treatment.

Tesa graduated with a Bachelors of Social Work from Shepherd University and a Masters of Social Work from the University of Maryland, Baltimore. She has been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker since 2013 and a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional since 2015.

Thank You to Our Community Partners



Thank you to the Sherando High School Future Business Leaders of America for their donation of toys and books to The Laurel Center. From left to right: Mitchell Skowbo (President), Maiya Woodward (Secretary), Zane Richardson (Member), Claire Sumner *sitting on the floor* (Member), Lauren Fieghery (Member)

The Laurel Center is so grateful for the support from our community. Each week we receive generous in-kind donations from community groups and individuals. Your generosity makes a difference to all our clients. In-kind donations help with our grant match and provide much needed supplies for our clients. Please see our Wish List below for the items we need most.

Wish List Items

Alarm clocks
Women's shaving cream & razors
Hair brushes & hair ties
Chap stick
Shampoo & Conditioner
Deodorant
Nyquil/Dayquil
Hand sanitizer
Mouth wash
Cotton balls/q-tips
Baby shampoo/soap
Baby powder
Milk formula
Pacifiers, baby bottles, sippy cups

Desitin
Baby wipes
Paper towels
Toilet paper
Trash bags
Aluminum foil, plastic wrap, sandwich bags
Toilet brushes
Cleaning supplies (mops, brooms, sponges, bathroom cleaner, kitchen cleaner)
Dish soap
Laundry detergent
Dryer sheets

Disinfectant spray/wipes
Silverware
Cooking utensils

***Please note that due to limited space, we are not able to accept travel size items, clothing or books, unless there is a specific need listed.**

***When making in-kind donations with a value of \$100 or more, please bring an itemized list so we can track the donations appropriately.**

Thank you!

On behalf of up to 3,000 victims who receive services each year, The Laurel Center wishes to thank the following supporters for their cash contributions received September 1, 2016 to February 28, 2017:

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Ann Zuckerman

*all or part of the donation went to the Capital Campaign

Help The Laurel Center Make a Difference

Monetary Contributions

The Laurel Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Monetary contributions to The Laurel Center are tax-deductible to the extent the law allows. Please use the enclosed envelope to send your supporting contribution. To support our operating expenses, please write "Operating" on your check.

Gifts to the Capital Campaign are held in a separate reserve account and will be used for all building and campaign expenses. To support the campaign, please write "Capital Campaign" on your check.

In-Kind Donations

When making in-kind donations with a value of \$100 or more, please bring an itemized list to attach to your donor receipt. This helps us keep accurate records.

Cell Phones

You can donate your old cell phones, smartphones, iPads, and iPods to The Laurel Center and help someone in need. Cell phones may be given to people at risk to use for 911 without a service agreement. We also turn in cell phones for cash for The Laurel Center operating expenses. We have earned over \$12,000 participating in the cell phone exchange program!

Volunteer

Volunteers are vital to our programs. Volunteer opportunities include: Crisis Intervention Companions (CICs), assisting with fundraisers and special events, child care, court advocacy, answering hotline calls. Volunteers must attend 5 basic classes as well as additional advanced training.

If you are interested in joining our volunteer team, please contact Cindy Marzullo at 540-667-6160 for more information.

Thank you for your support!

The Laurel Center
P.O. Box 14
Winchester, VA 22604

Office: 540-667-6160
Hotline: 540-667-6466
Fax: 540-667-0138
www.thelaurelcenter.org

Email:
thelaurelcenter@comcast.net



www.thelaurelcenter.org

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Fax: 540-667-0138
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