2008 Annual Report

ADWAS

abused Deaf women’s advocacy services
Contact and Resources

abused Deaf women’s advocacy services
8623 Roosevelt Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115
Office: 206-726-0093 TTY
Fax: 206-726-0017
E-mail: adwas@adwas.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline
Deaf Advocates on duty 9 AM - 5 PM Monday -Friday PST
VP: 69.17.111.201
IM: ADWASHotline
E-mail: ADWAS@ndvh.org
24 hours | 7 days a week
1-800-787-3224 TTY

Local Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Crisis Line
24 hours | 7 days a week
1-888-236-1355 TTY
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ADWAS Professional Staff

Marilyn J. Smith - Executive Director
Kay Amos - Office Manager / Landlord
Sheli Barber - Therapist / Direct Services Coordinator
Carol Brown - Donor Development Coordinator
Michelle DeMey - Donor Development Assistant
Emily England - Associate Office Manager
Misty Flowers - Business Manager
Tamara Frijmersum - Community Advocate
Linda Goldman - Positive Parenting Program Coordinator
Crystal Green - Hotline Coordinator
Cathy Hoog - Advocate Specialist
Sadie Pile - Children's Advocate
Libby Stanley - Sr. Transitional Housing Advocate
Napal Tesfai - Independent Living Specialist
Ingrid Tidblom - Community Advocate
Dov Wills - Children's Therapist

ADWAS Board

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Anne Baldwin
JoAnna Ball
Melissa Wood Brewster
Liz Gibson
Elise Holliday - Chair
Lindsay Klarman
Shannon Murello Plyler - Financial Chair
Estie Provow

ADWAS Advisory Group

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Ken Block
Dan Brubaker
Don and Suzanne Dally
Ellen Ferguson
Richard Ladner
Leslie Leber
Ms. Elise von Koschembahr

Photography
Most photography by Caitlin Van Wyck
caitlinvwphoto@yahoo.com.

Privacy Statement
All client names and information in this Annual Report have been changed or omitted for reasons of confidentiality.
One of the children in residence letting us know how she feels ... “I really love you!”
Dear Friends:

The year 2008 found us faced with new opportunities and unexpected challenges. By June we raised enough private funds to hire a much needed Children’s Therapist whose main focus is working with children living in A Place of Our Own, our Transitional Housing Program. Budgetary cuts forced us to reduce our National Domestic Violence Hotline Deaf Program to one staff. Fortunately, we did not have to lay off the hotline staff person because two new funding opportunities came up; we applied for and were awarded $375,000 for a five year period from the Washington Family Fund for our Transitional Housing Program and received $10,000 from the Harvest Foundation to have a full-time Independent Living Specialist on staff. This position was filled with the former Hotline staff person.

In October we began curriculum and training planning for our two year National Replication Training Project. During 2009, twenty-eight cities across Deaf America will each send two Deaf women to ADWAS for one week of training. We are grateful to the Office of Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice and particularly to Amy Loder who has made sure that Deaf women have equal access to funding and training opportunities.

One other significant change during 2008 was the shift from holding an annual fundraising auction to hosting a breakfast fundraiser. In October over 200 people gathered at the W Hotel to hear Kerry Kennedy speak and to support ADWAS. This was a very successful fundraiser. We will be experimenting with a lunch fundraiser during 2009. While we miss the excitement and energy auctions radiate, the sheer amount of time and expense they require forced us to reprioritize our efforts.

Our number one task is and always has been to meet the needs of Deaf and Deaf-Blind victims of sexual and domestic violence whether or not there are serious changes in the economy. With hard work, the generosity of donors, and some luck we were able to maintain all client services by keeping programs stable and adequately staffed. Thank you to all our supporters for making this possible.

Sincerely,

Elise K. Holliday  
Chair, Board of Directors

Marilyn J. Smith  
Founder and Executive Director
I am a survivor!

I met my husband at Gallaudet University in 1996. I thought he was a wonderful man. He was good looking, charming, educated, and caring. Upon graduation from college he asked me to marry him.

After we married, we moved to New Mexico. I worked as a zoologist at the Rio Grande Zoo. My husband was a successful financial planner with a firm. We bought a cute cottage in New Mexico. We had what most people would consider the perfect life.

I became pregnant with my first child in 2004 and my second child was born in 2006.

Because he was a financial planner, I trusted him to be in charge of our finances. Everything seemed to be going fine. But after we lived together for a while, he began to change. He became extremely controlling: checking the bank account balance often, and limiting and controlling my spending.

After he was laid off from his job he began to work from home as an independent financial consultant. Because he was home all day he had access to the mail. One day I came home early from work and opened the mailbox. Much to my dismay, there was a letter from the Social Security office stating I owed Social Security $80,000. It was obviously their mistake that I thought could be cleared up easily. I contacted the Social Security office to report the error. Since graduating from college I had reported to the Social Security Office about my job status and earnings requesting that my SSI benefits be discontinued. Apparently, that did not happen. The representative said that checks continued to be sent to my home address and that all SSI checks had been cashed. I went over to the Social Security office to see the checks. It was clearly my husband’s handwriting and he had signed my name to the back of the checks. I was horrified.

I went home and confronted my husband. He became furious with me and threatened to hurt me physically. He screamed and cursed at me in front of our children. They cried hysterically. My husband stormed out the door. Who was this man I had married?

The next several days, I spent time making police reports and talking with the detectives. Throughout the interview, I cried uncontrollably. I was suspected of fraud. They immediately began an investigation.

A month had gone by and I decided that I couldn’t continue in this kind of relationship. Without telling my husband, I quit my job, picked up the kids from school and packed the car with just the basic necessities. That was the beginning of our long journey to my best friend’s home in South Dakota. My children and I drove for several days. We stayed with my friend for a month while looking for a permanent place to live. Unable to rent an apartment or open a bank account due to my credit history, I turned to my friend for help.

She told me about Abused Deaf Women’s Advocacy Services (ADWAS). I had never heard of ADWAS. I didn’t think that I had been abused. My husband threatened to hit me but he never did. We looked at the website and found out that abuse is not just physical. It can also be emotional and verbal abuse. While looking at the website I learned about the Transitional Housing Program (THP). We
contacted Libby Stanley, Senior Transitional Housing Advocate. We asked her questions about the THP and I told Libby about my inability to rent an apartment, that I needed to re-apply for SSI since I no longer had a job, and I needed to open a bank account. Libby said she and the ADWAS staff would gladly assist me with getting back on my feet. She sent me the housing application and I applied for the THP. I was accepted into a transitional housing apartment unit.

Once again, my kids and I found ourselves driving across the country from South Dakota to ADWAS in Seattle. It wasn’t easy.

For the next 18 months, with the support of my ADWAS advocate, I worked closely with the Social Security Office to get the situation resolved and to begin to get my credit report cleared. The kids were enrolled in the local schools. Also, I got a job as a zoologist. The 18 months allowed me to become stable and receive the services I needed. While at ADWAS, I was able to work with the Independent Living Specialist, Napal Tesfai, to learn banking and budgeting skills. I am now able to take care of bills and finances on my own. The Positive Parenting classes, taught by Linda Goldman, gave me confidence and new tools to use in order to support my children emotionally. When it was time for me to move out, I was able to rent an apartment in the community.

Today, I realize that abuse is abuse – period! The upheaval in my life was not caused by someone else’s hand but by someone else’s controlling and manipulative behavior. It was emotional abuse which is different but equally as devastating as being punched in the stomach. It will take me years to recover from what happened to me but I have begun the process. Even though I have moved out of ADWAS’ housing, I can still access the programs and services while living in the community.

My husband goes unpunished for what he did.
Making A Difference

In 2008, through the generosity of individual donors and Foundations, ADWAS was able to establish a full-time Children’s Therapist position (Dov Wills) and an Independent Living Specialist position (Napal Tesfai).

The brief stories below outline recent results with two of our program participants.

Cynthia is a hard-of-hearing 15 year old who lives at home with her mom. She experienced physical abuse from her father and started attending therapy sessions at ADWAS after her teacher reported she was spending a lot of time with her head on her desk in class, walking through the halls with her shoulders hunched over, stating she was hearing voices, and scowling at other students. After she met with Dov Wills, the ADWAS Children’s Therapist, every week for seven months, she was able to recognize the impact of the abuse she experienced and how it affected her ability to trust and have self-confidence with peers. By realizing this, she now interacts with the other kids in the classroom, smiles and laughs appropriately, and has made a friend. Dov has also determined that what her teacher characterized as “hearing voices” was a symptom of Cynthia’s depression, which has decreased through therapy and an increase in her self-esteem. Cynthia and Dov continue to work on issues related to her socialization and increasing her self-esteem, and have started focusing on the issues that remain between her and her mother. Dov is hoping to engage her mom in family therapy this summer or fall. She feels this would be very helpful to Cynthia.

Inga, who is Deaf, was born outside of the United States. In her home country, she was never sent to school. Her parents made all the decisions for her including an arranged marriage when she was in her early 20’s. Prior to marrying, Inga spent most of her life working on their family farm. While married, Inga was very isolated. Her husband kept her at home at all times and he made all the decisions. She was abused by her husband frequently and through this marriage had two boys. Inga came to ADWAS after fleeing from her domestic violence situation.

When Inga moved into an ADWAS apartment, the Independent Living Specialist, Napal Tesfai, assessed Inga’s strengths and weaknesses and found she could not read or write in her home language or English. She knew no sign language and had difficulty with simple math. She lacked communication skills and was not able to express her thoughts and feelings or communicate with her boys. She lacked positive parenting and life skills and because of this had little understanding of setting healthy boundaries for herself and her children.

Napal began working with Inga by methodically teaching her to read and write very simple English. Her methods included labeling everything in her apartment in English, i.e. door, cabinet, toilet, table, wall, etc. She also provided Inga with pictures and words to help her learn to read, exercise her memory skills, and increase her ability to hold important information in her mind. Inga is beginning to realize how much responsibility she has parenting her children, maintaining a safe household, making doctor’s appointment, paying bills, etc. This realization helped her focus on the critical skills needed to become self-sufficient and be a good parent.

Napal says that Inga has come a long way considering her history. She has shown incredible improvement in her life skills. She is learning American Sign Language and reading and writing simple English. She is excited about the new skills she has learned and is always looking for opportunities to use new vocabulary. Although, Inga still has a lot to learn, Napal is very proud of what Inga has learned so far and her eagerness to learn more.
I begin this article by presenting an exercise I use for teaching purposes to illustrate the difficulties that can arise using a visual language in a largely auditory world. It’s about people living in a flat world...

Imagine if you lived in a flat world like on a piece of paper. People were two dimensional dots, they could go anywhere in the plane but there was no up or down, no basements or attics - only forward and backward, side-to-side.

There were no windows looking outside the plane to another level. Everything that was in the world was on a big giant sheet stretching as far as one could see. Anyone living in this world had a hard time imagining any other way of living.

In this flat world they communicated in ways that fit their flat culture and environment. Their language used all the space they had available. Many flatfolk were talented with drawing lines, and could draw walls to make houses or paths, anything that could be drawn on a piece of paper.

Naturally, being two dimensional, flatfolk words flowed in a line; i.e. they could say one word then use another word before or after it. They could not say two things at the same time. In this flat world, there was no space for something like American Sign Language (ASL) to exist.

When flatfolk said “think outside of the box” they really were talking about a square shape. There were no boxes in the flat world, so flatfolk had a very hard time imagining a child’s block. When they tried to draw a picture of a child’s building block it still looked flat. You could not see all six sides of the block. When the scientists talked about a third dimension, “3-D,” it was very confusing. None of them could even agree on what such a world would look like.

Now let’s return to our unflat world...

It is hard for non-ASL users to understand our cultural identity, just as it is hard to explain the deep cultural implications of a three dimensional language to a person that uses a spoken language system. Try using a piece of paper and a pencil to draw a child’s building block. Some people draw one side of the block, some draw three sides, but it is impossible to draw all six sides of a solid object.

The concepts change slightly in the process of translation, even with the best interpreter. Now imagine that you are going to court and your children’s fate depends on an interpreter being able to explain that 3-D block to the court using only a paper and pencil. The misunderstandings can be disastrous.

(continued on next page)
ADWAS has always prioritized collaboration with other systems that survivors use to improve access and end oppression and violence in the Deaf community. We work hard to ensure that survivors receive “3-D” services that respect their chosen Deaf identity. Each person has the right to determine their own personal identity, and this is especially important for survivors of violence.

Abusers often try to use bias and prejudice to gain power for themselves, or manipulate systems with these attitudes and use calculating behaviors to take advantage of the bias and control the victim.

Advocating for Deaf victims in a way that promotes Deaf culture is an integral part of the ADWAS model to end violence. There can be many devastating results if a Deaf survivor's culture is ignored. It is equally important to be sensitive to all other possible cultures that a survivor might identify with and provide culturally appropriate advocacy services.

The world is full of such diversity; a service provider can never know all of the facts about all of the cultures possible. We can instead develop skills to ask the right questions and respect survivors’ choices about which cultural issues are important to her/him.

Only the survivor can decide what works best for them, what they are comfortable with and feel able to do. For example, think about how a person's age influences what they are comfortable with:

Seniors in the Deaf community can still remember how they lived with no doorbell light alert systems, or Blackberries, no TTYs, or any way to communicate with a Deaf friend except to drive across town and see if they were home. At that time the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) did not exist, nor did legislation guaranteeing the right to a free and appropriate education or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA.) Deaf people were called insulting names and the only support they could rely on was what could be found within the Deaf community. Their view of the world, cultural values and norms, may be completely different than the younger Deaf person of today.
The Deaf community of the new millennium has embraced technological advancements and created a new Deaf way of being. With modern digital communications it is possible to be face-to-face instantly with any other Deaf person around the world. We can now, for the first time, communicate over long distances using American Sign Language (ASL). This fast and powerful growth of technology provides a wealth of opportunity for the Deaf community and is presenting constant change in regards to Systems Advocacy.

Each barrier we remove in our Deaf advocacy services, in our agencies, in our Deaf communities, and in our world, will directly and positively impact every future survivor ADWAS serves.

As Deaf advocates with a goal to end violence in the Deaf community, we must be committed to equal rights for all Deaf individuals to truly meaningful access to resources and services. Deaf victims need real access to the systems that provide safety and justice, in their language of preference. Furthermore, we need flexible systems and service providers that are aware of the appropriate use of relay, videophone, and other technologies, and that have policies and procedures that allow Deaf survivors access to emergency responders and other important resources.

When barriers are removed, Deaf survivors have more options and abusers find themselves with fewer ways to control the survivor. By doing this work, advocates are bringing change that can ultimately end the oppression and prejudice that are root causes of violence in all communities.

**Spotlight on Partnerships**

In 2006, the disAbility Advocacy Project (dAP) of the Washington State Collaboration received a three year award from the Office on Violence Against Women, Education and Technical Assistance Grants to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities Grant Program. The lead agency for the grant is the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The collaborative partners of the dAP include the ADWAS, Disability Rights Washington, and the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs.

Whether at a local domestic violence program, a local sexual assault program, or a disability advocacy agency, the immediate goal of the dAP partnership is to improve the accessibility of services for survivors with disabilities in the local communities of Washington State. Local advocates and people with disabilities are now collaborating on projects aimed at addressing the gaps and barriers to services identified by the needs assessment. The dAP partners are providing technical assistance and support as needed to the dAP community collaborations. You can read more about this project at www.wscadv.org.
A DWAS has long understood the need for technology safety planning when working with Deaf victims of domestic violence. The ways technology is used by abusers to torment, stalk and abuse their victims has become increasingly common as the Deaf community increases its use of new technologies. As technology has evolved, so have the many ways abusers have become progressively more sophisticated in their use of technology to maintain power and control over their victims.

Safety planning around technology use is crucial for survivors in an abusive relationship, when they are planning to leave, and after they have left.

While knowing and preparing for the ways technology can be used by abusers, there is an equal effort to understand how technology can be used to empower victims and survivors. GPS tracking devices can be used to alert victims to the nearby presence of their abusers. Hidden cameras can be placed to record abusive incidents for evidence. Keystroke computer software and spyware can be used to track an abuser’s attempts at hacking into their victims e-mail accounts and private information. Security systems can be used to silently call the police in emergencies. Pagers and smart phones with cameras can be used to take photographs. Video recording devices can be used to record videophone calls. Victims are reclaiming technology to increase their safety and awareness. This is survival.

Here are a few safety tips:

*Trust your instincts:* If you feel your abuser knows things they shouldn’t it is possible they are monitoring your e-mail, computer, pager or videophone use.

*Create a new e-mail account:* If your abuser has access to your e-mail or you think they may have gained access, think about making a new e-mail account on a safe computer. Do not create or check this new e-mail from a computer your abuser could access, in case they are monitoring it.

*Change passwords and pin numbers:* Some abusers use victim’s e-mail and other accounts to pretend to be the victim and cause harm. If your abuser knows or tries to guess your passwords, change them quickly and often.

If you would like more information about technology safety, contact a Deaf advocate through the National Domestic Violence Hotline at ADWAS.

National Hotline- Deaf Advocates on duty 9 AM - 5 PM Monday - Friday PST
VP: 69.17.111.201
IM: ADWASHotline
E-mail: ADWAS@ndvh.org

(Hearing advocates at the National Domestic Violence Hotline are on duty 24 hours 1-800-787-3224 TTY or 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) Voice)
# ADWAS Statement of Financial Position
December 31, 2008

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Audited by Watson & McDonell, PLLC
2008 Revenue $1,218,780

- Programs: Government 59%
- Programs: Grants & Contributions 32%
- Programs: Fundraising Events 3%
- Other 6%

2008 Expenses $1,324,587

- Programs: Domestic Violence 48%
- Programs: Sexual Assault 18%
- Programs: Management 5%
- Programs: Depreciation 6%
- Programs: Community Building 3%
- Programs: Training 7%
- Fundraising 13%
New ADWAS Major Gift Program  
Become a member at $500 and above

In 2009 ADWAS launched a new major gifts program. The goal for 2009 is to raise $160,000.

Funding from governmental entities, grants, businesses and corporations does not cover all of the costs to sufficiently provide for everything ADWAS needs to operate. We depend on individuals like you to help us continue this important work of addressing the issues facing Deaf and Deaf-Blind survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

We are encouraging members to join us in strengthening families. As a donor to our major gifts program you demonstrate the importance of supporting survivors of sexual and domestic violence as they receive services to help them heal.

The commitment you make also inspires others to give. Donors’ names will be listed according to the amount of the contribution in publications and notifications beginning in 2009.

Below represents a breakdown of your investment if you chose to make payments over time. It’s amazing how easily it adds up.

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Gifts may be made through your workplace, a one-time payment, or payments over one year. Donations of stocks and appreciated property are also accepted. You may want to consider an employee match or family member match.

Contributions of any amount are greatly appreciated.
Giving Levels of Commitment

**Integrity $25,000 and above**
Private dinner with the Executive Director and ADWAS Board Chair
Plus all other benefits listed under the Healing Level of donors

**Healing $10,000 to $24,999**
Personalized Memento
Group dinner with the Executive Director
Plus all other benefits listed in Vision Level of donors
Blank greeting cards with cover design created by the women and children living in the transitional housing
VIP table at the annual major fundraising event

**Vision $2,500 to $9,999**
Donor Recognition Party at a private home
Plus all other benefits listed in Justice Level of donors

**Justice $1,000 to $2,499**
Donor Recognition Party
Plus all other benefits listed in Perseverance Level of donors

**Perseverance $250 to $999**
Donor Recognition Party
Invitation to all public events
Plus all other benefits listed in Respect Level of donors

**Respect $1 to $249**
Name listed in the annual report
Name listed on the web donor page (updated quarterly)
2008 ADWAS Donors

Individuals

*Donors are listed alphabetically beginning with the fingerspelled “a.”*

Fran Gallo and Jenelle Osborne hosted a yoga asana for ADWAS. The downtown Seattle Athletic Club provided the space. Each participant of the asana donated the class fee to ADWAS. For every new donor, the donation was matched by the Lucky Seven Foundation for support of the Children’s Therapist. Later in the year, Fran and Jenelle showed up again, this time to provide a one time yoga class instruction to the mothers in our Transitional Housing Program. Fran and Jenelle reminded us that the emotional and spiritual aspects of life are an integral part of healing from the ravages of violence.

Do you have a fundraising idea or event you would like to host on behalf of ADWAS? Contact Carol Brown, Donor Development Coordinator, at carol@adwas.org.
2008 ADWAS Donors

Businesses, Foundations and Organizations


Gifts In-Kind


Holiday Program

Tara and Sandy have made worlds of difference at ADWAS. Each week they bring patience, compassion, and interest to the ADWAS Playroom as they step into their tutor role and work with the ADWAS resident youth to light up their bright minds. They come bearing kindness and work on developing trusting relationships with youth that serve as models of great adult/youth relationships. Both Tara and Sandy are dog-lovers, yoga-enthusiasts, and ADWAS neighbors! Thank you Sandy and Tara!

*If you would like to volunteer your time tutoring a school aged student through our Homework Club contact Sadie Pile, our Children’s Advocate at sadie@adwas.org.*

**In Honor Of:**


**In Memory Of:**

Every year during the winter holiday season, we have some amazing people that choose to give to families through the ADWAS Holiday Program. G. Marie Miyata and her family have been involved with this program for years. In 2008, Ginger Van Ry, a Maple Leaf neighbor, coordinated the Everett School District School Psychologists group to assemble gift bags for all of the mothers in our residential units. Several work groups from businesses like the Gap, Qwest, and LexisNexis supported families for the holidays by donating gift cards or fulfilling a whole family’s entire wish list. These are just 3 examples of the generosity of the community. For a complete list of ADWAS Holiday Program donors please refer to donor page number 16. Linda Goldman, our Positive Parenting Coordinator, welcomes your participation in this seasonal program. She can be contacted at linda@adwas.org.

Hope and Justice Breakfast Sponsors
Continental Mills | KeyBank | Mithun | Qwest Women | Sprint Relay | SignOn | The Boeing Company

Workplace

Volunteers
Thank you to our dedicated volunteers who have supported our programs, administration, events, and staffed our 24-hour crisis line. Your time and effort are invaluable.

ADWAS makes every effort to accurately list the names of its valued donors. If we have made an omission or an error, please accept our sincere apology and kindly notify our development office so we can correct our records - carol@adwas.org or (206) 726-0093.
Glass artwork by Jo Braun 2006 titled “LOVE/TOUCH”
Located at ADWAS, this installment was created for both its visual and tactile aesthetics to be enjoyed by sighted Deaf or Deaf-Blind residents.