

President's Message

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

By President Valerie Briggs Bargas

Domestic violence is the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by one intimate partner against another. It includes physical violence, sexual violence, threats and emotional abuse.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence recently reported that one in three women in the United States has experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner. This could be your mother, your sister, your daughter, your friend. Domestic violence cuts across all socioeconomic lines, affecting rich, poor, black, white, young and old.

Did you know?

▶ Every nine seconds, a woman is battered in the United States.¹

▶ Fifty-seven percent of homeless families identified domestic violence as a primary cause of homelessness.²

▶ About four in 10 female victims of intimate partner violence lived in households with children under age 12.³

▶ Forty to 60 percent of men who abuse women also abuse children.⁴

▶ Each year, an estimated 3.3 million children are exposed to violence by family members against their mothers or female caretakers.⁵

▶ Boys who witness domestic violence

in their own home are three times more likely to become batterers.⁶

▶ Forty percent of teenage girls age 14 to 17 know someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.⁷

▶ Louisiana is ranked second highest in the nation for homicides related to domestic abuse. Also, 81 percent of female homicides in Louisiana are committed by a partner or ex-partner.⁸

▶ There has been at least one domestic homicide in every parish in Louisiana.⁹

▶ More than 5,000 adult women per year living in Louisiana will experience domestic violence.¹⁰

The Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) is dedicated to helping protect families and empower victims so they can feel safe. According to 2015 statistics provided by our grantees, LBF funding was able to help more than 10,118 women and 5,454 children in Louisiana with the safety they needed from an abuser.

I am proud to report that this year the LBF awarded more than \$499,602 in grants to domestic violence agencies across the state. These agencies provide legal services for women and children to help them feel safe again. The essential services provided by these agencies include a 24-hour crisis line; shelter for abused spouses and their children; legal services; education concerning domestic and dating violence; and establishing collaborative relationships with law enforcement, judges, clerks of court and prosecutors.

As lawyers, we have an opportunity to help victims gain access to the legal system regardless of financial situation and to help break the cycle of violence in their family. We can do this by supporting the LBF.

The LBF proudly supports the fol-



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lowing domestic violence programs — Beauregard Community Concerns, Inc.; Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans/Project S.A.V.E.; Chez Hope, Inc.; D.A.R.T. of Lincoln; Faith House, Inc.; Faith House, Inc./Family Justice Center of Central Louisiana; Jeff Davis Communities Against Domestic Abuse; Metro Centers for Community Advocacy; Oasis; Project Celebration, Inc.; Safe Harbor, Inc.; Southeast Spouse Abuse Program; St. Bernard Battered Women's Program; The Haven, Inc.; and The Wellspring Alliance for Families, Inc.

FOOTNOTES

1. AMA, 1998, Georgia Department of Human Resources, 1999.

2. The United States Conference of Mayors, A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities: 1999, December 1999, p. 94.

3. Reprinted and adapted from "News Flash" (<http://www.fypf.org/newsflash>), an online newsletter of the Family Violence Prevention Fund.

4. American Psychol. Ass'n, Violence and the Family: Report of the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family (1996), p. 80.

5. American Psychol. Ass'n, Violence and the Family: Report of the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family (1996), p. 11.

6. M.A. Straus, R.J. Gelles and S. Steinmetz, *Behind Closed Doors*. Doubleday, Anchor, 1980.

7. Children Now/Kaiser Permanente Poll, December 1995.

8. Violence Policy Center. When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2014 Homicide Data (September 2016).

9. Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence. 2015 Legislative Guide. <http://lcadv.org/wp-content/uploads/2015-LCADV-Legislative-Guide2.pdf>.

10. Tjaden and Thoenne, National Institute of Justice and the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention Survey, 2000. 4. M.C. Black, K.C. Basile, M.J. Breiding, S.G. Smith, M.L. Walters, M.T. Merrick, J. Chen and M. Stevens (2011). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from: http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf.

Louisiana Bar Foundation Announces New Fellows

The Louisiana Bar Foundation announces new Fellows:

Hon. Clare F. Jupiter..... New Orleans
 Kathryn A. Dufrene Baton Rouge
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 Katherine L. Hurst..... Lafayette
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