



JUSTICE IN ACTION

VOLUME I, NO. 5

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FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Reader,

I hope this month finds you healthy, safe, and growing more accustomed to the “new normal.” As I write and dislike the words “new normal,” I am reminded that this kind of life-altering change of our everyday routines which causes many of us such anxiety is similar in many ways to the kinds of life-altering changes that survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) are frequently called upon to make to protect themselves and their families.

They are often called upon to change their routines, to stop going to the places they usually go, to give up mutual friends and acquaintances, to leave their homes, to change or leave their places of employment. It's not a virus they are trying to avoid, it's an abuser who is capable of terrorizing and killing them. Thankfully, there are folks like you, who have joined with us at the Mary Byron Project (MBP) to help make the law a better protector of survivors and a better tool in ending IPV. Even while the pandemic rages, we continue to review and handle cases for survivors of IPV in Kentucky's Courts and provide expert consultation to other attorneys doing the same.

This month you'll see how your financial support has helped us enhance justice for IPV survivors as you read about a recent donation we made to help courts serve survivors during the ongoing pandemic. You'll be fascinated as you learn more about our very impressive Board President, Phyllis Florman and about a few more of our innovative Celebrating Solutions Award winners. Finally, we're going to tell you about our newest online training session and why it is so important. Happy reading!

Dondee Gilbert



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Both experience and research shows us that the trauma of intimate partner violence (IPV) can have devastating mental health consequences. Survivors are at increased risk for anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, sleep disturbances, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). And on average, over half of women seen in a range of mental health settings either currently are or have been abused by an intimate partner.¹ Unfortunately, due to lack of both awareness and community resources, the mental health needs of survivors frequently go unmet. One way that organizations, including the Mary Byron Project, are trying to address this issue is by working to make sure services are trauma-informed. Services with this approach recognize the symptoms of trauma and the role that it plays in the lives of victims/survivors. If you're interested in learning more about trauma-informed services, check out our latest online training: [Trauma Informed Services for Victims/Survivors of IPV](#). This 16 minute training explores the brain and body's reaction to crisis, as well as the ways that victims cope with trauma. Understanding what survivors might be experiencing can help you create services that are supportive and welcoming rather than re-traumatizing.

1. [PREVALENCE OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND OTHER LIFETIME TRAUMA AMONG WOMEN SEEN IN MENTAL HEALTH SETTINGS](#) Copyright © 2011 National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health

Meet Our Board

AN INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT PHYLLIS FLORMAN



This month we sat down with our distinguished Board President, Phyllis Florman. She has long been an important part of our MBP team. Here's what she had to say:

Tell us about your leadership and service to our community:

I have always been committed to elevating the status of women and their families. And I am grateful for the opportunities, people, family, friends, and life experiences which have enabled me to try to make a positive difference in people's lives.

Some of the opportunities occurred when I served as a Commissioner of the Louisville Jefferson County Human Relations Commission and was appointed 3 times to the Kentucky Commission on Women, serving as the vice chair. During my third term, I was elected vice chair of the National Association of Commissions on Women.

Other opportunities arose during my career as an attorney. These included serving as president of the University of Louisville Law Alumnae Association, president of the Louisville Bar Foundation, and president of the Family Place, a child sexual abuse treatment agency. I had the unique distinction of being the first caucasian woman to be inducted into the Coalition of 100 Black Women.

I was a participant in Leadership Louisville and then in the Bingham Fellows. That year's project was addressing quality of life issues in Smoketown and Shelby Park. Being recognized as a Woman of Distinction by the Center for Women and Families was a special honor. And so is serving as the president of the Mary Byron Project as it seeks to end intimate partner violence (IPV).

How long have you been involved with MBP and how did you get involved?

I have been on the Board for many years. And I have been serving as the president for 2 terms.

My involvement began when my dear friend Marcia Roth became the first Executive Director. Marcia enjoys the reputation of giving her time, energy and talents to causes that involve elevating the status of women and their families. When she invited me to join the board, I needed no further information.

Why is the work of MBP important?

MBP is a nationally recognized thought-leader in the field of IPV. For our first 20 years in existence, we fostered innovations and strategies to end IPV through our Celebrating Solutions/Roth Awards programs.

Now, under the new leadership of Dorislee Gilbert, we seek to enhance justice to end IPV. Our goals are to help IPV victims navigate the legal system through appellate advocacy to keep survivors and their families safe and to shape the law to better serve and protect victims and to end IPV.

What are some of your favorite accomplishments of MBP?

When you look at the more than 60 programs that have been granted Celebrating Solutions/Roth Awards, you can't help but be impressed and overwhelmed by the dedicated people around the United States who have created innovative, effective, far-reaching programs that have been replicated over the years. And we are part of that.

Recipients of these awards tell us that winning gave them "credibility" within their communities and states and on the national level. MBP effectively inspires and leads the efforts to end IPV.

Tell us about your family.

I feel blessed to have a marvelous husband, 3 remarkable children and their spouses, and 8 fantastic grandchildren.

Tell us about the evolution of your career and all its iterations.

Over the years, I have been a secretary, a middle school English teacher, and an attorney concentrating in arbitration and mediation. A high point was being admitted into the National Academy of Arbitrators. Now I am having a wonderful time as a docent at the Speed Museum.

What do you like to do in your free time?

My hobbies have included racketball, tennis, needlepoint, zumba, traveling, walks with friends, visiting and spoiling grandchildren, and reading.

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

I sincerely thank the Board and staff of MBP for being able to be a part of an amazing organization. I've had so many wonderful opportunities, even more than I've shared here. All in all, it's been a terrific ride!

MUCH NEEDED ASSISTANCE TO THE COURTS

On May 15, 2020, the Kentucky Supreme Court issued a new administrative order regarding functioning of the Courts beginning June 1. As has been the case throughout this pandemic, Kentucky Courts remain open and operational for the processing of and hearing of domestic violence protective order petitions. The local family courts in Jefferson County have been offering to allow parties to participate in these hearings remotely during the pandemic, when possible; and beginning June 1, the Kentucky Supreme Court is mandating that courts conduct hearings using available telephonic and video technology in most circumstances.

Over the last few weeks, we discovered that the problem locally is that courts just do not have all the needed technology to allow all parties in domestic violence hearings to participate fully and safely. That's where the Mary Byron Project stepped in. To continue our mission of enhancing justice to end intimate partner violence, we donated four laptop computers and appropriate cables to the Jefferson County Family Courts for their use in conducting domestic violence protection order hearings safely and thoroughly for all parties involved during the continuing pandemic.

We've told you before that the stresses of forced social isolation increase the risk of violence within homes, but those same stressors also reduce opportunities for victims of abuse to safely tell someone about the abuse and stop or escape it. Domestic violence protection orders are critical, especially at times like these. A victim who secures one of these orders can be allowed to remain in the home while the perpetrator of the abuse is forced to leave. But this relief is absolutely dependent on the ability to safely and fully participate in a court hearing. That's why MBP's gift is so important.

Jefferson County Family Court Judge Christine Ward described that MBP's laptop donation will "enable [the courts] to ensure all participants in these proceedings have the same access and to keep an accurate and complete record of remote hearings." She described that for some time the courts will be relying on this "technology to accommodate remote hearings where possible to keep people healthy and safe." She expressed appreciation for MBP's gift from all ten of the Jefferson County Family Court judges, who recognize the importance of this donation to help the courts "meet needs in these challenging times."

Because of your continuing support, we are able to continue our mission of enhancing justice to end intimate partner violence even in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. Thank you!

Celebrating Solutions 20th Anniversary
AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE
Looking Back on Our Winners...

Each month leading up to the selection of the winner of the Celebrating Solutions "Award for Excellence", we are spotlighting several of our incredible former winners and their services to victims of intimate partner violence. This month's former Celebrating Solutions winners:

**National Center for Victims of Crime, National Stalking Resource Center
Washington, DC (2007 Winner)**

According to the National Center for Victims of Crime website, "the mission of the Stalking Resource Center is to enhance the ability of professionals, organizations, and systems to effectively respond to stalking. Since its inception in 2000, the SRC has trained over 100,000 professionals who work with victims in all 50 states, two US Territories, the District of Columbia, the United Kingdom, and Germany and provided technical assistance to hundreds of communities seeking to enhance their response to stalking. The SRC is committed to continuing its national effort to promote awareness, action, and advocacy to enhance victim safety and hold stalking offenders accountable."

<https://victimsofcrime.org/stalking-resource-center/>

**Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center, Domestic Violence High Risk Team
Newburyport, MA (2008 winner)**

Created in the aftermath of another domestic violence tragedy, the Domestic Violence High-Risk team coordinates criminal justice, probation, hospital, and batterers' intervention programs to identify high risk victims earlier and provide tailored interventions. Recognized by Vice President Biden in 2013, as a "leading promising practice" numerous communities that have replicated the team have experienced significant improvements in the quality of their response to intimate partner violence.

<https://jeannegeigercrisiscenter.org/>

La Casa De Las Madres, Safe Housing Project, San Francisco, CA (2009 winner)

The Safe Housing Project brings La Casa's expertise in anti-violence services onsite to nearly 50 public and private housing locations to aid over 29,000 residents. It provides support, safety planning, legal remedies information and other services to help survivors sustain permanent

housing and prioritize safety. In addition to survivor support services, the Safe Housing Project also provides outreach and education, training and technical assistance, and public advocacy. <https://www.lacasa.org/>

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