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A World Without Violence

Earlier this spring, our hearts broke at the senseless violence impacting Black clients, staff and community, and we continue to stand with Black Lives Matter and others who want to be part of the solution.

We also saw unimaginable health concerns due to COVID-19 that required our swift action to provide uninterrupted services. Through it all, we knew we had a continued vision, regardless of our circumstances.

Rose Brooks Center envisions a world without violence. This has been our vision statement for over 40 years - and we believe it fully.

It is because of this vision that one of our initiatives is to create safer communities for those we serve, our staff, and our community. Rose Brooks Center will continue to advocate for victims of domestic violence who experience cultural and racial disparities. And we will continue to provide safety and support to all who are taking those incredibly difficult steps to leave abuse behind.

So, why do I believe we can have a world without violence? I believe it because I have seen the strength of Rose Brooks staff and clients when facing adversity or overcoming violence. I have witnessed the tireless work of our advocates when working with clients, and the steps taken by the systems we partner with to create change.

But mostly it is because I know the power of our voices when we stand together. When we stand together, we collectively remind this world there are still countless people impacted by domestic violence, who need to hear our voices and see our actions.

Thank you for standing with Rose Brooks Center.

Susan K. Miller, CEO

Empowerment by Employment

“This place saved my life, literally!” A Rose Brooks Center client shared these powerful words in an agency survey. These words are exactly why we take our mission so seriously - because we know what is at risk for survivors and their families. It is a humbling experience to be a part of helping someone build a new future, oftentimes beginning again from scratch.

Nationally, 30% to 52% of employed victims of domestic violence lose their jobs due in part to domestic violence. Survivors have endured partners who have caused employment sabotage, and long-term harm to the survivor’s employment history. The need for employment advocacy among survivors is critical as they build a new future, free from violence.

Our Employment Advocacy Program helps survivors create independence by improving employment readiness, job obtainment, and job retention - in addition to other economic and long-term housing goals.

For those who have to start over, this program delivers empowerment by employment - and it is creating safe, independent futures for survivors of domestic violence.
A Swift Response

Rose Brooks Center is about saving lives - so it was vital that our response to COVID-19 was swift and thorough. In March, at the same moment that Kansas City’s mayor was declaring a state of emergency, Rose Brook’s executive team created an emergency response plan for the 120+ employees of the agency, as well as the families and pets living in shelter. Additionally, an action plan to have all program delivery transition to virtual or teleservices was put into place - and the result was uninterrupted safety and care.

The COVID crisis has required Rose Brooks to incur a large amount of unexpected, unbudgeted expenses which will continue to mount as we carry out a new style of service delivery over the coming weeks and months. But with support from generous donors we stay committed to protect the safety and health of clients, staff, and community.

We continue to effectively respond to challenges on a daily and sometimes hourly basis. We do this because we know that domestic violence does not subside during a time like this, but rather it escalates as abusers use isolation as yet another tool of abuse for already vulnerable victims.

See below each photo some examples of how Rose Brooks continues to respond to a few of the COVID related challenges.

To decrease the need for shared spaces, we installed TVs and fridges, and additional outlets in each individual room.

We transitioned the 24/7 hotline to be answered securely at advocates’ homes. The hotline saw an increase in callers due to the stay-at-home order.

We added social distancing signs throughout shelter and administration offices.

Staying Connected to Students

During COVID-19, school shutdowns, and stay-at-home orders, students throughout the country were also being asked to continue to participate in learning via virtual classrooms. But when we don’t feel safe, learning becomes difficult, which is precisely why the staff in Rose Brooks Center’s school-based Project SAFE® program knew they needed to respond quickly. Project SAFE wanted to help their students feel as safe and resilient as possible while continuing to meet the emotional needs of students.

Because of the relationships Project SAFE staff have with their respective schools, they were seamlessly able to stay connected to their students despite not being in the classroom. “Since we did not have access to the individual students, we sent videos we created to the classroom teachers for distribution,” explains Stephanie Milby, Director of Children’s Services at Rose Brooks Center. “The teachers were extremely supportive and excited for us to continue our work with the kids and truly saw us as educational partners.”

Many schools included Project SAFE’s videos on Counseling Google Classrooms as well as the individual teacher’s Google Classroom. All-in-all, videos were sent to approximately 40 classroom teachers during the stay-at-home order, as Jackson County finished out the school year from home.

To learn more about Rose Brooks Center’s school-based violence prevention program, visit us online at www.rosebrooks.org/services/community-outreach.
Questions about giving? Please feel free to reach out to Marla Svoboda, Chief Development Officer at marla@rosebrooks.org or call 816-605-7110.

P.S. Thank You!!

Thank you to each and every individual and partner who continues to stand with us by your support. Because of your continued kindness, we can say “Rose Brooks is here” for survivors and victims of domestic violence.

We are stronger together. We are Rose Brooks.