FEATURES:

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“You are part of their story”

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You Are Part of Their Story

When I think about what it takes to end the cycle of domestic violence, I am overwhelmed with gratitude for those in our community who are standing with us - to ensure thousands of families have a safe future, free from abuse. Just like the families we serve, they can’t do it alone, and we can’t do it alone either. . . so thank you.

With each newsletter, we hope to bring you updates about our programs and services, and the many ways Rose Brooks Center meets the needs of victims and survivors. We also hope you see yourselves in the solution and support given to each individual and child.

Within this issue, you will read about our court advocates as they help victims navigate the legal system and protect their rights. You will hear about students who were deeply impacted by the support they received from a Project SAFE® prevention specialist. You will read about the healing power of food, as Rose Brooks Center meets the basic need of nutrition by providing healthy meals to the families living in emergency shelter, and learn of the living legacy of one special volunteer.

In all of these stories, and more, you are part of the solution. Through your time, resources, and donations, you have made it possible, and are part of their story of healing and safety.

We thank you for standing with us as we all work to create safe futures.

Sincerely,

Susan K. Miller, CEO

P.S. Our 24-hour Help Line is 816.861.6100. Rose Brooks is here.

The Healing Power of Food (and those who serve it)

Through our Nutrition Program, Rose Brooks Center provides over 35,000 meals to survivors and children fleeing domestic violence in need of food, shelter, and support EACH year. The success of Rose Brooks’ nutrition program is demonstrated by the fact that fresh and healthy meals are always prepared on time, three times a day, 365 days a year.

Our kitchen staff is enthusiastic about creating meals which support the shelter residents’ healing process. Staff understand that when our bodies are stressed, it lowers our ability to process the food we eat. They also know our families have been living in trauma, limiting their ability to take care of themselves. This is where our incredible kitchen staff step in, build trusting relationships, and work each day to provide nutritious, healing foods that nourish and begin to reset their bodies.

Over the past 12-months, we have provided a total of 35,333 meals to adults and children in shelter, including 7,032 breakfasts, 11,412 lunches, 12,609 dinners and 4,280 supplemental meals. Kitchen staff utilize the dietary requirements as a framework from which to provide a variety of healthy, flavorful meals including full-liquid diet options for survivors who enter shelter ill, or with a jaw or mouth injury from abuse, inhibiting their ability to chew.

We thank our staff of Rose Brooks chefs for always working to overcome the difficult barrier of funding by being creative (a.k.a. “your very own on-site vegetable garden!”) and cognizant of costs.

We also thank The McGee Foundation and McGowan Charitable Foundation for their funding and instrumental role in our ability to offer nutritious, enjoyable, and incredibly healing meals for our families.
**Seeking Justice and Healing**

The criminal justice system can be daunting for anyone, let alone someone who is experiencing the trauma of being a victim of crime. When survivors of domestic violence step into a court room, they are often coming face to face with the person who hurt them for the first time since the assault, and it can be terrifying.

As we consider the victim, who is not only seeking justice but healing, we realize there is a gap that needs to be filled in supporting them through the process. Rose Brooks Center has been providing this assistance through our Court Advocate program for over 19 years in several Jackson County courts, including Order of Protection, Municipal, and Family Courts. Advocates talk victims through what will happen in court, walk with them through court hearings and answer any questions the victim may have - and this is all before entering the court room!

The program impact is incredibly substantial to those entering the legal system. Rose Brooks’ services include, but are not limited to, safety planning, crisis intervention, assistance with community resources and filing orders of protection. We additionally provide support to victims in criminal court and protection order court in matters such as explaining court procedures, accompanying victims to hearings, assisting in filing for protection orders, assisting victims through the processes should an order be violated, and filing for Crime Victims’ Compensation.

Because of this great need, we are proud to have been a significant and respected part of the Jackson County court and legal systems for nearly two decades, standing alongside survivors like Leslie (quoted below), when they needed us most.

“We had a court appearance. I was terrified to go by myself. I was very blessed that Rose Brooks Center had a court advocate to go with me. By showing up with the advocate, it deflated his power. He was shocked that I had someone from Rose Brooks with me.”

- Leslie, previous shelter resident and current survivor!

To learn more about our court program visit: [www.rosebrooks.org/services/community-outreach](http://www.rosebrooks.org/services/community-outreach)

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**Back to School**

“Back to school!” We’ve all heard this phrase and are certain it elicits a different response from nearly everyone who hears it. For the students in Rose Brooks Center’s Project SAFE® program, back to school can mean much more than ‘back to homework,’ it can mean weekly support from their Project SAFE prevention specialist. It is in this environment that students learn to cope with the unique challenges they face every day, as well as gain the resiliency skills needed to reframe any trauma they may have experienced.

In one area school last year, a Project SAFE prevention specialist watched the resiliency skills he teaches take action after a tragic event impacted the entire student body. “Kids wanted to talk and express their anger. The tension was palpable,” the prevention specialist explains. “But as we continued to meet, students began to shift their focus to more positive long term outcomes and practice social support techniques. Of course it was a tragic circumstance, but it gave them all the opportunity to reframe the trauma they had experienced.”

Being on-site multiple days allowed the prevention specialist to help support school staff, who requested his presence, along with the students who needed to talk. The school thanked Project SAFE for being on-site stating, “His presence de-escalated a situation that could have negatively impacted the rest of the school year.”

Project SAFE is a member of our violence prevention programming. To learn more please visit: [www.rosebrooks.org/services/community-outreach](http://www.rosebrooks.org/services/community-outreach)
Christine O’Brien was born in Atchison, KS in 1945. After receiving both her undergraduate and masters degree from Purdue in 1969, she went on to achieve a BS in Nursing from the University of Kansas in 1974, and worked in Kansas City in research on ALS and other neurological diseases in the early part of her career and with the health care insurance company Assurant in the latter part.

Christine had many passions in her life, one of the greatest of which was world travel. She visited Turkey, New Zealand, Scotland, and Greece to name a few. She had a deep spirit of curiosity and liked to plan her treks solo in order to have the biggest adventure. Christine also loved planting flower gardens and volunteering. Her favorites were the library, nature centers, performing arts…and Rose Brooks Center.

Christine was seldom without a canine love in her life, always Jack Russel Terriers, and at the end, it was her sweet Dani, with whom she did agility work and walked every single day.

Christine passed earlier this year, and while never a wealthy woman in finance, left two significant legacy gifts to Rose Brooks Center. One was an appreciated IRA, the other, a portion of her estate. Because of these gifts, Rose Brooks will be given further sustainability in our Pet Shelter program, and other lifesaving services. And Christine’s memory will live on.

To learn more about how you can create a lasting memory at Rose Brooks Center with a planned gift, please contact Marla Svoboda, Chief Development Officer, at 816-522-4675 or marla@rosebrooks.org.

Prepared a Community

Did you know Rose Brooks Center has a training center that provides education for over 100 service organizations throughout Kansas City, and beyond?! We believe the destructive cycle of abuse can only be broken by offering a full continuum of care which includes educating the greater community and its service organizations.

It is by educating community service providers that we will better prepare them to respond to victims of domestic violence, connecting them to available resources, and ultimately saving thousands of lives.

Our education programs aim to shed light on the issues of domestic violence and raise awareness of the challenges a victim faces in reaching out for help. Through education and awareness we hope to be able to reach many more victims and their families.

Game Changers

“Be a game changer for the families and pets of Rose Brooks Center!” This is the tag line for our very popular fall event, Casino & Auction Night. We hope to see you there, but more importantly we hope it starts a conversation about our mission and the impact you can create by attending! Funds raised from an event can help change the course of a survivor’s life. Some, who can’t attend the event, still provide a gift and designate it to Casino Night. It all counts!

Being a game changer means your gifts can be used for critical needs for survivors. i.e. Four clients were provided with assistance to obtain certifications required to secure new, safe employment. All four are STILL employed!

Start the conversation today by attending Casino & Auction Night, and introduce someone you know to the mission of Rose Brooks. #BeAGameChanger

Learn More: www.rosebrooks.org/casino-night

It is our initiative to create a safer community, for everyone. To see some of the classes we offer, please visit: www.rosebrooks.org/services/training

socialize with us.