

Housing and Economic Justice: The last few months have been very exciting. On March 16th, Zeb held a training on the Allstate financial empowerment curriculum. That training was attended by near 30 advocates and Zeb handed out over 200 educational resource binders for survivors, complete with pen, DVD and calculator. Also this month ICADV signed a memorandum of understanding to support the development of affordable rental housing in Des Moines.

The Skylark Project: The Skylark Project finished two important projects in February. First we applied for a new grant through the Office on Violence Against Women. With the financial help of OVW, we can expand the scope of our work with women leaving prison and re-entering their communities. Our re-entry counseling services would connect women from Iowa Correctional Institution for Women and Mount Pleasant Correctional Facility with important services in their communities, like local domestic violence programs, employment, and housing opportunities. Trying to balance the financial, employment, and parole obligations associated with leaving prison is an overwhelming experience for most women. Our re-entry services would help survivors of domestic violence withstand this pressure while establishing safety and independence. OVW grants will be awarded in September, so keep your fingers crossed!

In February two more Skylark Project commutation candidates took another exciting and important step toward submitting their applications. Katie and Liz presented the stories of these two candidates to the independent Expert Review Panel, and both candidates received immediate, resounding support. One candidate went to prison as a teenager: she pleaded guilty to attempted murder rather than face trial for a murder committed by her much-older abusive boyfriend. The other candidate has been in prison for over thirty years, convicted of murder in a shared trial with her abusive husband, despite very limited involvement in the crime and a promise for leniency from a former Governor. The Expert Review Panel quickly recognized the coercion and abuse that forced these women to participate in crime, and the Panel unanimously agreed that justice demands commutation for both women. In the coming months the Skylark Project will help these women gather letters of support from their communities before submitting their applications for commutation to the Board of Parole and the Governor this summer.

Public Policy: Our proposed legislation Senate File 2357 would give local law enforcement the authority for taking firearms out of the hands of a person convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic abuse or a person who has a qualifying protective order against him. Currently there is already similar federal law in place. However, without local law enforcement involved abusers will not, and are not, abiding by the federal firearms ban. The bill passed the Senate early on with a vote of 36 to 11. The real challenge began when it went over to the House. SF 2357 passed the House Public Safety Committee on March 3 by a vote of 16 to 5. The Representatives who did not support the legislation included Representatives Alons, Rayhons, Baudler, Worthan, and Sands.

The bill was amended in Committee to include a provision that would exempt from the firearms ban law enforcement service weapons. This exemption would only apply to protective orders and not in situations where the cop is convicted of domestic abuse. Also, cops personal firearms would still be subject to the ban. This amendment also limited the scope of the firearms ban to the types of relationship included currently under federal law. This would exclude dating relationships. Finally the amendment limited the situations in which the firearms ban applied to misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence. To be eligible the crime must include at minimum an “attempt” to assault not just the threat of

assault. It is important to note that all of these provisions are currently already in federal law and the amendments act only to mirror the proposed state law with the current federal law.

Senate File 2357 passed the full House on March 10 by a vote of 73 to 25. Those voting no on the bill included:

Alons, Baudler, Chambers, De Boef, Deyoe, Forristall, Grassley, Hagenow, Helland, Horbach, Huseman, Paulsen, Rants, Rayhons, Roberts, Sands, Schultz, Soderberg, Sorenson, Sweeney, Tymeson, Wagner, Watts, Windschitl, Worthan.

The Senate concurred with the amendments added in the House on March 11 passing the bill as amended by a vote of 36 to 12. The bill was signed by the Governor on Monday March 22.



Prevention:

Organizational Changes: At the very end of January ICADV's Board approved our new Vision and Mission statement. We are really excited about adding prevention to our agencies goals. ICADV staff has also created a draft of our long range plan—including some new prevention goals. In the coming months the board will be reviewing and approving our updated long range plan. Adam presented the new certification process to the membership during the March membership meeting. Board approval is still pending; however prevention and social change have both been added as tracks advocates can take.

Training: Our prevention Coordinator held a 5 hour training. Topics included prevention 101, risk and protection factors, and incorporating prevention into your work plan. In the coming months we will be announcing a summer series of prevention webinars. Keep your eyes open for updates.

Social Marketing Interns: We held our initial intern workshop in early February and a follow up workshop near the beginning of March. These two workshops helped students to get a base knowledge of domestic violence, prevention, social marketing and planning. Students are currently completing a survey of their target audience and will begin to develop a product in the coming months.

Men's Committee: The men's committee has a draft of their new mission statement and have been toying around with a few names. During the March call members organized to have men from the Minnesota Men's Action Network share about their experience in forming a group and organizing men.

Grants: We were notified that we received funding from the Office of Women's Health to support our social marketing interns. Cost of training, travel and a small stipend will now be able to be covered. We are also excited to announce that the Department of Public Health received a grant (Project Connect) to partner domestic violence programs with health care providers. ICADV is a partner on this grant and we are excited for the work to come. We also were notified that ICADV's application for year two funding of DELTA PREP has been approved. Funding is always an issue so we are excited to be piecing these things together.

Training: In the past couple months, Kirsten has launched a series of webinars, including Lunch and Learns, certification trainings and best practices discussions. Webinars are taking ICADV by storm! She has also done some work on an amicus brief for the Court of Appeals, as well as continuing to work on her responsibilities as part of the Domestic Violence Death Review Team. That included a guest appearance on the Fallon Forum radio show to talk about intimate partner homicides in Iowa.

REACH: REACH members are planning service projects for The First Lady's Shelter Awareness Day on April 24, 2010. This is the third year for shelter awareness day. The day creates opportunities for volunteer groups and shelter programs to complete much needed projects. The First Lady travels throughout Iowa visiting shelter sites and discussing the importance of supporting shelter programs in the community.

Development: It's About Time 2010 is right around the corner. It's only one month away! We have been gathering donations, planning menus, seeking sponsors, and envisioning lovely decorations. On that note, we are in search of white Christmas lights for our false wall that will form the "grand entrance" to the event. Please contact [Megan Thomassen](#) if you can donate some!