Celebrating Solutions Award
Nomination Form

Legal name of organization: Asian Women's Shelter

Year established: 1988

Program nominated for award (if different): The Multilingual Access Model (MLAM) Program

Year established: 1991

Address: 3543 18th St, #19

City/State/ZIP code: San Francisco, CA 94110

Agency phone number: (415) 751-7110

Contact person: Stelet Kim

Title: Community Resource Coordinator

Phone number: (415) 751-7110 ext. 310

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E-mail address: stelet@sfaws.org

Website address: www.sfaws.org

Brief description of organization: Since 1988, AWS has become a nationally recognized leader in providing culturally competent and linguistically accessible services for immigrant domestic violence survivors. Primarily San Francisco Bay Area.

Geographical area served: Yes

Is the organization tax-exempt under IRS 501 (c) (3) guidelines or a public agency/unit of government? Yes

Please check up to five descriptors that best apply to the program you are nominating:

- Batterer treatment
- Coalition/collaboration
- Counseling
- Dating violence
- Elder abuse
- Employment/training program
- Faith-based
- Health care setting
- Hotline service
- Legal aid/assistance
- Prison-based

- Public awareness/education
- School/youth violence
- Shelter-based
- Stalking
- Technology/Internet service
- Transitional housing
- Underserved population
- University setting
- Victim relocation
- Other ___________________
As one of the goals of the Mary Byron Project is to disseminate information about cutting-edge programs and best practices, we wish to post exemplary Celebrating Solutions Award nominations on our website (www.marybyronproject.org). Those posted will include the organization’s website address, telephone number, and e-mail address. If you have concerns about this request, please address them to information@marybyronproject.org, prior to submitting a nomination.

By my signature on this letter, I grant the Mary Byron Project permission to use the contents of my nomination for the Celebrating Solutions Award in the manner and for the purposes set above. I further affirm that I am fully authorized to grant such permission to the Mary Byron Project.

______________________________
Signature

______________________________
Date December 16, 2011
1. **Describe the mission of your organization in five sentences or less.**

The mission of Asian Women's Shelter (AWS) is to end domestic violence in all of our communities by promoting the social, economic and political self-determination of women. AWS recognizes that domestic violence stems from the oppression of women and is further compounded for immigrant women as it combines with racism, homophobia, classism, ableism and ageism. AWS is committed to every person's right to live in a violence-free home and has a specific focus towards addressing the cultural and linguistic needs of immigrant, refugee, and U.S.-born Asian women and their children. This philosophy is reflected in AWS's non-hierarchical, consensus-based structure, and in its main areas of work: Direct Services, Community Building, and Organizational Development.

2. **Describe the most innovative aspects of the program you are submitting for consideration.**

One of the most innovative aspects of AWS's Direct Services Program is the Multilingual Access Model (MLAM) Program. It has been key to the agency's success in breaking through language and cultural barriers to meet the needs of our clients. In San Francisco, Asians account for approximately 32% of the population, 50% of which is limited English proficient (LEP) and approximately 80% of which speak a language other than English at home. One tenth live below the federal poverty line and 27% live below the 200% federal poverty line (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Asians living in the Bay Area encompass a diversity of over 40 different ethnic groups, 100 languages, newcomers to fifth generation Americans and a broad range of socio-economic status, religions, sexual identity and age. For 23 years, Asian Women's Shelter (AWS) has worked effectively with thousands of survivors in the San Francisco Bay Area to break the cycle of violence and has partnered with hundreds of agencies to create a safety net of services. Although AWS's doors are open to all women, children, youth, and transgender individuals, the vast majority of the clients are limited or non-English speaking immigrant women and children. Through the MLAM Program, AWS is able to provide services to all clients.

The MLAM Program does far more than just provide translators and interpreters. It combines both the Direct Services and Community Building Programs by providing clients with cultural, social and linguistic support and the coordination of social services, as well as culturally and linguistically competent community outreach and education. Through the program, AWS is able to better serve all survivors and their children, support community-based organizations and government agencies, as well as empower and create a strong cadre of advocates in underserved communities. The MLAM Program's goals are threefold:

1. **Direct Services:** Meet the urgent needs of AWS residents, outside clients and crisis-line callers through language accessibility. Over 90% of AWS's clients—shelter residents, clients who don't require emergency shelter and crisis-line callers—are LEP or non-English speakers.
For these survivors, language accessibility is the entry point to services and help. In order for AWS to provide clients with an array of services, such as shelter, legal advocacy, counseling, employment and housing assistance, the ability to communicate is the first priority. Currently, AWS offers support in 35 languages and dialects, and has a pool of 110 active MLAMs (language advocates).

(2) **Coordination of Services & Resources:** Address the lack of accessible social services for non-English speaking survivors of violence. In recognition of the need for accessible services to LEP or non-English speaking clients, AWS staff and MLAMs work side by side with government agencies and other community-based organizations to ensure that survivors have access to the comprehensive services they require. To support clients, AWS believes strongly in sustaining meaningful and reciprocal community partnerships, and sharing training experience and technical assistance. As one of the most vocal advocates for the Equal Access to Service Ordinance in San Francisco County, AWS created and spearheads the Citywide MLAM Program, in which the organization’s pool of language advocates are shared among five San Francisco-based anti-violence organizations (See “Local Collaboratives” under “Key Partners”). AWS has a current grant from the U.S. Office on Violence Against Women that has enabled it to extend the Citywide MLAM program to two additional programs, Gum Moon Women’s Residence and Clara House. Extending to these two transitional housing programs has increased access to housing for non-English speaking survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence.

(3) **Community Building:** Utilize language advocates to change cultural norms to end the generational cycle of domestic violence. Through the MLAM program, women become empowered leaders and resources within their respective communities, including immigrant and queer communities. After completing a mandatory 74+ hour training, participants become certified domestic violence counselors in the State of California and MLAMs. MLAMs provide critical services to AWS by bridging the communication gap between advocates and clients, providing emotional support for survivors and their children and accompanying them to important meetings, such as legal proceedings and immigration and medical appointments. In addition, language advocates provide community education and leadership within their own communities to change cultural norms to end domestic violence. An example is a group of Thai language advocates, volunteers, and staff who have gathered to train and have dialogue with Thai Buddhist monks and create culturally appropriate responses for Thai temples to address domestic violence in the Thai community.

3. **Describe your program’s implementation. What barriers did your organization have to overcome? How did you marshal the necessary resources for implementation?**

The MLAM Program was created and implemented by AWS in 1991 (two years after we first opened our doors) in order to address the absence of structured language support for non-English speaking survivors of domestic violence in the San Francisco Bay Area. Commitment and dedication of time and energy from staff and AWS constituencies were critical to the founding of the program because there were no similar programs in existence at the time; there was no blueprint to work from or model to follow. Initial barriers included: (1) finding diverse and culturally appropriate ways to publicize the
MLAM project and recruit from underserved communities; (2) finding seed and sustainable program funding; and (3) finding qualified and appropriate program staffing, especially among community partners. Through careful planning, grassroots organizing, and strong staff focus, support and commitment—and drawing from years of experience working with this population—AWS created an achievable work plan that involved collaborating with community-based partners throughout the Bay Area to publicize and recruit for the MLAM Program. After several years of thoughtful planning and implementation, AWS was also able to receive seed funding from local and state government agencies to support the MLAM project.

4. **How do you know your program works?**

Since its founding, the MLAM Program has grown and expanded, enabling it to better fulfill its three goals of (1) meeting the urgent needs of AWS residents, outside clients and crisis-line callers through language accessibility, (2) addressing the lack of accessible social services for non-English speaking survivors of violence, and (3) building capacity in underserved communities by recruiting and training bilingual, bicultural women to become language advocates. The following are some key examples to illustrate how the MLAM Program is succeeding in each of its goals:

- Upon the shelter’s opening in 1988, language support was offered in only English, Lao, and Mien. Today, MLAMs are available in 35 languages, allowing AWS to offer support to the East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and West Asian populations, Russian population, Spanish-speaking populations and Arabic and Farsi-speaking populations.

- During the 2010-2011 fiscal year, AWS provided 3,177 shelter bed nights, with over 90% of shelter residents requiring language support in 13 different languages, and MLAMs providing 1700 hours of support. Upon leaving, over 90% of these residents provided positive feedback through surveys and exit questionnaires, and stated that they were satisfied with the language support they received at AWS. Also during 2010-2011, AWS responded to 1,001 crisis calls, 50% of those in 22 different languages, roughly equating to 200 hours of language support.

- Due to the success of AWS’s MLAM Program, other agencies expressed their desire to use our language advocates, and the Citywide MLAM Program was born: seven other agencies in San Francisco now use AWS’s pool of language advocates and have committed to increasing their agencies’ language and cultural capacity to better meet the needs of their clients. A number of programs throughout the nation have also replicated the MLAM Program, including Asian Pacific Women’s Center in Los Angeles, Raksha in Atlanta, Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project in Washington D.C., Asian Women United of Minnesota, and My Sister’s House in Sacramento, and Women’s SOLE in St. Louis—and we receive additional requests for technical assistance regularly.

- Twice a year, between 15-25 individuals, many of whom are domestic violence survivors, become language advocates in approximately 8-10 languages. For these individuals, it is empowering to become resources for their peers and provide culturally appropriate support and advocacy in their native tongues. Almost 100%
of MLAMs maintain at least a one-year commitment to language support and advocacy, and approximately 95% remain MLAMs for an average of 4-5 years.

5. **Who are your key partners? What are their roles?**

Since our founding, AWS has prioritized the building of strong community partnerships in order to break isolation, maximize limited resources, avoid duplication, and create a continuum of services for all survivors. Today, it is one of the few domestic violence shelters in the nation that places an equal emphasis on direct services and community building activities that reach a broader audience outside of the shelter. With all partners, AWS shares the larger vision of ending violence in all communities, and also shares program work and funding. Partnerships allow AWS to develop relationships with diverse communities, and build bridges with communities that remain largely invisible or are continually marginalized by mainstream domestic violence programs. Through these collaborations and the MLAM Program, AWS is able to provide survivors with access to the comprehensive services they need. The following are some of AWS’s key partners:

**Local Collaboratives**

*Citywide MLAM, including:* Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (APILO), Rosalie House, Brennan House, Communities United Against Violence (CUAV), W.O.M.A.N., Inc., Clara House, Gum Moon Residence: The role of each agency is to provide accessible language services to clients through the shared pool of AWS trained and paid MLAM advocates.

*Anti-Asian Trafficking Collaborative (AATC), including:* AWS, Narika, and APILO: The role of each community partner is to provide a network of services, ranging from intensive case management to legal support, to trafficked survivors. The AATC members also work together on policy advocacy and funding issues.

*The Domestic Violence (DV) Consortium:* The DV Consortium is a network of 17 anti-violence agencies throughout San Francisco that work together to improve the overall services offered to domestic violence survivors in San Francisco; DV members also work together on larger policy and funding advocacy issues.

**Individual community partners**

*Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach:* The attorneys at APILO, a non-profit legal agency that provides pro-bono services, represent the majority of AWS’s residents in court. APILO has a long-standing reputation as a legal organization that provides language and culturally appropriate services to survivors of violence, and also has a core staff of three attorneys who are experts in the field of domestic violence and trafficking.

*Narika:* This is a non-shelter domestic violence program that was founded with the help of AWS constituencies, including current/former volunteers. Narika supports the diverse South Asian community, and continues to work with AWS to outreach to, and provide more comprehensive services to the South Asian population in isolated areas, including Contra Costa County.

*Korean Community Center of the East Bay (KCCEB) and Shimtuh:* Shimtuh is a non-shelter, domestic violence/sexual assault program of KCCEB founded by a former AWS staff person, and is the only domestic violence program explicitly tailored to meet the needs of the Korean community. AWS and Shimtuh work together through cross-referrals and community building activities.
Donaldina Cameron House: This is a cultural organization located at the heart of San Francisco’s Chinatown. It provides a wealth of services—ranging from culturally enriching activities and programs for children and youth to social services and case management for survivors of domestic violence—that targets the Chinese-speaking and Vietnamese-speaking communities.

Community United Against Violence (CUAV): This anti-violence agency in San Francisco serves the queer community of the Bay Area. CUAV’s services range from their crisis hotline, to counseling services, and advocacy for queer survivors of violence. CUAV has supported AWS and provided anti-homophobia and anti-oppression trainings to AWS. AWS has also worked with CUAV to outreach to the queer immigrant community through the MLAM program.

6. **Could/should your program be replicated in other areas of the country? Why?**

Yes! AWS is committed to sharing resources and expertise for other organizations to adapt and replicate the MLAM Project especially because there continues to be a gap in culturally and linguistically competent service providers for LEP and non-English speaking survivors. Effective organizational programs that build language and cultural access are in high demand across the state and nation. In our experience leading AWS’s Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance (TA) Program, every 12-month cycle of TA includes multiple applicants prioritizing issues of language and cultural access and successful outreach and engagement of new and un/underserved immigrant communities. MLAM’s context and successes and challenges are a source of support for their local communities’ needs.

And in fact, AWS’s MLAM component, including the Citywide MLAM Project, has already been reproduced across the nation. AWS played a pivotal role in replicating the program in the East Bay by providing intensive technical assistance to several domestic violence agencies. The language program that was created is similar to AWS’s Citywide MLAM Project and is called the Domestic Violence Language Access Project (DVLAP) of the East Bay. The MLAM Program is also recognized nationally: a published manual on how to replicate the program can be found on the web site of the National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women: www.vawnet.org. This site’s mission is to harness and use electronic communication technology to end violence against women. The Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, a national forum for information and resources about violence against women in Asian and Pacific Islander communities, also recognizes the national relevance of the MLAM Program. Yanin Senachai, former Resource Center Coordinator, stated, “It is the most widely disseminated and nationally-adapted model for developing long-term strategies for serving all victims of domestic violence, regardless of English language proficiency. The program emphasizes collaboration and coordination among community-based organizations and agencies, and fosters growth of the organization and its connections to communities they serve.”

The MLAM component of AWS should continue to be replicated because it highlights the importance of community-based investment and partnerships, as well as shared learning,
accountability, responsibility, and vision. It is not geared towards any specific community, but rather, provides an organic and broad framework that can be modified/adapted to any underserved community in the country. MLAMs are also “everyday” people who come from diverse backgrounds and communities; therefore, any committed woman or transgender individual can be recruited. The main components of replication include: (1) initial assessment and planning phase i.e., which communities are underserved? What are appropriate means to outreach to these communities?; (2) internal organizational support and planning; (3) internal program staffing; (4) recruitment/outreach phase in different communities; (5) seed/program funding; and (6) possible expansion to include other anti-violence agencies.

For non-English speaking victims of domestic violence, access to shelter, emotional support and advocacy is not a “special” need but a basic one. Organizations like AWS serving new immigrant survivors face cultural and linguistic contexts of incredible breadth and diversity. To date, very few replicable models for successful and expansive organizational language and cultural access exist. Incorporating a full commitment to multicultural, multilingual services will serve all survivors and children in need, and will contribute to the effectiveness of the entire organization working towards breaking the cycle of violence.

7. **Does your agency have a workplace policy that addresses domestic violence? If so, please include a copy.**

AWS’s work centers around the experiences of survivors, with the understanding that survivors can be any of us: staff, board, volunteer, language advocate, not just a person seeking AWS shelter and services. This awareness is part of the framework through which we operate on a daily basis in order to support and empower our entire constituency. While AWS doesn’t have a specific workplace policy that addresses domestic violence, we do have specific safety protocols and policies to protect everyone who lives, works and volunteers at the shelter. AWS is committed to promoting the safety, health and well-being of the entire community. Please see attachments of policies and procedures for more information.

8. **Has the agency and/or nominated program received VAWA funding?**

Yes, AWS receives VAWA funding through three grants directly from the Office on Violence Against Women and through two subcontracts with other agencies. VAWA funding supports a variety of our programs, including the Multilingual Access Model Program.
VIII. SAFETY ISSUES

A. Confidentiality

All employees are required to keep the location of the shelter and all information concerning clients strictly confidential. This is vital for the shelter to be able to provide a safe and secure environment for its clients. Any breach of client confidentiality may lead to immediate dismissal from AWS.

B. Office Security

Each employee is responsible for keeping all doors locked. (See attached security checklist.)

C. Letterhead

AWS stationery shall not be used for personal matters.

IX. CHANGES IN PERSONNEL POLICY

AWS reserves the right to alter, revise or withdraw its policies at any time with or without notification to employees.
AWS CONFIDENTIALITY CONTRACT

The major function of shelters for battered women and their children is to serve as a safe haven free from the threat of violence. For this reason, it is important for us to do everything possible to keep the location confidential including using a box at the Women's Building to receive our mail and keeping the number of individuals who know the location of the shelter to a minimum.

While we know that none of our volunteers or other supporters would maliciously or intentionally divulge the address or general area of the shelter, we cannot overly stress the need to keep it confidential and that even an innocent comment to a friend can easily spread throughout our "small" community. To provide a safe environment for residents, volunteers, staff, and other supporters, both the address as well as its general area, such as neighborhood or district must not be revealed to anyone.

The conditions above apply not only to the current shelter, but also to all past shelters. We do not want to give anyone any concrete ideas of where the shelter may be. Thus, the location and general area of past shelters must remain confidential.

For these reasons, we must ask everyone who visits the shelter to read and sign the following:

I have read the above and agree to never reveal the exact address or general area of both past and current shelters to anyone, even a close friend or relative, for any reason at any time. I realize that to reveal the address could potentially place many people in danger.

_________________________  _____________________________
Date                                                                 Signature

_________________________
Witness
FOR STAFF

AWS procedures if batterer comes to the shelter location

1. **Use your judgment:** If you are on beeper and resident or volunteer is telling you about a possible batterer at the shelter, try to go to the shelter if it is a confirmed and identified batterer. If the resident or volunteers are not sure, but see a suspicious person, use your judgment.

2. **Do not answer the door.** Alert staff on duty and/or by beeper and Executive Director. Get all children and residents away from doors and windows. Secure all locks and windows. Try to get a description of the batterer and the car s/he is driving. (This information should also be on emergency board and in the woman’s intake information)

3. **Call the police at 911.** Tell the police that a batterer is outside the shelter, give as much descriptive information as possible. Let them know if there is a restraining order (copy should be in woman’s file). Ask the police not to come to the shelter door, but to call by phone to let us know what is happening. Give the number you are at when you phone them: home, phone booth, beeper # or shelter # depending on where you are.

4. **If the police arrive when the batterer is around the premises:** DO NOT OPEN DOOR. Police can question batterer regarding trespassing and reason for being at the house without confirming to the batterer that it is AWS.

5. **If the batterer has left by the time the police arrive and a staff member is present:** Staff should talk to the police. Give description and any information we may have about the batterer (i.e., has weapons, in a gang, where he lives). Request the police to provide extra patrolling of our house and neighborhood. Remind police of confidentiality, remind police to report response to our house by address only or AWS only. AWS and address should not be documented together in any written report or dispatch.

6. **Check in with residents:** If staff and/or volunteers are in the shelter, let residents know what has been going on and make a safety plan, go over precautions and give them support. You’ll most likely need support yourself, so do not hesitate to call other staff. (Beeper on-call staff, Executive Director, then others on staff list if first two options don’t work)

If you are not at the shelter, call in to update and support residents by using the special code ring. Residents are instructed to answer the resident phone ONLY if it rings twice, hang up (pause) and ring again. Then the resident will pick-up the line, but not say anything at first. You (staff) should state your name and identify yourself as AWS staff right away, then residents will know it is safe to start talking. Staff should use their own judgement and/or confer with another staff person to determine whether it is necessary and safe to come into the shelter to give residents in-person support.

7. **Take extra precautions in entering and leaving shelter:** Call volunteers and staff expected for next immediate shift before they come to the shelter to warn them about the batterer. (i.e., If the incident happens on a Monday night, call the staff person coming in Tuesday morning) Drive around the block, look to see if the batterer’s car or suspicious persons are lurking around the area. Enter and leave the shelter in pairs.

ORGANIZATION/POLICY/Pol/Proc Emergency/Batterer at Shelter staff: November 13, 2009
ASIAN WOMEN’S SHELTER

SEMI-FINALIST

2ND ROUND INFORMATION
Asian Women's Shelter
The Citywide Multilingual Access Model (MLAM) Program
3543 18th Street, # 19
San Francisco, CA 94110
Additional Questions
August 2012

a. What is the approximate number of individuals served annually by the applicant or nominee?
Since AWS serves clients in very different ways, we are providing the breakdown for different types of services, drawn from our FY 2011-12 statistics:
   • Crisis line calls: 1,870
   • In-shelter clients: 25 women and 23 children
   • Outside clients: 13

b. How many paid staff and volunteers are used to administer the nominated program?
   • AWS currently has a staff of 16, composed of 13 full time staff and 3 part time staff. All AWS staff, regardless of position, provide direct services to survivors, meaning that all staff provide services either directly (depending on language capability, as all staff have gone through the MLAM training) or in partnership with someone from the MLAM pool.
   • The MLAM Program is headed by one staff member (MLAM Coordinator), with support from Volunteer Coordinator (for partnership in provision of Volunteer/MLAM training), as well as the Associate Director, Finance Coordinator, Program Services Coordinator, and Community Services Coordinator, all of whom provide administrative support.
   • A core volunteer group of roughly 50 volunteers assist on a regular basis throughout the year, with additional volunteers helping with special projects and annual fundraising.
   • The MLAM pool is now slightly over 100 persons, working on-call (with hourly compensation) to provide language advocacy in over 40 languages.

c. Is the composition of your Board of Directors and staff reflective of your underserved population?
Yes. AWS board and staff demographics are closely related to the demographics of the population served, with the following diversity:
   • AWS Board of Directors includes 9 women, of whom 8 are Asian Pacific Islander (API) and 1 Latina; age range is between 27 and 55; sexual orientation is 1 LGBT and 8 straight.
   • AWS staff includes 16 women, of whom 12 are API, 1 White, 2 Mixed, and 1 Moroccan; age range is between 27 and 64; sexual orientation is 5 LGBT and 11 straight. Staff (excluding volunteers and language advocates) speak 19 languages.
d. Are there past awards, accolades, and grants furnished upon the applicant or nominee that would further exemplify its success in combating domestic violence?

Awards and Accolades:

- 1989: San Francisco Mayor honored AWS with a proclamation declaring Asian Women's Shelter Day in San Francisco. Between 1989 and 2010, there were a number of certificates and proclamations recognizing the work of AWS in serving survivors of domestic violence.
- 2008: AWS received the Community Leadership Award from the San Francisco Foundation for two decades of contribution to the anti-domestic violence community and the Asian Pacific Islander community.
- 2010: AWS received a Certificate of Honor bestowed by the SF Board of Supervisors.
- 2010: AWS received a Certificate of Honor bestowed by the California State Assembly.
- 2012: AWS was voted one of the top 7 non-profits in San Francisco.
- Over the years of AWS operation, individual staff members have been selected for various awards, including the Bank of America Local Heroes Award and the California Wellness Foundation Peace Prize.

Grants:

- AWS has been recognized at the city and state levels as a provider of quality services to survivors of domestic violence and receives ongoing funding for AWS programs.
- In 1999, AWS received a grant from the National Center on Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control to publish a paper on the MLAM Program as part of the Public Education Technical Assistance Project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence.
- In recognition of its unique and innovative contributions to the domestic violence movement, AWS received federal funding from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), Department of Justice from 2002 to 2011 to provide training and technical assistance to non-profits nation-wide. Within this period, ten programs requested and received support to replicate the MLAM program in their own communities.
- AWS also receives funding from OVW for two other programs: 1) Culturally and Linguistically Specific Services, and 2) Transitional Housing.
- AWS was one of 50 non-profits invited by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to apply for funding; AWS was one of seven organizations selected for their 3-year program (2009-2012).
- AWS receives funding from Blue Shield Against Violence for a number of different programs, including those related to 1) core support for shelter services, 2) organizational development, and 3) ensuring cultural competency.
- In addition to the organizations listed above, AWS receives funding from SF Giants Community Fund, Asian Pacific Fund, Verizon Foundation, Avon Foundation, Walter & Elise Haas Fund, and a number of smaller foundations.
e. **Goals for the Multi-lingual Access Model include the following:**

1. Develop, implement, and continue ongoing evaluation of MLAM services to ensure that services are meeting the needs of AWS clients. AWS will undertake a formal evaluation of the MLAM program in FY 20012-13 with funding from Blue Shield Against Violence, and we would like to ensure that evaluation continues beyond this grant through ongoing engagement of evaluation consultants.

2. Increase the number of MLAMs for languages identified by AWS and Citywide MLAM members as underrepresented, to ensure that we have the capacity to serve all survivors who need our services. This is an ongoing effort, and MLAM recruitment currently prioritizes underrepresented languages. We are, however, limited by staff time in the number of participants who can be accommodated in each session.

3. Develop language-specific Continuing Education Groups to support individual MLAMs in a single language group for the purposes listed below. To implement, we would need funding for additional staff time, stipends for MLAMs, childcare stipends for MLAMs, food to support meetings, mileage, materials, and language consultants for continuing education.
   - Meet regularly for the purposes of improving performance, as well as providing mutual support.
   - Enable language specific groups to refine vocabulary specific to domestic violence work and develop materials appropriate for standardized use by language advocates.
   - Review materials in translation used by various city and state offices to ensure that language advocates stay current with common usage among service providers.
   - Enable less fluent and less experienced advocates to learn from mentors within the language group.
   - Develop strategies and implement plans for outreach (for MLAM recruitment and domestic violence community education) in linguistic and ethnic communities.
   - Develop core groups by language to represent AWS and domestic violence issues at community events.

4. Utilize the services of professional interpreters and interpreter trainers to provide continuing education to AWS MLAMs. Although AWS MLAMs complete AWS training on domestic violence and a variety of related topics, this is not professional interpreter training. MLAMs have requested repeatedly to have access to professional training—ideally leading to certification. The lofty dream would be to incorporate financial support for selected MLAMs to complete professional interpreter training.
Questions on AWS MLAM Program

1. Are services provided to anyone regardless of gender or ethnicity? Do you serve males and masculine-identifying survivors? If not, where are those individuals referred for services?

AWS provides a variety of services, among them emergency shelter for domestic violence and trafficking survivors, crisis line domestic violence counseling and referrals, support for outside trafficking survivors, and community education. All of these services are provided without regard to gender or ethnicity, with the exception of emergency shelter. In order to provide a safe space for the maximum number of survivors, and in keeping with the AWS philosophy of prioritizing survivors with the fewest resources, AWS welcomes women, intersex, and transgender survivors across the gender spectrum. Survivors of domestic violence and trafficking that cannot be accommodated at the shelter are provided with a combination of counseling, advocacy support (including accompaniment and MLAM services for legal, medical, and social services), and referral to other emergency shelters.

2. Your application states that “Upon exit, 67% of shelter residents had increased their incomes.” Can you provide additional information regarding how this was measured? Is this attributed to the services received at AWS?

It is almost a given that prospective clients who become shelter residents are without income and other resources, or they would be likely to make other housing and safety arrangements. Most residents, regardless of employment status, immigration status, or personal income, find themselves without income at the beginning of their shelter residence and increase their income in a variety of ways that can be attributed to the services received at AWS, as detailed below:

- AWS assists survivors in eligible categories (for example, parents with dependent children, survivors of human trafficking) in accessing social services that can provide them with immediate financial support.
- AWS assists survivors in accessing English-as-a-Second Language classes, job readiness programs, and job search programs, which enable residents to increase income—some in the short-term, and some in the long-term, supported by public assistance.
- AWS assists survivors in accessing legal services to regularize immigration status and obtain work permits, enabling them to work legally.
- AWS assists survivors in accessing legal services to obtain court ordered support for themselves and children.
- AWS assists survivors in stabilizing housing, transportation, and other basic needs, so that those with ongoing employment can retain jobs, and those in a position to seek immediate employment can do so.
3. Please provide more information on the ways in which the MLAMs “provide community education and leadership within their own communities to change cultural norms to end domestic violence.” In what ways are they changing cultural norms?

In 2000, AWS recognized that to end domestic violence, equal resources had to go into addressing root causes by shifting cultural values and increasing the capacity of communities—including refugee, immigrant, and other limited-English-speaking communities—to address violence from within, through community education, outreach, and collaboration on the local, state, national, and international levels. Much of the local-level work is done by MLAMS and AWS staff members, working together within particular ethnic and linguistic communities. Spurred by family history, personal experience, or observations of friends and relatives, most AWS volunteers and MLAMS enter the training program with an eagerness to learn, but little concrete information or clear understanding of domestic violence. After completing the course, they have more awareness of things happening within their families and communities, and they are often our most effective outreach workers, going back to their own communities to participate in tabling at ethnic community events or providing educational sessions through community-based organizations, schools, or faith-based organizations. The result of such activities is wider understanding throughout communities of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, sexual assault, human trafficking, and services available to survivors.

The community outreach efforts of the AWS MLAM Coordinator (Jee Suthamwanthance, who is Thai) in partnership with Thai MLAMs provide a great example. During an AWS campaign to increase visibility for AWS within faith-based organizations, they approached the five San Francisco Bay Area Buddhist temples, requesting permission to provide domestic violence training to monks. Because of their careful consideration of cultural practices in approaching the temple leadership, they were well received and encouraged to implement the series of trainings. Despite the lack of precedent for women training monks within the temple environment, the monks received them as professionals and greeted the learning opportunity with eagerness. Although they had previously provided spiritual guidance to survivors, they had done so without understanding the diversity and gradations of experience that can be identified as “domestic violence”. The training, followed by some outreach activities initiated by the monks themselves, led to an ongoing dialogue with a central institution in the Thai community. When crisis line callers report being referred by temple monks, we know that changed attitudes are being passed to community members.

Similarly, a group of Japanese women (including an AWS Women’s Advocate, an MLAM, and a former resident/MLAM) formed to organize outreach efforts in San Francisco’s Japanese community. They were successful in reaching not only the local community, but also worked in partnership with a domestic violence non-profit in Japan. Through this collaboration, two AWS staff traveled to Japan to provide technical assistance, and one Japanese staff came to San Francisco to complete the volunteer/MLAM training and a short internship. Together, they produced a booklet in Japanese with basic information on domestic violence and how to access assistance.

As a result of the booklet production and other outreach activities in San Francisco, the AWS Japanese Group has made firm connections in the Japanese Consulate, as well as stores,
churches, and newspapers. The result heightened awareness and changed attitudes in individuals and key community resources, leading to increased referrals to AWS.

AWS also works to achieve community attitudinal change through activities and education provided to residents, anticipating that residents and their children will not only contribute to a peaceful household during their stay, but will also take positive messages to the wider community when they leave the shelter. Communal living, group activities, and conflict resolution strategies promote values to combat homophobia, sexism, racism, and oppression. For many residents, living in a household that is diverse in terms of culture, language, and sexual orientation provides the first opportunity to experience how much we are all alike, despite differences.

4. Please share additional information on the Citywide MLAM Program and specifically, how client confidentiality is maintained.

AWS partners with four other community non-profits through the Citywide MLAM Program; members pay annual dues to have access to the list of available languages and MLAMs, enabling them to contract directly with MLAMs on an hourly basis for language advocacy services. MLAMs are fully informed about the need for confidentiality on behalf of their clients, and MLAMs and all agencies working in partnership with AWS (whether they are Citywide members or not) subscribe and commit in writing to the same high standards of professional behavior, meaning that when client information must be shared between agencies, it is done with the full understanding of the client and express written consent.

5. Could any domestic violence agency which addresses the needs of non-English speaking victims and survivors adopt your method of training domestic violence survivors to be language advocates?

To clarify, the AWS welcomes interested survivors to apply for the volunteer and MLAM training program, provided that they have had sufficient time to heal from their own experiences; every training cohort includes former residents, other survivors, and adult children who come from DV families. The AWS training program is replicable, but we have a number of safeguards that ensure safety for trainees and clients and contribute to the success of the training program. First, the training is organized by experienced AWS staff, who conduct extensive screening interviews to ensure that trainees are emotionally ready to learn, open to self-reflection, and capable of respecting the experiential backgrounds of other trainees. At the conclusion of the training, the trainers conduct exit interviews, assessing whether or not each candidate is emotionally ready to begin working with survivors. Candidates who are survivors themselves are encouraged to compete their own healing before serving others, and if there were any doubts about the emotional readiness, trainers would discuss this again at the end of the training—postponing MLAM commitment, if necessary. Second, our clinical consultant (who works with direct service staff on a regular basis) provides two training sessions, one of them focusing on self-care, vicarious traumatization, and secondary PTSD resulting from exposure to domestic violence through training discussions or direct service. Third, trainers link new volunteers and MLAMs with a “point person” in the Direct Service Program, who provides guidance, support, and connection to the clinical consultant, if necessary. Finally, AWS is part of an essential
network of professionals (law enforcement, counselors, legal services, and community-based organizations), all of whom work with the same understanding of domestic violence and would prioritize the safety of survivor/clients and MLAMs working with them.

In answer to the question, then, we believe that the MLAM program and the participation of survivors as volunteers and MLAMs can be replicated, but the agency should have the experience, skills, clinical back-up, and strong organizational network to ensure success.

6. Please provide additional information on the curriculum for the 74-hour training for certification as a domestic violence advocate.

Attached to these questions, please find the following documents that should give you a full picture of the curriculum and content of the training program:

- Fall 2012 Training Schedule (This is included because there will be some changes in the schedule, adding hours to the MLAM portion)
- Spring 2012 Training Curriculum (which will give you the curriculum covered in each session, but which will not include the extra sessions to be added in Fall 2012)
- Guest Speaker Biographies (This will show you the professional qualifications of the pool of speakers)

The State of California requires that all agency staff working with survivors of domestic violence complete a 40 hour training program with specific curriculum, after they are certified pursuant to the California Evidence Code Section 1037.1(a)(2). The AWS volunteer/MLAM training program exceeds this requirement, with MLAMs completing 74 hours of training.

7. How do you engage immigrant and refugee women as leaders?

AWS engages immigrant and refugee women as leaders in a variety of ways, both within the shelter and through external technical assistance. First, our volunteer and MLAM recruitment draws heavily from local immigrant/refugee communities; although we do not track this information, we estimate that perhaps 80% of the volunteers and MLAMs were either born outside the US or are the children of immigrants/refugees. Through the training and ongoing mentoring that volunteers and MLAMs receive, they have opportunities for direct service with clients, exposure to local service providers (including from medical, legal, educational, counseling providers), interaction with other members of the domestic violence community, and face-to-face meetings with elected officials at the local and state levels. They can, if they choose, participate in AWS outreach activities, giving them the opportunity to gain skills in presentation, grassroots organizing, and public service.

Second, many AWS staff members were either born outside the US or are children of refugee and immigrant parents. AWS values professional development, and staff are encouraged and supported in taking advantage of training and leadership opportunities locally and nationally, as both providers and recipients of technical assistance.
Third, since its inception, AWS has valued collaborative partnerships and has fostered the establishment and growth of non-profits serving the diverse ethnic and LGBTQ communities in the San Francisco Bay Area. AWS has helped establish new non-profits by providing funding, guidance, and organizational development. We believe that this community-building will contribute to the elimination of domestic and other forms of violence and improve services for survivors and their children.

One of our former residents is a good example of the personal growth and leadership development that can come from participation in our program. Ten years ago, she and her daughter were shelter residents. As a recent immigrant, she spoke limited English and had little experience in San Francisco. In 2012, she participated in the volunteer/MLAM training, and since then she has been active in assisting in serving an outside client, a Thai male survivor of human trafficking. The experience of moving from survivor to service provider has been extremely empowering. She is now supporting an outreach campaign to engage boys and men in the Thai community in addressing domestic violence.

8. What public awareness efforts have you engaged to make community members more aware of the services provided by MLAMs?

As noted in previous questions, AWS is committed to going beyond one-on-one services to effect change at the community level, and volunteers and MLAMs are an important part of the outreach and community education, which addresses prevention, as well as access to services. AWS reaches thousands of individuals each year through public awareness efforts in schools, colleges, churches, temples, health and community centers, community events, and language-specific newspapers. AWS staff, MLAMs, and volunteers conduct tabling, presentations, and trainings to ensure that members of San Francisco’s diverse communities are aware of our services, including culturally competent and linguistically accessible support now available in over forty languages. Pamphlets in many languages (Thai, Japanese, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Indonesian, Korean, Tagalog, and other languages) are available throughout the city, providing information on domestic violence and how to access services.

Note on DVD: On the enclosed DVD copies, you will find tools that AWS uses for outreach, information, and healing:

- “I am talking about it”: In 2012, AWS produced a public service announcement to promote discussion of domestic violence and inform the public about AWS services, giving the message: “There is violence in my community, and I am talking about it. Are you?”
- Digital story created by AWS MLAM, part of the AWS Japanese Group
- Digital story created by former AWS resident, now AWS MLAM, participating in outreach activities in the Bay Area Thai community.
Mary Byron  
FY 12-13 application  
MLAM Program FY 11-12 Budget  
Celebrating Solutions Roth Award

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Operating Expenses

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Dear Applicant:

This modifies our letter of the above date in which we stated that you would be treated as an organization which is not a private foundation until the expiration of your advance ruling period.

Your exempt status under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) is still in effect. Based on the information you submitted, we have determined that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the code because you are an organization of the type described in section 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Grantors and contributors may rely on this determination unless the Internal Revenue Service publishes notice to the contrary. However, if you lose your section 509(a)(1) status, a grantor or contributor may not rely on this determination if he or she was in part responsible for, or was aware of, the act or failure to act, or the substantial or material change on the part of the organization that resulted in your loss of such status, or if he or she acquired knowledge that the Internal Revenue Service had given notice that you would no longer be classified as a section 509(a)(1) organization.

You are required to file Form 990 only if your gross receipts each year are normally more than $25,000. For guidance in determining whether your gross receipts are "normally" more than $25,000, see the instructions for Form 990. If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. A penalty of $10 a day is charged when a return is filed late, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. However, the maximum penalty charged cannot exceed $5,000 or 5 percent of your gross receipts for the year, whichever is less. This penalty may also be charged if a return is not complete, so please be sure your return is complete before you file it.

If we have indicated in the heading of this letter that an addendum applies, the addendum enclosed is an integral part of this letter.
ASIAN WOMENS SHELTER INC

Because this letter could help resolve any questions about your private foundation status, please keep it in your permanent records.

If you have any questions, please contact the person whose name and telephone number are shown above.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Michael J. Quinn
District Director