Celebrating Solutions Award
Nomination Form

Legal name of organization: National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative

Year established: 1998

Name of Program being nominated for award (if different):

Year established:

Address: P.O. Box 15026

City/State/ZIP code: Flagstaff, AZ 86011

Agency phone number: 928-523-9205

Contact person: Neil Websdale, Ph.D.

Title: Director

Phone number: 928-523-9205

Fax number: 928-523-2210

E-mail address: Neil.Websdale@nau.edu

Website address: www.ndvri.org

How did you learn about the Celebrating Solutions Awards? On-line 2013 announcement. We were encouraged to reapply for 2014.

Brief description of organization: NDVRI provides technical assistance for the reviewing of domestic violence related deaths and holding accountable both the perpetrators of domestic violence and the multiple agencies and organizations that come into contact with the parties.

Geographical area served: United States including Indian Country

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:

- Battered treatment
- Coalition/collaboration
- Counseling
- Dating violence
- Elder abuse
- Employment/training program
- Faith-based
- Heath care setting
- Hotline service
- Legal aid/assistance
- Prison-based
- Prevention
- Public awareness/education
- School/youth violence
- Shelter-based
- Stalking
- Technology/Internet service
- Transitional housing
- Underserved population
- University setting
- Victim relocation
- Other
1. Describe the work of the nominated program and explain how the mission of the program is accomplished.

For 15 years NDVFRI has provided technical assistance to help incorporate domestic violence fatality review into the coordinated community responses to domestic violence in the United States and other countries. The mission of the director, staff, and NDVFRI consultants is to help teams identify and review deaths caused by, related to, or somehow traceable to domestic violence. In so doing, we also help teams and their communities create safer provisions for battered women and their children and hold accountable both the perpetrators of domestic violence and the multiple agencies and organizations that come into contact with the parties. We fulfill our mission by conducting national, regional and local training conferences and workshops; providing onsite, teleconference and videoconference technical assistance to community groups all over the United States; offering extensive online services through our website (ndvfri.org), newsletters and film library; and, working with an array of national, international and regional and state level partners including state coalitions against domestic violence and sexual assault, and governor’s and attorneys general offices. At the community level we deliver services directly to all those stakeholders involved in domestic violence cases including but not limited to: law enforcement, prosecutors, defense attorneys, shelter/domestic violence center staff, a broad range of advocates for victims, survivors of domestic violence, school personnel, medical examiners and public health workers, housing authority staff, members of faith communities, batterer intervention program staff, friends, neighbors and co-workers of victims/perpetrators, child protection workers, representatives from probation and parole services, mental health professionals, researchers, court personnel and others involved in the lives of victims and perpetrators of domestic violence related homicide and suicide.

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

There are many innovative aspects to the work of the NDVFRI and the 175 or so permanently embedded community teams the initiative has helped establish. These include:

* A multi-agency and genuinely interdisciplinary focus and modus operandi. NDVFRI consultants come from many of the aforementioned fields. Teams reflect this mélange of influences and benefit by learning from the diverse viewpoints at the table.
* NDVFRI encourages community teams to review fatalities through the lived experiences of decedents, exploring the compromises they faced. Team members often understand or can deduce what their respective professions, agencies, and colleagues had to offer in a case. Part of the art of the review is to recreate the worldview of the victim. Where team members might theoretically explain the array of services the state offers, they know full well victims do not see those services as a logical assemblage. It is not because victims are stupid or their perceptions warped. Neither is it because various state agencies deliberately set out to undermine victims or make it difficult to receive services. Many victims engage state services as one might enter a confusing, alienating maze. NDVFRI teaches communities that many victims encounter services while dealing with bone-chilling fear. Learning how victims’ maneuvered in the grip of such fear becomes part of the complex task of unraveling how services might be offered differently.
* NDVFRI recommends teams focus on systems and their complex interactions, concentrating especially on how those interactions might not work well for victims. The onus here is on how
professionals and systems' workers are organized, not on blaming individuals or agencies for deaths. Reviews are not like investigations. Rather they seek to protect victims and hold offenders accountable at the same time as avoiding the same blaming and shaming behavior that domestic violence offenders often engage in with their victims.

* NDVFRI work involves hands-on, practical case review that gets at both the macro ways systems work and the detailed idiosyncrasies of those agency operations. Put simply, the approach is innovative because it enables community groups to drill down to specific problems, and rectify them.

* NDVFRI provides leadership in bringing surviving family members to the review table. Many communities at first resisted such involvement, claiming surviving family members would be re-traumatized. Our approach draws upon our network of surviving members themselves who report that being part of the review is a highly significant form of catharsis, although not emotional closure.

* NDVFRI work has raised the important problem of what happens to surviving children. The program has pioneered in this area, making a strong case for providing various services (counseling, legal, social, educational and financial) perhaps through the teams themselves or their community partners.

* NDVFRI instills in communities a sense of the important linkages among the review of domestic violence related killings and the assessment and management of risk.

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

**Implementation:** During the mid 1990s Dr. Websdale and colleagues worked with the Florida Governor's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence to study domestic violence homicides. As a result of this work, Dr. Websdale wrote a couple of grants in conjunction with the Florida Task Force to seek funds from the newly formed Violence Against Women Office, US Department of Justice, to create the first fatality review teams in Florida. At that time only a handful of states had fatality review teams, most of them local or regional. The project called for us to visit criminal justice agencies to gather files and learn in depth about the micro-dynamics of these cases. In conducting this work the team met many different agency professionals, particularly police officers, advocates, judges, prosecutors, and medical examiners. On rare occasions the team met family members who had lost loved ones. Eventually, Dr. Websdale published these Florida findings in a book entitled *Understanding Domestic Homicide*.

The handful of fatality review teams active in the mid 1990s worked to identify homicides and suicides caused by, related to, or somehow traceable to domestic violence. They reviewed cases in an attempt to prevent similar deaths in the future and to reduce domestic violence in general. In some states, statute law enabled the creation of the teams, guaranteed the confidentiality of their deliberations and findings, recommended team members, and informed the nature and form of review work. In others, review teams operated more casually, expressing concerns about the dangers inherent in prescribing the process of death review and housing it within state agencies and organizations.

Either way, review teams worked mostly without the benefit of learning from others doing similar work. A group including Neil Websdale, Barbara Hart, Merry Hofford, Judge Susan Carbon, and Judge Michael Town discussed the possibility of setting up a national initiative to act as a clearinghouse for information about fatality review, to provide technical assistance to the
emerging network of teams, and to put on national training conferences. In 1999 Dr. Websdale wrote a pilot grant seeking funds from the Violence Against Women Office (VAWO) to establish NDVFRI. VAWO funded the grant and the NDVFRI team held its first national summit on fatality review in Key West, Florida in late October 1999. Since then Dr. Websdale and his team have worked in 45 states, spreading the philosophy of fatality review and helping establish networks of teams.

**Barriers:** From the mid to late 1990s, the NDVFRI team shared many of the concerns of grassroots advocates and others that reviews might become too formal, too impersonal, excessively bureaucratic and overly professional in orientation. The program team wrestled for years with how to involve family members, friends, neighbors, and those who knew victims. In the early years, teams expressed suspicions about learning from these non-agency professionals. Would community members close to the case tell the truth? Have an ax to grind? Want statutorily protected information from the team? Or simply break down emotionally?

Many review teams started by examining homicide-suicides; always selecting cases with no pending civil litigation or criminal prosecutions. Reviews occurred in private and those teams operated under protective confidentiality statutes that shielded their deliberations from the prying eyes of the media and others. Put differently, death review was a “safe” activity for those agencies at the table. Teams reported aggregate data to units of central government charged with gathering and publishing it. In some cases, data in these reports encouraged reform and social change.

The early reluctance of agencies to solicit community input to death reviews reflected prevailing ways of seeing cases of domestic violence. It was supposedly the experts who made sense of these cases. These experts included police, judges, prosecutors, advocates, emergency medical room personnel, social workers, batterer treatment specialists, attorneys, and so on. Each had their story to tell. At times, these players had their own turf to protect and their own understandings of what lay at the root of domestic violence.

Those attached to these seemingly conflicting interpretations often shared a strong sense that the public, the community, and, more specifically families, friends, workplace peers, and neighbors of the decedents could not know of the technical complications involved in working these perplexing cases and perhaps did not fully appreciate the complexities of domestic violence cases. To the extent state service providers often shield their inner workings from the general public, this concern was perhaps well placed.

Fortunately, these somewhat condescending sentiments began to change and fatality review teams began to become more permeable to community influence and input. First, review teams learned that in a significant number of domestic violence related killings victims did not have contact with agencies. Even in those cases where there was contact, it was often limited to a particular agency. It was a rare case where agencies worked in concert with a battered woman prior to her demise. Second, researchers such as Dr. Jacqueline Campbell began to publish important data showing that those closest to decedents knew most about their lives and the compromises they faced. Dr. Campbell showed that family members such as sisters and close friends knew much more about battered women’s plight than agencies charged with supporting, serving and protecting them. Third, surviving family members began to agitate for a voice at the table. In some cases the NDVFRI team talked at great length with those who had lost loved ones. Surviving family members wanted to tell their story and contribute to preventing similar tragedies in the future. Since these early days, most family members we talk with about their involvement with fatality review teams report the experience to be cathartic.
The team met and still meets considerable resistance to trying to recreate intimate partner homicides through the eyes of decedents. One obvious objection is that she is now dead, so how can we possibly recreate the case through her eyes? A good point, indeed, and one that draws support from the fact that battered women likely take much important information to the grave. A different objection came from a number of advocates who asked why waste money reviewing cases where women died? Rather, they contended, it is better to spend that money on women who are alive and in need of services; another valid concern. Nevertheless, the research was compelling; battered women and those closest to them often knew the most about victims’ compromises. If we wanted to improve service delivery and reconsider how best to support, protect and serve, we needed to know more about battered women’s knowledge, maneuverability, and choices. It became clear that meticulous and humane fatality review work ought recreate her experiences and discern her perception of her options rather than superimposing a multi-agency/professional interpretation of her maneuverability and compromises as she confronted, negotiated, and lived them.

As fatality review teams took on new members, the struggle over how to review continued. The NDVFRI director and consultants remained acutely aware that some teams data gathering instruments truncated battered women's lives into easily coded or countable parts, variables if you will, rather than fully grasping the complex trajectory of her life, her mélange of feelings, tensions, fears, ambiguities, and nuances. Clearly, we need aggregate data about these cases, especially if we are to influence legislators and the press. We especially need empirical findings regarding age, income, sex, the issuance of protection orders, police attendance at the home, and so on so that we can compare across cases, regions, states and so on. However, that search for standardized information ought accompany rather than eclipse the acquisition of personal, highly complex idiosyncrasies. Put differently, wide angled lens fatality review involves much more than collecting statistical data and identifying trends and patterns across cases. Every life is different and it is important to capture highly idiosyncratic and nuanced information. Incident-based data gathering tends to catalogue people’s lives through the organizational schema and analytical filters and interests of authorities, experts, professionals, and social science researchers. Conducting death reviews that rely solely on the bureaucratic criteria of the criminal justice apparatus or various service providers runs the risk of failing to capture the chilling themes and continuities in abuse that far transcend either the immediacies of violence or the at-times clumsy, mismatched official responses to that violence. Striking this balance between quantitative and qualitative data and the tendency of some review teams and their members to prioritize scientific rationality over the complex lived experiences of women, remains a barrier.

Marshaling Resources: With the generous support of OVW, NDVFRI marshaled its resources to help teams in 45 states become permanent parts of their communities’ coordinated responses to domestic violence. Indeed, in the space of 15 years, roughly175 permanent teams have sprung up in those 45 states. The program also relied on building numerous links with local, regional, state and national project partners (see 5 below). This has involved marshaling the political and social skills of the NDVFRI program team, developing a reputation for non-partisan, collaborative approaches to reviewing cases, building working relationships with a wide range of agencies and organizations, and honing interdisciplinary sensibilities that are global in scope, civil and conciliatory in tone, and inclusive at every possible level.

4. How do you know your program works? Please site two examples. Although anecdotal examples are helpful, at least one example must include quantitative data.
* We know the program works because of the dramatic increase in the number of teams and the array of team members in the relatively short space of 15 years and the plethora of recommendations for change and actual changes those teams have effected across the country. The best way to appreciate the magnitude of these effects is to visit our website and read the reports from teams. Most of those teams did not receive funding to commence their work, only technical assistance from NDVFRI. Although some teams are now funded at state or even local level, our impression is that teams continue their work because they find it both useful and compelling. We also know that the emergence of a national network of domestic violence fatality review teams has corresponded with a marked decline in the number of intimate partner homicides. It is impossible to prove that the teams or NDVFRI exerted any causal influence on this decline. However, the fact remains that homicide victims killed by intimate partners declined 29% between 1993 and 2007 (Bureau of Justice Statistics; Female Victims of Violent Crime, 2009: 3) and we feel the multi-agency, interdisciplinary work of the NDVFRI and the teams it serves contributed to that decline.

Multiagency groups continue to accept our offers for technical assistance and we cannot keep pace with the demand. Our last national conference in May 2013 (Domestic Violence Fatality Review: Global Possibilities) drew over 300 attendees. Our website (ndvfri.org) hits numbered 7,918 in 2013. Over the last 15 years we have provided in person technical assistance to many thousands of stakeholders in hundreds of communities, assisting with the formation of teams and advancing established teams’ work. In 2013, NDVFRI trained approximately 1,000 people through the conference, keynotes, and technical assistance visits.

* Agencies across the country report practical changes in the way they handle domestic violence cases based on their involvement in fatality review work. For example, the Attorney General’s Office in Montana developed what they call a HOPE card, specifically as a result of a case review. The card resembles a credit card and carries the photograph of a domestic violence offender and details of the order of protection. Unlike paper copies of orders, it is small, practically indestructible, and verifiable. This is just one practical example among many that have emerged as a result of review work. Other states have taken up the HOPE card as a way of verifying the existence and authenticity of protection orders. The HOPE card is but one highly publicized development to appear in the 300 or more reports that appear on the website.

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

* International: partners include the UK Home Office; UK Advocacy After Fatal Family Abuse; those governmental agencies in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK engaged in multi-agency and interdisciplinary family violence work, for example, the Center for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children, University of Western Ontario, Canada; the Ministry of Justice, the Northwest Territories, Canada; the Ministry of Justice, Alberta, Canada; the Family Violence Death Review Health Quality and Safety Commission, New Zealand; Attorney General’s Office, New South Wales, Australia.

* National: US Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women; the Battered Women’s Justice Project; Praxis International; EMERGE Offender Treatment Program; Asian and Pacific Islander Institute; Aequitas; the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges; the National Family Justice Center Network; the National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women.
* State: Domestic and sexual violence coalitions; state attorney generals’ offices (for example, we have close ties with AG Offices in Florida, California, Montana, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Nevada). Within the state of Arizona, where NDVFRI is based, we have close working ties with the Arizona Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence; the Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police; the Arizona Prosecuting Attorney’s Association; the Diane Halle Center for Law, ASU; the Morrison Institute for Public Policy, ASU; the Arizona Governor’s Office for Children, Youth and Families; Arizona Police Officer Standards and Training Academy; the Supreme Court’s Committee on the Impact of Domestic Violence on the Courts.

**Partner Roles:** These partners fulfill a number of roles. Space precludes a detailed elaboration of all the work the partners do with and for us. Some provide technical assistance. For example, BWJP and Praxis International work with NDVFRI to blend safety audits and fatality reviews; EMERGE works with the program team concerning risk and risk assessment; the Asian and Pacific Islander Institute works to study race, ethnicity, with a special focus on intimate partner homicide in the Asian Pacific Islander communities across the US. Government entities and attorneys general offices work with us at a more generic policy level, strategizing with NDVFRI about what case types to review, how to fund fatality review work, the politics of death review, and the relationship between domestic violence and human productivity. Our relationship with the Montana Attorney General’s Office helped facilitate the emergence of the first tribal fatality review initiative in the country. Other groups such as Aequitas provide support regarding specific technical information that lies well beyond the capabilities of the NDVFRI director, consultants and staff, for example, offering communities detailed insights on the latest and most successful ways of prosecuting cases and holding offenders accountable.

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

Our program does not recommend that other nations, states, regions, communities, counties, and municipalities simply replicate our templates. Although we make available state statutes, team data gathering instruments, confidentiality guidelines, team reports and much more information on our website and in our tailored technical assistance packets, we encourage nascent and established teams to incorporate existing models and techniques into their unique community operations, thus preserving local nuance, cultural idiosyncrasies and systems differences. However, our director and consultants do travel extensively and offer technical assistance on best or emerging practices.

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

The NDVFRI operates within a mid-sized university structure that does not have a formal workplace policy on domestic violence. Northern Arizona University (NAU) plays an important part in the coordinated community response to family violence in the region and state. NDVFRI conducts its work under the auspices of the newly formed Family Violence Institute (FVI). The FVI is in the process of establishing formal department policies and procedures. Staff will develop a domestic and sexual violence workplace policy.

8. Has the agency and/or nominated program received VAWA funding? Yes.
Release of Information

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 January 30, 2014
NDVFRI

Celebrating Solutions Awards
Semi-finalist Information
The Mary Byron Project  
Marcia Roth  
Executive Director  
10401 Linn Station Road  
Louisville, KY 40223  

October 24, 2014  

Dear Ms. Roth,  

We are honored by your committee’s selection of the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative as a semi-finalist for the Celebrating Solutions award. The following materials are enclosed in our application:  

1) Three letters of support  
   a. Partner or collaborative organization: Battered Women’s Justice Project  
   b. Victim’s organization: Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
   c. Elected official: Coconino County Attorney David W. Rozema  
2) Proof of 501(c)3 status  
3) Budget for fiscal year 2014  
4) General questions responses  
5) Program specific questions responses  
   b. Attachment B: 79-item tool: The Domestic Violence Council of Hamilton County, Ohio Domestic Violence Death Review Panel, Demographic Data Form  
   c. Attachment C: A tool for statewide data analysis: California Statewide Data Collection tool.  
   d. Attachment D: A tool for documenting criminal justice involvement with the parties: Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project  
   e. Attachment E: Internal conference evaluation  
   f. Attachment F: SurveyMonkey webinar evaluation  

We included the following exhibits for your review:  

Exhibit A: Family Violence Institute at NAU flyer  
Exhibit B: Sample webinar flyer  
Exhibit C: 2015 Fatality Review: Communities and Social Change conference flyer
We enclosed five flash drives. The flash drives include several articles we regularly use in our training and technical assistance efforts.


Again, thank you for the opportunity for recognition through this prestigious award. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Neil Websdale, Ph.D.
NDVFRI, Director
October 17, 2014

To: Selection Committee - Mary Byron Celebrating Solutions Award

Re: National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative

I am so pleased to have this opportunity to heartily recommend the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative (NDVFRI) as a deserving recipient for this award. BWJP is the national resource center on civil and criminal justice responses to domestic violence and we’ve had the pleasure of partnering with the NDVFRI on a variety of projects for many years.

Part of BWJP’s mission is to identify promising practices in the field in order to allow us to coordinate training events for grantees of the DOJ Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) that stimulate innovative responses to these crimes. Since 2002, BWJP has included presentations and workshops by the NDVFRI in a number of our multidisciplinary trainings for OVW grantees. We felt that it was important to promote the fatality review methodology in order to help jurisdictions understand how institutional responses to victims and offenders could more effectively prevent domestic homicides. As fatality review teams develop across the nation, their case reviews uncover barriers that victims face in accessing protection and demonstrate how perpetrators capitalize on gaps in the system to accomplish their crimes. Armed with this information, communities have improved their practices to better serve victims and more effectively contain offenders. I have no doubt that NDVFRI efforts have made a significant contribution to the reduction of domestic homicides in the US.

For several years, BWJP has explored another methodology for analyzing institutional practices, the safety audit. A safety audit involves an in-depth exploration of institutional practices in order to understand their impact on the real lives of the people whose cases are "processed" by social systems, and uncovers the reasons why poor outcomes occur and how they can be addressed. In discussions of our work, BWJP and the NDVFRI began to see the promise of combining the two approaches for a more comprehensive assessment of the criminal justice system’s handling of DV cases. Since 2011, our organizations have partnered on the Fatality Review and Safety Audit project (FRASA) under a grant from the state of Arizona. In conjunction with a highly motivated local team in Coconino County, AZ, the first FRASA effort was completed last year. Currently, final recommendations are being drafted from the assessment of the project’s second site, Apache Junction, AZ. This has been an exciting learning process for both organizations and we look forward to continuing this collaboration in future with additional FRASA projects.
Our partnership's success is due to the fact that our work is informed by shared values. Our system's change efforts are grounded in the lives of survivors of violence. Fatality reviews actively seek to involve surviving family and friends in the review process to better understand the victim's experience and learn from their unique perspectives. As BWJP works to improve the civil and criminal justice systems, we ask jurisdictions to evaluate all of their policies and procedures from the point of view of the victims who seek their protection. Our safety audits typically include focus groups with victims to hear directly from them about their experiences with the justice system and DV services. Both organizations also incorporate an examination of racial and class disparities into our assessments, in order to understand how these disparities are produced by current procedures and to ensure that proposed solutions will reduce or end them. In addition, both organizations believe that a multidisciplinary approach that engages the wisdom of all interveners is the best way to generate the necessary level of communication and interagency cooperation that creates an effective coordinated response to victims and offenders.

The NDVFRI is an invaluable resource that truly enhances the ability of local communities to prevent domestic homicides and intervene more effectively in any incident of domestic violence. Their work is highly respected in the US and internationally, and their methodology is highly replicable and can be adapted successfully in diverse communities. The technical assistance provided by Neil and his staff is hands-on, practical and high quality, which is demonstrated by their success in facilitating the continued increase in fatality review efforts over the last two decades.

The NDVFRI is without a doubt an exceptional nominee for this award and I recommend them to you without reservation.

Sincerely,

Denise Gamache, MSW
Director
October 20, 2014

Ms. Marcia Roth
Executive Director
Mary Byron Project, Inc.
Fostering Innovations and Strategies to End Domestic Violence
10401 Linn Station Road, Suite 116
Louisville, KY 40223

Re: Letter of Support for National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative

Dear Ms. Roth,

The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV) strongly supports the nomination of the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative (NDVFRI) to receive a Mary Byron Celebrations Solution Award. FCADV is a not-for-profit organization that serves as the statewide membership association representing Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers, and is designated in statute as the organization responsible for administering state and federal funding earmarked for domestic violence core services. FCADV provides training and technical assistance to domestic violence center staff, law enforcement, lawyers and other professionals, has implemented numerous innovative programs to address the diverse needs of domestic violence survivors and their children, staffs the 24-hour crisis hotline for domestic violence survivors, and serves as the primary representative of survivors in the public policy arena.

NDVFRI has a long history of assisting the state of Florida and FCADV in groundbreaking work relating to domestic violence fatality review. In 1995, NDVFRI began providing on-site, in-depth training and ongoing technical assistance to help Florida communities establish local domestic violence fatality review teams. The establishment of such teams enabled those communities to bring key stakeholders to the table to review domestic violence homicides, identify gaps in services, and make recommendations to increase victim safety, ensure perpetrator accountability and ultimately save lives. Communities that established those first local teams with the help of NDVFRI have formed strong collaborative partnerships among victim services organizations, law enforcement, the courts, child welfare agencies and others to develop programs to prevent domestic violence homicides.
More recently, in 2009, NDVFRI assisted FCADV and the Florida Attorney General in establishing a statewide domestic violence fatality review team. NDVFRI provided the initial training to the statewide team, and provided on-going technical assistance and guidance as the statewide team reviewed its first case and drafted its initial report and recommendations. Over the past two years, NDVFRI also provided on-site training in Florida communities that established new local domestic violence fatality review teams. These new teams reported to FCADV that the NDVFRI trainers’ expertise and enthusiasm provided them with the necessary tools to conduct effective reviews and to sustain the team going forward.

NDVFRI’s website serves as an excellent resource for Florida’s fatality review teams to access cutting edge research related to fatality review and prevention of domestic violence homicides, as well as fatality review team reports from other states and countries. This website, in addition to NDVFRI’s always outstanding annual conference, enables fatality review teams to tap into promising practices from other jurisdictions, and exchange information with their peers.

Domestic violence fatality review teams are a critical component of a multi-disciplinary, coordinated community response to end domestic violence. NDVFRI, through its training, technical assistance, and resources, has provided invaluable assistance to Florida statewide and local fatality review teams in their efforts to increase and improve interventions for domestic violence survivors.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide this letter of support for NDVFRI.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Tiffany Carr
President/CEO
October 20, 2014

Marcia Roth
Executive Director
Mary Byron Project, Inc.
Fostering Innovations and Strategies to End Domestic Violence
10401 Linn Station Road, Suite 116
Louisville, KY 40223

Dear Ms. Roth:

It is with great pleasure that I lend my support to the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative (NDVFRI) for the 2014 Mary Byron Celebrating Solutions Award. NDVFRI has been housed or co-located at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff since 1999. The organization has provided vital leadership within the state of Arizona and specifically in Coconino County as stakeholders search for strategies to reduce the impact of domestic violence on victims, their families, and our communities.

According to the Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence, approximately 100 Arizonans die every year in domestic violence related incidents. These include victims of intimate partner homicide, children, victims of familial homicides, perpetrators who take their own lives or are killed by law enforcement, and bystanders. These tragedies affect not only the families of the victims and perpetrators but the entire community. In order to make a concerted effort to prevent such deaths, Arizona began exploring domestic violence fatality review early in the millennium. In 2005, the legislature passed a statute protecting the teams' work, and the efforts progressed to form additional teams around the state. NDVFRI worked closely with local stakeholders to form local, autonomous, multi-disciplinary domestic violence fatality review teams aimed at improving their responses to domestic violence and preventing future tragedies. In late 2008 and early 2009, Coconino County began working creating a team, which my office fully supported. NDVFRI provided on-site training and technical assistance and was always available by phone and email to help address concerns and move the work forward. Today, there are 12 teams in Arizona, and NDVFRI supports the work of all of them, providing guidance and serving as a repository for their information and that of teams across the nation. It is worth noting that NDVFRI also provides technical assistance to review team networks in 44 other states.
The impact of the teams’ work has been wide-ranging. Locally, the Coconino County team has explored increasing communication among agencies, issues with prosecutorial and judicial access to information, and medical protocol, among others. Members of the team have successfully worked with the local hospital to implement domestic violence screening in the emergency room. The City of Phoenix developed a risk assessment tool for law enforcement and worked to streamline their response protocols in domestic violence cases. In fact, fatality review has directly led to a growing movement to explore and implement sensitive, nuanced risk assessment across the state. The Yuma County team recognized a significant problem with domestic violence among the elderly and recommended increased outreach to them. These are just a few of the ways fatality review is used to develop, advance, and enhance prevention and intervention strategies.

Additionally, NDVFRl has hosted four national conferences in Arizona in the last ten years. The events bring leading experts in the field, team members, and interested stakeholders from across the country to our state to learn, network, and support one another.

The Governor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families supported Dr. Webdale and his team through a STOP grant for a separate project combining fatality reviews and safety assessments (FRASA). The funds allowed the unique blend of two tried and tested systemic analyses and provided two communities (Flagstaff in Coconino County and Apache Junction in Pinal County) with the opportunity to intensify their fatality reviews and explore themes from past reviews. Consultants from the Battered Women's Justice Project and Praxis International, Inc. traveled to our community to assist the local team in a safety assessment. The assessment gathered a broader range of information than is generally collected when reviewing a specific case. Our team completed their report earlier this year. The recommendations from this report will improve policies, procedures, and responses to domestic violence, thus increasing victim safety and offender accountability. In fact, Chief Kevin Treadway of the Flagstaff Police Department started a task force to address some of the concerns before the report was even completed. The grant also funded a series of six conferences over two years, one of which was held in Flagstaff. The conferences provided technical assistance to law enforcement and included a panel on Survivor Perspectives on Risk; this distinctive session gave officers the opportunity to hear from survivors, ask questions, and broaden their views of the complex dynamics of domestic violence. I was pleased to see such an innovative project take place in our
community and look forward to hearing about the positive impacts on victims and their families.

Arizona's multi-agency preventive efforts have expanded vastly over the last 10 years, and fatality review has been a major contributor. In some communities, it is the cornerstone of coordination and communication among agencies. We are fortunate to have NDVFRI within our borders and recognize the national impact of the organization as well.

Sincerely,

David W. Rozema
Coconino County Attorney
NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY FDN INC
% NORTHERN AZ UNIVERSITY
PO BOX 4094
FLAGSTAFF AZ 86011-0001

Employer Identification Number: **-***3726
Person to Contact: Ms Lane
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your Apr. 15, 2010, request for information regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that your organization was recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in February 1965.

Our records also indicate that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(iv).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,

Michele M. Sullivan, Oper. Mgr.
Accounts Management Operations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>$116,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe</td>
<td>$30,098</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$17,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants</td>
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<td>Operational</td>
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<td>Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>$51,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$234,789</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. What is the approximate number of individuals served annually by the applicant or nominee?

The NDVFRI serves people in several different ways. The team of staff and consultants conducts training through presentations at conferences as well as local, state, and regional events. The list below is taken from our semi-annual reports to the Office on Violence Against Women for January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People Trained</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult protective services staff</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorneys/law students</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batterer intervention program staff</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child welfare/protection workers</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child advocates</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community advocacy organization staff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrections personnel</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court personnel</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally specific community programs</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence program staff and boards</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual sexual assault and domestic violence program staff and boards</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder organization staff</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government agency staff</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health professionals (excluding forensic examiners)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law enforcement officers</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health professionals</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosecutors</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault forensic examiners</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault programs staff and boards</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social service organization staff</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State, tribal, and/or territory sexual assault coalition</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and/or domestic violence coalition staff and boards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervised visitation and exchange center staff</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal community groups</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal government/Tribal government agency staff</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim-witness specialists</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other national technical assistance providers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1061</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, the team provides targeted technical assistance through site visits, consultations, and responses to information requests. In 2013, NDVFRI provided 1,301 hours of technical assistance to agencies and communities across the country. The nature of technical assistance does not allow tracking of people served. In some cases, it takes place on a conference call with a
small group who then bring the information back to the full team. In others, one person may contact the organization on behalf of many. Thus, NDVFR’s technical assistance manifests in vast numbers of people accessing the information. Recipients use the information in a variety of ways. Additionally, the dialogic nature of technical assistance provision enhances our own learning. We explore technical assistance more thoroughly in the additional questions posed.

Another aspect of service is the NDVFR website. In 2012, the website was redesigned with a user-friendly interface and fresh multi-media educational content. The site acts as a clearinghouse for fatality review information, and the team diligently collects updated information from teams, such as reports, confidentiality agreements, bylaws, and statutes. Most notably, the new site offers visitors an interactive map providing easy access to team reports and documents and a video library featuring interviews with the leading experts in the field and recordings of conferences and presentations. From January 1, 2013 – June 30, 2013, the site logged 11,911 pageviews from 2,808 unique visitors. We regularly add new content to the site.

2. How many paid staff and volunteers are used to administer the nominated program?

We currently have 1.77 full time equivalent (FTE) positions funded through this grant. Additional personnel include our network of consultants. These experts conduct as needed site visits and trainings on behalf of NDVFR and include attorneys, judges, government agency heads, and high-ranking law enforcement officers. During large conferences, we rely on undergraduate and graduate students as well as professional contacts to serve as volunteers.

NDVFR is housed in the Family Violence Institute (FVI) at Northern Arizona University (NAU). (See Exhibit A.) The FVI attracts high-quality undergraduate interns who assist with a variety of tasks for NDVFR. The students engage in practical professional development in the family violence field.

3. Are there past awards, accolades, and grants furnished upon the applicant or nominee that would further exemplify its success in combating intimate partner violence?

NDVFR has been funded by the Office on Violence Against Women and located or co-located at Northern Arizona University for 15 years. NDVFR was also awarded a STOP grant by the Arizona Governor’s Office on Children, Youth, and Families to implement a related project (known as FRASA) combining fatality reviews and safety assessments. The combination of these two systemic analysis methodologies holds great promise. Information about the FRASA project is available at www.frasafety.org.

Dr. Neil Websdale, Director, has received two awards for his work through NDVFR. In 2011, he received a Recognition Award from Director of the FBI Robert Mueller for his contributions to fatality review work in Native American sovereign nations. In 2010, he received the Arizona Attorney General’s Award for Distinguished Leadership in the Field of Victim Services.

Dr. Websdale has won 3 national book awards. Dr. Websdale's first book, based on his work in Kentucky, was titled Rural Woman Battering and the Justice System: An Ethnography (Sage,
1998). It won the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Outstanding Book Award in 1999. His third book, Policing the Poor: From Slave Plantation to Public Housing (Northeastern University Press, 2001), also won the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Outstanding Book Award in 2003 and the Gustavus-Myers Center for the Study of Bigotry and Human Rights Award in 2002. These awards add to the prestige of NDVFRI since the field work they report addresses key violence against women issues including many of the issues we highlight.

4. If funding were not an issue, what (if any) changes or additions would you make to the nominated program in the future? What are the long term goals for your program? We are interested in hearing both your practical goals in addition to any lofty dreams you might have for the future.

NDVFRI seeks service expansion in a variety of ways. At the moment, we contract with OVW to provide 10 communities with on-site services annually. We would like to increase on-site training and technical assistance to 30 communities per year. This involves growing our network of consultants and developing new training curricula. Recently, NDVFRI embarked on a series of webinars on fatality review (see Exhibit B for a sample flyer). The first two sessions (Fatality Review: The State of the Art and DV Fatality Review: The Montana Model) attracted nearly 200 attendees with many more requests for access to the recordings. We hope to explore creative use of technology, such as podcasts, to broaden access even further.

NDVFRI seeks to increase the sophistication of technical assistance delivery. We would like to develop a more comprehensive understanding of what “successful” teams look like. This includes appreciation of what constitutes effective team leadership, organization, and communication. Relationships remain the key to effective coordinated community responses as we continue to explore innovative approaches. We will also strengthen our own relationships with national project partners and increase connections with other initiatives. Strong collaboration will open avenues for new projects, new collaborations, and new discussions on how to increase victim safety and perpetrator accountability.

Over the past few years, NDVFRI has explored conducting reviews in Native American communities. We know that Native women experience high levels of domestic and sexual violence, and that the systemic response is often underdeveloped. Advancing work with Native communities presents an opportunity to learn from them and improve our services. It will require us to modify the process and understand differing concepts of accountability. Dr. Websdale assisted with the creation of the first culturally specific Native American domestic violence fatality review team. The collaboration among seven tribes and the state of Montana reviewed its first case last year. We hope to parlay that experience into cultivation of new consultants and expansion of the model into additional Native American communities.

Dr. Websdale and his team formed the FVI in 2013. The FVI houses both the NDVFRI and the FRASA projects, along with future programs and grant-funded projects. One of the FVI’s goals is to provide student and professional educational and service opportunities. In addition to our current institutional analysis work, we plan to offer targeted workshops with continuing education credit for professionals in the field. We hope to offer these both in person and via
webinars in order to increase the impact. These workshops may directly relate to fatality review. We recognize a need for introductory education as well as advanced workshops for established teams. Providing a forum for discussing issues like confidentiality, working with surviving family members, implementing recommendations, and cultural sensitivity would be beneficial to teams across the country.

The previously mentioned FRASA project ends in December 2014. Both project staff and community stakeholders feel it helped advance the fatality review team’s work in pilot communities. The FVI hopes to adapt the model and introduce it in other communities.

We envision the FVI will emerge as a leader in professional training regarding domestic violence. Our current network of consultants would allow us to bring experts from different parts of the system to train their colleagues on issues like law enforcement response, risk assessment protocols, innovative prosecutorial strategies, and victim access to residential and non-residential victim service programs.

For several years, the team has discussed finding a way to provide services to surviving children who lost one or both parents to intimate partner homicide or intimate partner homicide/suicide. The offending parent may be imprisoned, leaving some uncertainty as to who cares for the child. Grandparents sometimes take custody, but this can result in custody battles between maternal and paternal grandparents. Other relatives may also take the children in. Adding a child to an existing family unit may place financial and emotional strain on the new family, leading to some children being passed from relative to relative. Many enter the foster care system. Currently, there are no best practices on ensuring continuity of care. The instability in the new living situation may exacerbate the emotional trauma of losing one or both parents. Caretakers may be understandably ill-equipped to appropriately address the trauma history, increasing everyone’s stress. After all, in addition to the child’s trauma, relatives are experiencing their own grief. Exploring strategies to improve service delivery while respecting confidentiality is a challenge that must be addressed. (For more information, please visit our website’s video library to view Donya Witherspoon and Dr. Marilyn Armour discussing surviving children.) We hope the FVI can serve as a central location where the exploration and practical implementation of these and other projects can take place.

While we currently work in the US, we recognize the increasingly global environment. For this reason, our most recent 2013 conference, “Global Possibilities,” addressed both national and international issues. Our upcoming November webinar includes a volunteered contribution from a prominent British speaker. In the summer of 2014, the FVI hired a Post-Doctoral Scholar with a primary interest in international violence against women. We hope to increase our involvement in international domestic violence homicide prevention. For instance, the World Health Organization undertook a research project examining homicide trends. Other organizations approach violence against women as a human rights violation. Researchers who focus on risk assessment apply the concepts in different countries and adapt them as needed. The Family Violence Institute allows us to house visiting scholars, expand our learning horizon, and access contextual information otherwise unavailable.
1. Please provide information on ways in which review teams may “recreate the worldview of the victim.”

Domestic violence fatality review provides communities with a framework to increase their understanding of systemic responses to domestic violence. Professionals working with both victims and perpetrators may see a plethora of options available to potentially increase safety, decrease abuse, and hold perpetrators accountable. However, we understand that the system looks very different to individuals and families attempting to navigate it. Fatality review heightens sensitivity to the plight of victims by recreating the case through her (and sometimes his) eyes. This includes gathering a broad array of information from multiple sources. Commonly, information comes from agency records such as law enforcement, prosecution, probation, parole, and corrections, diversion programs, victim advocacy, schools, child protection, family court, civil court, and public health data. This data provides insight into both the victim’s and the perpetrator’s experience with the system. It also allows teams to make specific recommendations for those agencies.

NDVFRI encourages teams to expand their knowledge of a case by interviewing surviving family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and others who may be privy to additional information about the victim, the perpetrator, and their relationship. Working with surviving families can greatly enhance reviews. The level of familial involvement varies. Providing options for familial, friend, coworker, and neighbor involvement is a vital part of the process. An important part of their participation involves explaining the process of review and the limitations on information sharing. Teams cannot share confidential information and family members need to know this.

As we know, most victims do not engage with the system. Questions regarding why victims do not engage with various agencies purportedly designed to help them are an important area of exploration. For instance, teams may know the victim never contacted a domestic violence program or law enforcement. A family member, friend, or coworker may be able to highlight gaps in public awareness of available resources or other reasons she chose not to reach out. Some local domestic violence programs may not offer culturally specific services. Communal adversarial relationships with law enforcement or fear for a partner’s employment may affect willingness to call 911. Further, teams may have access to personal sources such as diaries, journals, and social media accounts. These firsthand accounts can assist teams in filling in gaps in information and conducting victim-centered reviews.

Increasingly, teams are opening their reviews to near-death cases. In these reviews, a living victim can provide powerful information about the relationship history, her
decision-making and the factors influencing it, barriers to service access, and her experiences with various systemic responses. They shine a light on the compromises victims face.

2. Please describe in detail the process that is followed when you receive a request to provide technical assistance to develop a statewide team. What are the requirements from the team? Do your consultants provide on-site training? Is a training for the statewide members usually suggested? If so, how long is the training and what is the content? Are you available for additional consultation later as the team begins its reviews?

Teams generally contact us through the “Contact NDVRI” feature on our website or through direct communication with the Director or staff. These requests relate to the establishment or enhancement of both local and statewide teams. Each training and technical assistance (TTA) provision, including preparation for said provision, is specifically tailored to the community. However, there are several steps we generally take.

If a state expresses interest in statewide team formation, we proceed into an information-gathering phase. We often set up conference calls with stakeholders to discuss several pertinent themes:

- **Impetus for formation.** Teams may form in direct response to a spate of homicides or as part of a new coordinated response effort. Learning about the environment that prompted the desire to form a team assists us with designing our technical assistance.

- **Status of reviews in the state.** Statewide teams that serve as the only review mechanism tend to operate differently than those seeking to supplement local teams’ work. In Florida, for example, the statewide team assists local teams and helps standardize the information they produce. They also review particularly difficult or sensitive cases. In contrast, the New Mexico team is statewide only.

- **Potential team members.** We work with the primary points of contact to identify stakeholders already invested in the concept. We then assist them in broadening their potential membership to include professionals and others who have contact with victims, perpetrators, and their children in their state. Our visits encourage wide participation from stakeholders. Some training attendees may not serve on the team but can provide support in other ways. These conversations often explore communication barriers among various systems players.

- **Training and technical assistance goals.** We solicit information about what they hope to gain from training and/or technical assistance. This often includes salient
issues such as increasing commitment from stakeholders, bylaw construction, the review process, crafting and implementing recommendations, and report writing, among other topics.

The initial call collects information on the above points. NDVFRI staff sends notes to the participants to ensure we understand their request and their working environment. Subsequent communications depend on the structure of the assistance. We do recommend an on-site training when fiscally feasible and responsible. This is limited by our funding availability, but we find that sending staff and/or consultants to the community elicits more productive TTA provision. We discuss additional avenues for technical assistance in question four. In addition to the TTA needs analysis, the facilitating team member is required to have an OVW grant number. However, for communities that do not have OVW funding, NDVFRI seeks creative solutions to assist when possible and fiscally feasible.

If funding allows an on-site TTA visit, the event usually ranges in length from a half to a full day. However, some teams request longer sessions that can expand up to two days. We are available for consultation during a review and have participated as guests in actual reviews.

The content varies according to team needs. The table below represents a recently developed agenda for a full day training accommodating an audience of nearly 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30-10:30</td>
<td>What Happens Before an Intimate Partner Homicide? Fatality Review Overview</td>
<td>Dr. Neil Websdale, NDVFRI Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30-11:15</td>
<td>The Montana Model</td>
<td>Matthew Dale, NDVFRI Chief Consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15-11:30</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:15</td>
<td>The Role of Law Enforcement in Fatality Review</td>
<td>Chief Jerald Monahan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15-1:15</td>
<td>Working Lunch: Video and Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our trainings regularly contain variations of this agenda. NDVFRI provides a range of local workshops to teams across the country. Common presentations include:

- **Introduction to Fatality Review.** This overview offers communities interested in starting a team a chance to learn about the origins and growth of fatality review. It informs them of the general process, potential sources of information, and examples of implemented recommendations. It often includes a mock review, described below.

- **Developments in Fatality Review.** This workshop, aimed at established teams that have conducted one or more reviews, outlines significant developments in the field. For instance, the participants may learn about new strategies in reviews, such as including clergy or schools. Presenters may discuss implementation methods. Teams may want guidance on engaging friends and family. Presenters may explore issues related to confidentiality, such as access to health records.

- **Confidentiality.** This topic addresses discussions and concerns related to the management of public, private, and confidential information. Two attorneys, Robin Thompson and Nina Zollo, serve as consultants for NDVFRI. The organization sends them across the country to assist local teams who are struggling with or simply exploring this topic. They are also available to provide phone consultations, paid for by NDVFRI. However, they do not provide legal counsel related to legislation.

- **Mock Review Exercises.** Staff and/or consultants regularly facilitate a mock review. NDVFRI houses a library of anonymous cases from real reviews. The cases are altered to eliminate identifying information by incorporating elements from other reviews or experiential knowledge. The mock review activity provides an opportunity to develop a timeline, identify red flags, explore agency and
community involvement and coordination, label gaps in the responses, and develop recommendations to fill those gaps.

After the training, NDVFRI staff is available for additional technical assistance consultations. Due to the conversational tone of our workshops, we regularly follow up with organizers to answer questions from the event. We further receive emails and phone calls after attendees have processed information.

3. What information is generally included in the “customized information packets” referenced on your website?

Since each packet is highly individualized, we do not have a standard set of documents we provide for each request. They may include scholarly research, popular pieces, samples of documents from our website, documents and resources from various agencies and programs, and/or contact information for resources in the field. However, we do find ourselves frequently using some items. We have included a sample of these on the enclosed USB drives. We also regularly refer people to our video library. At present, we have two recorded webinars. We are exploring a technologically and fiscally viable way to house them. The webinar series will expand our resource library and connect people with experts in the field in a new way.

4. Please provide additional information on the types of “technical assistance” provided.

Technical assistance to teams is both needs- and resource-based. As explained above, we generally recommend on-site technical assistance delivery for new teams. Established teams facing complex issues often receive in person services as well. NDVFRI also delivers remote technical assistance. This occurs via individual and conference calls telephonically or through videoconferencing. NDVFRI receives frequent questions via email, and while many of those requests result in phone calls, we resolve some through electronic communication. We have found that a combination of these modes of technical assistance is an effective delivery system. We also host a bi-annual national conference, drawing participants from across the country at various stages of experience with fatality review. These events complement the targeted technical assistance we provide. The next conference takes place in May 2015 (see Exhibit C).

We have expanded our technological capacity to disseminate information in recent years. Our revamped NDVFRI website offers an abundance of resources. Our website houses an impressive video library of keynote addresses, workshops, and interviews that can provide a great deal of insight to teams. Our newest vehicle for providing technical assistance is through webinars. This has proven to be an effective method of providing
information on specific topics. Although the webinars are a great tool in helping teams
stay current on specific topics, the nuances of fatality review often demand personalized
assistance.

5. What are some of the common mistakes made most often by fatality review teams?

NDVFRF supports a review culture of safety rather than a culture of shame and
blame. We apply this philosophy to the entire team. For newly formed teams, we provide
training and technical assistance based on the steps found on our website under the tab
“Getting Started”. This guidance relies heavily on the rich experience of the 175
domestic violence fatality review teams in operation.

Fatality review is by nature an evolving process. Team formation, reviewing new case
types, and crafting and implementing recommendations continuously reveal areas of
potential improvement to a team’s process. NDVFRF does not view these as mistakes, but
rather opportunities to fine-tune the approach. We assist communities in confronting
these challenges on a regular basis.

As discussed above, we provide ongoing technical assistance to forming teams. We see a
recurring challenge involving team membership. Nascent teams may inadvertently
exclude potentially valuable members. Communities may also lack support from key
agencies. We draw from a multi-disciplinary group of consultants to discuss how
to agencies can participate in accordance with their missions.

Established teams may struggle with participation. Over time, some efforts stagnate and
fewer members attend meetings. We often help them expand the scope of their reviews in
these circumstances. We suggest selecting cases with a view to learning opportunities.
We also help them consider broadening their team membership and utilize our
consultants to bridge communication gaps.

Some teams struggle with navigating confidentiality issues. Federal and state law govern
the release of information from systems players. NDVFRF staff and consultants,
including specialist legal counsel, work with those teams to help locate statutes, develop
protocols, and communicate openly about where the concerns originated and how to
address them. Other teams may express interest in expanding the scope of their reviews.
Some states have amended their statutes to review near deaths. Near death reviews
require a heightened sensitivity, as the victim survived the attack and may contribute to
the review. NDVFRF provides training and technical assistance to address each of these
issues.
Teams are also concerned about the degree to which their recommendations are implemented. In addition to being the ultimate goal, review outcomes can help drive participation. NDVFRI shares successful strategies from other teams and informs conversations about the development of local protocols to track changes.

NDVFRI technical assistance further addresses expanding the narrative beyond systemic documents. When teams become focused on statistical data and lose sight of the parties’ perspectives, they may limit their ability to create effective recommendations. Deep analysis of report writing and involving family and friends can re-center the process. We address the comfort, emotions, and security of surviving family members, attempting to strike a balance between providing accurate information about how families can participate and not patronizing them. Some surviving family members may wish to attend a meeting with the entire team, while others may prefer phone or video involvement or a small interview with two or three team members. The contributions of surviving family, friends, co-workers and others greatly inform the process of reconstruction. As such, when assisting with new team formation, NDVFRI encourages stakeholders to use familial, friend, coworker, and neighbor interviews.

Reviewers still have much to learn from each other and surviving family and community members. For instance, there is an acute need for a paradigm shift toward understanding how victims perceive risk and act upon their perception. We need sophisticated, nuanced, state-of-the-art risk assessment procedures that recognize that victims sometimes see systems as increasing rather than decreasing their risk of death. It is essential that homicide prevention initiatives deploy risk assessment practices imbued not only with a sense of what risk markers matter but also with heightened understanding of risk assessment “processes,” including how questions are asked, in what context, or, indeed, whether questions are asked at all. Meeting victims where they stand lies at the heart of effective multi-agency and community responses to domestic violence. Learning what is important to victims broadens the review team, in turn expanding coordinated community responses. Quality homicide prevention therefore involves deploying multiagency and community strategies that include the nuanced deployment of risk assessment.

As further discussed in question seven, NDVFRI does not proscribe any particular tool or method. Staff and consultants recognize the need for local approaches.

6. Please feel free to briefly share any additional information about your program that may be helpful for our reviewers to know.

While NDVFRI works directly with stakeholders considering or already engaging in fatality review, the impact is far broader. The context-driven review process alters the ways in which participants view domestic violence. In addition to a paradigm shift in
viewpoint, it has practical implications. It changes the way law enforcement investigates. It changes the way prosecutors charge cases in criminal court. It changes the way advocates conduct outreach. In short, domestic violence fatality review offers an opportunity to change the way professionals approach victims and perpetrators. We can never know the true extent of domestic violence in this country. However, when the system does respond, victims and perpetrators are directly affected by the work of review teams in their communities. It offers a systematic, nuanced, sensitive intervention. The massive growth of fatality review since the 1990s shows the efficacy of the process. It helps build relationships, enhances coordinated community responses, and holds agencies accountable. Fatality review can make dramatic improvements in victim safety and perpetrator accountability.

In addition, NDVFRI is now housed under the newly established Family Violence Institute (FVI) at Northern Arizona University. The FVI is a non-partisan center that engages in research, public policy work, program evaluation, and education and training designed to eradicate family violence. The work NDVFRI and FVI conduct complement and enhance their respective missions.

A component of FVI's vision is to address intimate partner homicide on a global level. Intimate partner homicide and the maltreatment of women is a global issue as evidenced by phenomena such as forced prostitution, honor killings, bride burnings or dowry deaths, witchcraft killings and genital cutting. These disturbing and interrelated phenomena continue to raise grave concerns internationally. FVI has been contracted to assist with special projects and Dr. Websdale has been invited as a leading expert to address national and global issues. Our long term goal is to expand fatality review throughout developing countries, to examine these offenses against women with a view to understanding them, preventing, and using the information as a means of contributing to a more secure, safe environment for women and children. We hope to expand the work NDVFRI does nationally and globally.

7. Please provide copies of any assessments, screening tools or evaluations utilized.

NDVFRI does not endorse a specific formula, tool, assessment, or evaluation to conduct reviews. Each community has unique needs and strengths and we tailor our technical assistance accordingly. Fatality review teams may utilize at least two different types of tools: case selection criteria screening and data collection. We encourage teams to explore the available instruments, then adopt and adopt methods that work best for them. Regardless of which assessment or tool a team elects to use, we strongly support the philosophy that the tool is just that --- a tool, and only one method of many. Our guidance is to use a wider lens than simply checking boxes. Teams need to listen to the narrative of
the victims and the agencies involved. We encourage them to closely analyze data sources and delve into the material to create a more complete picture.

Teams uniquely create their case selection criteria. While we do not generally provide specific instruments, we discuss this at length with teams. Many teams choose not to develop a form. Instead, they engage in discussion as a group. The NDVFRI website offers samples of available data collection tools. Attached you will find the following documents:

- Attachment B: 79-item tool: The Domestic Violence Council of Hamilton County, Ohio Domestic Violence Death Review Panel, Demographic Data Form.
- Attachment C: A tool for statewide data analysis: California Statewide Data Collection tool.

We have also included copies of our internal evaluation tool that we utilize for our national conference offerings (Attachment E). Our webinars are evaluated through SurveyMonkey. We attached a text version of the survey (Attachment F). We use these results for continuous improvement measures.