



RICADV

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



*We ebb and flow with the tide
and while the depths are inevitable
we rise above the water – and soar.”*

– Anonymous



March 28, 2020, the day Rhode Island's stay-at-home order went into effect, marked a before and after in the life of this generation. The year 2020 has challenged our collective resilience. The waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, the outcry for racial and social justice sparked by the unjust murders of Black people and the calls for help from domestic violence victims trapped in their homes weighed heavily on our hearts. Yet, from the depths of sorrow and injustice, hope soared and prevailed.

For victims of domestic violence, COVID-19 was a crisis layered over another crisis. The pandemic exacerbated abuse and the needs of survivors. Hope persevered through the passion and commitment of advocates who worked on the front lines to serve victims and their families. Through the unwavering dedication of advocates who never gave up and our staff, we were able to continue services and shine a light on the public health crisis of domestic violence.

Hope endured as we navigated forward through streams of rapid changes, requiring us to continue adapting. We, too, persisted – we advocated for additional resources, expanded options to meet the needs of survivors and continued our commitment to work toward dismantling racism. Our community and supporters rallied around us. Through collaborating with local and state partners, various organizations and news media to spread the word, we made it known domestic violence is a community issue, and it deserves a community response.

While our work looked different in many ways this year, through it all, we are still here. We are still standing. We are still moving the mission to end domestic violence forward, and remain determined and hopeful as we continue our tireless advocacy for survivors and their families.

Onward, together!



“To me, being a survivor means using my experience to help others know they are not alone and do not deserve to be abused in any way.”

– Laura, SOAR member



Tonya King Harris
Executive Director



Janet Marcantonio
President,
Board of Directors

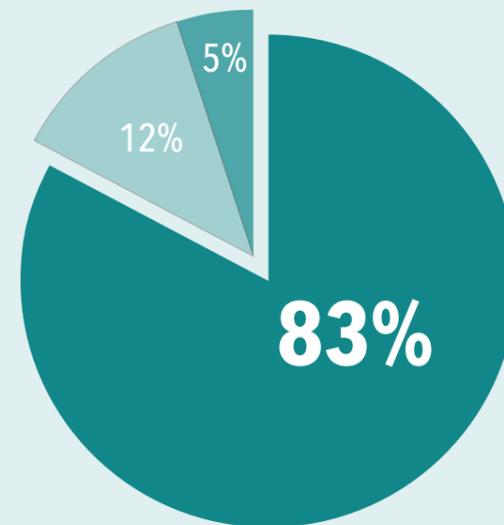
Financial Report

The RICADV ended the fiscal year in a strong financial position, closing its financial books on June 30, 2020, with a positive change in unrestricted net assets from operations of \$5,465.

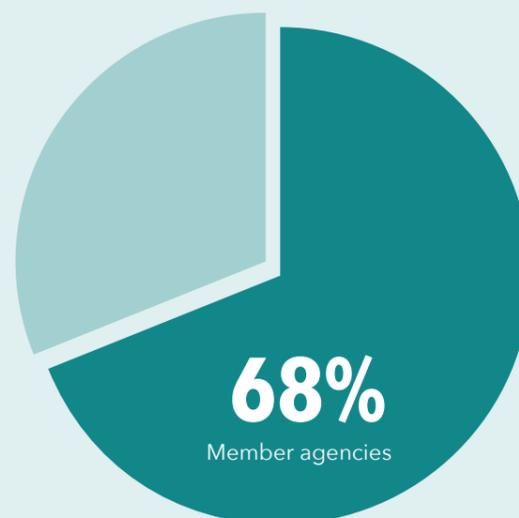
Total operating revenues and support were \$5,254,851. Eighty-three percent of the funds came from federal grants and contracts, 12% came from the State of Rhode Island and 5% came from foundations, corporate support, individual donations, community groups, dues and training fees.

Total operating expenses were \$5,249,386. Of the total expenses, 68%, or \$3,569,721, consisted of funds passed through our member agencies, primarily for the provision of direct services to victims of domestic violence.

The RICADV conducts an annual audit in accordance with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget Uniform Grant Guidance.



- 83% Federal grants and contracts
- 12% State of Rhode Island
- 5% Foundations, corporate support, individual donations, community groups, dues and training fees



EXPENSE TOTAL \$5,249,386

Services

Throughout the year, the RICADV's network of member agencies worked to advocate for and support those in our communities who are impacted by domestic violence, dating violence, sexual violence and stalking.

These organizations provide a vast array of services including emergency shelter, support groups, counseling and assistance with the legal system. We thank their staff, board members and volunteers for their ongoing commitment to serving survivors of abuse and their children.

We also want to note changes in our member agency membership, as McAuley Ministries has become a new affiliate member of the RICADV and Sojourner House is no longer a member of the RICADV network.

2020 MAJOR FUNDING SOURCES

- Allstate Foundation
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (DELTA Impact)
- Rhode Island Bar Foundation (IOLTA Program)
- Rhode Island Department of Human Services
- Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families
- Rhode Island Foundation
- State of Rhode Island
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family Violence Prevention and Services Act
- U.S. Department of Justice, Victims of Crime Act
- U.S. Department of Justice, Violence Against Women Act
- Women's Fund of Rhode Island

FULL MEMBER AGENCIES

- Blackstone Valley Advocacy Center
- Domestic Violence Resource Center of South County
- Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center
- Women's Resource Center

AFFILIATE MEMBER AGENCIES

- Crossroads Rhode Island
- Center for Southeast Asians
- Family Service of Rhode Island
- McAuley Ministries
- Progreso Latino
- YWCA Rhode Island

“Strength is something survivors have an abundance of. You need strength to survive every day. You are strong because you have survived the relationship, and you can survive – and thrive – afterwards, after the relationship has ended.”

– Zaida, SOAR member

Statewide Statistics

This year, the pandemic affected the way survivors of domestic violence and their families sought services. The many barriers survivors faced were intensified by the pandemic, and COVID-19 changed the way we worked in many ways to meet their needs. In the early stages of the pandemic, survivors had to navigate through factors including the scarcity of personal protective equipment (PPE), quarantine locations and precautions, public health screenings and access to technology. Advocates shared that many survivors struggled to find a safe space to make a call to reach out for support. In many cases, once survivors felt they could safely call, the length of the calls to advocates and the intensity of their needs were greater than in previous years.

Data after the pandemic began showed surging numbers in calls to the statewide Helpline and agency hotlines during several months. There were increased demands for some services – like emergency shelter and housing, for example – and there were also some decreases for services like court advocacy. Because of health safety measures, some courthouses temporarily closed, limiting the availability of these services in certain areas of the state – presenting survivors with barriers

including transportation issues. Most survivors who accessed emergency shelter stayed at shelters longer because of the lack of affordable housing options available and COVID-19 precautions that may have prevented them from staying with family or friends. Many survivors indicated their preference to access services via the phone and online platforms – even when in-person options were available – to protect themselves from the virus.

This year, 45,543 individual services were provided by advocates to survivors. A survivor may receive one or more forms of services during the course of advocacy and support. The pandemic introduced many factors to consider, showing us while we can provide a data overview, numbers alone do not tell the full story.

Policy and Advocacy

The RICADV's 2020 policy and advocacy work began with a training session in January for all Rhode Island District Court judges. The training was a collaboration between the Center for Court Innovation (CCI), a technical assistance provider for the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women, R.I. District Court and the RICADV. RICADV staff presented the training along with expert attorneys from CCI specialized in domestic violence courts and lethality and danger risk factors. These were initial steps toward the goal of implementing a dedicated, specialized high-risk "DV Court" in Rhode Island.

As the COVID-19 pandemic led to historic surges in calls to the statewide Helpline, we switched course to respond immediately and engaged in targeted advocacy to ensure victims had the services they needed.

We advocated with statewide partners in the courts, human services, housing field and state government to make sure resources remained available and survivors had the additional support needed to weather the storm of the public health and economic crisis.

We led a public awareness campaign to inform Rhode Islanders that the network of member agencies serving domestic violence survivors and their families, shelters and advocates were still there to help during difficult times.

Our strong partnership and COVID-19 response collaboration with the Office of the Governor provided survivors and their children access to additional emergency services, shelter and housing options with federal CARES Act funds and other invaluable resources throughout the pandemic.

The governor's efforts to make the statewide Helpline number and online chat visible – and share important information during her daily press briefings and through online forums – were essential for families and children impacted by domestic violence during the pandemic.

"The ocean is my healing place. I survived the storm of yesterday. I am safe, I am at peace, I can soar."
 – Cali, SOAR member



SOAR (Sisters Overcoming Abusive Relationships)

This year, the pandemic did not slow the momentum and energy of SOAR members, and the task force of survivors found creative ways to engage in public awareness efforts and systems change work from home, in spite of the challenges caused by COVID-19.

This included speaking on virtual panels and at online events, writing letters to the editor for news publications, publishing blog posts on the SOAR website, collaborating together on letters to state leaders and responding to questions from the public through community Q&A videos.

SOAR members advocated to increase funding for the Crime Victim Compensation Program, improve access to affordable housing options, raise the amount for assistance benefits through RI Works, improve financial stability through an increased minimum wage and financial literacy and dedicate coronavirus relief funds to support survivors through shelter and housing options.

In June, four SOAR members shared some of these calls-to-action during virtual advocacy meetings with the R.I. congressional delegation during the National Network to End Domestic Violence Advocacy Day.

In September, a SOAR-sponsored event series launched, centering the voices and perspectives of survivors in community training and education. SOAR also presented two events to the community in collaboration with experts, focusing on fostering resilience in children who witness domestic violence and understanding the impact of trauma on financial decision-making.

Community Engagement

The RICADV's 2020 training calendar series transitioned from in-person trainings to online webinars to allow for at-home learning. We revamped our training calendar to provide basic and advanced workshops about domestic violence as well as professional development, including trainings to broaden leadership skills and grant writing expertise. We also hosted trainings with two nationally renowned experts – Alicia Aiken, director of the Danu Center's Confidentiality Institute, and Jill Davies, deputy director of Greater Hartford Legal Aid.

We partnered with the Women's Resource Center, Progreso Latino, the Center for Southeast Asians, the Refugee Dream Center and Tri-Town Community Action Agency's D/deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind Victim of Crime Advocacy Program to share financial advocacy with the individuals these organizations serve, thanks to funding from The Allstate Foundation.

We continued to gather advocates of color in the movement to end domestic violence to build community, provide peer support and expand leadership of people of color within the movement.

“I used to think the abuse made me weaker or that I was broken because of it. However, I know now that surviving, leaving and dealing with PTSD from domestic violence are the strongest, bravest things I've ever done.”

– Haley, SOAR member

SOAR MEMBERS PROVIDED

- 14 presentations this year
- 300 people reached live in (virtual or in-person) audiences
- 2,200 views of recorded events

Audiences included advocates in the movement to end domestic abuse, housing and economic fields, lawmakers and legislators, students, community members and more.

- 11 media interviews worked on by SOAR
- 6,500 views on SOAR's blog, increasing community engagement with posts written by SOAR members since April

Public Awareness

During a year where the visibility of life-saving services and stepping up as a community to address the needs of survivors was more critical than ever, the RICADV's communications efforts maintained constant news media coverage, developed a comprehensive COVID-19 response information center on the RICADV's website and provided communications support for a multitude of virtual events and initiatives – including a statewide town hall with Gov. Gina Raimondo, the R.I. delegation and other state leaders and advocates. Through collaborating with news media and state partners, the statewide Helpline number was displayed continuously during the governor's press briefings and newscasts, and information about services – letting survivors and their families know “we are here, we are open,” despite the pandemic – was seen in headlines, broadcast segments and distributed among state and community groups for months.

While meeting the intense communications demands during the pandemic from local and national news outlets as well as state partners, the RICADV, in partnership with the member agencies, also developed several public awareness campaigns including a new campaign for National Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) in October and partnered with our sponsor, Cox Communications.

The campaign called the community in to “Know the Signs” and learn more about subtle and overlooked forms of abuse, because as the campaign call-to-action notes, “It’s on all of us to end domestic violence.” Survivors’ stories were shared on social media, radio, Pandora and TV public service announcements were broadcast in English and Spanish and billboards and ads were displayed throughout the state. Video, radio and print media interview series were published via Rhode Informa, local radio stations and *The Providence Journal*, and the RICADV hosted a campaign kick-off event where SOAR (Sisters Overcoming Abusive Relationships) held a Q&A panel to address questions from the community.

“Surviving domestic violence take a village. Keep letting survivors know you are there for whatever they need, even if it's just to listen.”

– Kristi, SOAR member

Prevention

This year underscored the need for primary prevention, which aims to stop domestic violence before it starts by addressing root causes of abuse. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified risk factors for domestic violence, including social isolation and economic insecurity, and magnified the inequities that exist in our state. With COVID-19 funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the RICADV prioritized community-led prevention strategies in response to the pandemic, partnering with four organizations led by and for communities of color – ARISE (Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education), Progreso Latino, SISTA Fire and Youth In Action.

This year called on us to deepen our commitment to the transformational change needed to create an equitable, peaceful world. In that spirit, we are amplifying the voices and efforts of these organizations to change the conditions in our communities contributing to domestic violence.

The RICADV played a leadership role on the Rhode Island Commission for Health Advocacy and Equity and served on

the COVID-19 Equity Council. We participated on public policy coalitions to strengthen economic supports for families, including Raising RI and Raise the Bar on Resident Care. Ten Men shifted to a virtual model in the spring, with June marking the completion of our eighth annual cohort. The Deborah DeBare Domestic Violence Prevention Fund supported six community-led projects to address urgent needs and develop innovative methods for engaging youth and adults throughout the pandemic.

We continued to support member agency and longstanding prevention partner, Women's Resource Center (WRC), through our CDC DELTA Impact funding. Serving as the backbone agency of the Newport Health Equity Zone (HEZ), WRC works with local residents and community stakeholders to promote green and open space in the North End of Newport, with the RICADV evaluating this prevention strategy. The Newport HEZ fosters resident leadership in efforts to ensure the needs and wellbeing of current residents are at the heart of the plans and decisions affecting their neighborhoods.

Anti-racism Work

We believe systems of oppression not only create barriers to services, safety and justice – they are the root causes of violence and inequity. As such, the RICADV aspires to be an anti-oppression organization, committed to dismantling white supremacy and oppression in all its forms, including racism, sexism, classism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia and xenophobia.

Aspiring to be an anti-oppression organization is not a separate part of our work, but the lens that informs how we do our work. It is at the heart of moving our mission forward. From our legislative advocacy, where we focus not only on domestic violence legislation but on policies that improve quality of life for everyone, to our primary prevention and community engagement strategies that center on those disproportionately impacted by violence and oppression, we are committed to centering the voices of survivors and catalyzing change that leads to more just, inclusive and healthy communities for all people.

Our Mission

The purpose of the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV) is to eliminate domestic violence in Rhode Island. Our mission is to support and enhance the work of our member agencies and to provide leadership on the issue of domestic violence.

“Overcoming is deriving strength from the traumatic events we have survived through. We overcome daily by not allowing the memories of the past to utterly consume our drive to move on regardless of the obstacles that may present themselves. Quitting is never an option once you realize that you remained standing against all odds.”

– Patricia, SOAR member

Thank You

We would like to thank the members of our staff and board of directors who transitioned from the RICADV in 2020:

Staff: Lee Clasper-Torch, Ezra Guay
Board: Kyle Bennett, Neal McNamara, Ramona Rodriguez-Mejia, Vanessa Volz

We would like to thank our interns, Daphney Coriolan, Ally Huzyk, Gabriella Mamet, Laila Mirza and Dee Nedder. We also thank Loretta Kennedy, art director, and Giselle Gallo, graphic designer, for their creative vision and steadfast work on several RICADV projects this year.

We dedicate our 2020 annual report to the advocates of the RICADV's member agencies who worked directly and unwaveringly with survivors and their families throughout the pandemic, and the hundreds of thousands who lost their lives to COVID-19.

This publication was supported by Federal Grant Number 5 NUS4CE002308-03-00 awarded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and by Federal Grant Number 2018-V2-GX-0062 awarded by the Office of Victims of Crime, a component of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), U.S. Department of Justice (USDJ). Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Staff

Tonya King Harris, *executive director*
Brittany Ballantyne, *communications manager*
Ian Colomer, *policy specialist*
Krista D'Amico, *director of prevention*
Taylor DelTufo, *administrative assistant*
Sara Eckhoff, *law enforcement training coordinator*
Elissa May Franklin, *SOAR coordinator*
Brandi Gbemisola, *community engagement specialist*
Bethany Larrañaga, *communications associate*
Michele Marques-Pacheco, *business manager*
Devon Pinkus, *men's engagement coordinator*
Carmen Recalde-Russo, *director of community engagement and communications*
Lucy Rios, *deputy director*
Cynthia Roberts, *evaluator*
John Wesley, *director of policy and advocacy*

Board of Directors

Janet Marcantonio, *president*
Rilwan Feyisitan, Jr., *vice president*
Toni Marie Gomes, *treasurer*
Jessica Walsh, *secretary*
Jim Berson
Judith Earle
Mak Falaye
Terrence Green
Jennifer Meade
Mary Roda
Damaris Roman
Michele Wilcox

Concept and layout design created by Loretta Kennedy with support from the RICADV staff.

2020 AT A GLANCE

ENGAGING TEENS

The RICADV launches the Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month campaign, engaging R.I. teens and youth to promote healthy relationships.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BEFORE IT STARTS

Deborah DeBare Domestic Violence Prevention Fund (DVPF) grantee organizations, funded through the RICADV, begin working on long-term projects focusing on changing policies, community conditions and harmful norms to prevent domestic abuse before it starts. Short-term community micro-grants funded by the RICADV also launch, starting work on projects that foster and increase community cohesion through public awareness, education and the arts.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

RICADV WORK GOES VIRTUAL

The RICADV shifts to virtual platforms and begins working remotely during the pandemic. The RICADV's trainings shift to online-only, including sessions by two nationally-recognized experts, Jill Davies and Alicia Aiken.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

HEIGHTENED ADVOCACY

The RICADV shifts and expands its statewide advocacy efforts to meet intensified needs of survivors during the COVID-19 pandemic through tireless advocacy on various programs and initiatives.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

STATE-LEVEL RESPONSE

Governor Gina Raimondo starts elevating the issue of domestic violence, prioritizing the needs of survivors and noting the statewide Helpline number in her press briefings, and announces a plan to address the domestic abuse during the pandemic.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

IN THE NEWS

Reporters and news outlets continue sharing information about RICADV resources for victims of domestic violence, helping get the word out to survivors and bystanders alike that despite the pandemic, "we are here, we are open" to support the community.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

CALLING R.I. MEN IN

The RICADV launches the June public awareness campaign, calling R.I. men in to help end domestic violence through culture change.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

JAN

FEB

MAR

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

2020 AT A GLANCE



INCREASED SHELTER CAPACITY
Through state and community partnerships, the RICADV works to expand emergency shelter capacity.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

EXPANDED SERVICES
The RICADV announces the expansion of services for survivors, including Blackstone Valley Advocacy Center's expanded catchment area.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

KNOW THE SIGNS
The RICADV launches a new public awareness campaign for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, calling the community in to "know the signs" of abuse because "It's on all of us to end domestic violence."

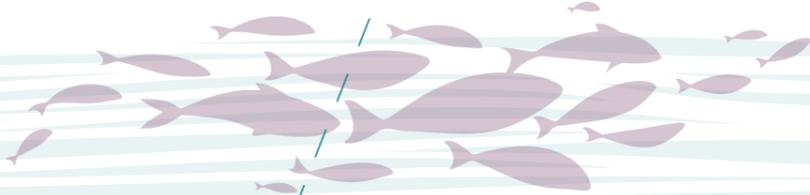
[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Through funding from the CDC, the RICADV partners with organizations ARISE (Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education), Progreso Latino, SISTA Fire and Youth In Action, led by and for communities of color, working to change conditions in our communities that contribute to violence and inequity.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

RICADV RAISES FUNDS FOR SERVICES
Thanks to the support of our partners, the RICADV raises over \$884,600 which is distributed to the member agencies to fund direct services for victims of domestic violence and their families by the end of the year.



JULY

AUG

SEPT

OCT

NOV

DEC



RHODE ISLAND COALITION
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
422 POST ROAD, SUITE 102
WARWICK, RI 02888-1539

401-467-9940
www.ricadv.org
ricadv@ricadv.org

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2099
Providence, RI

In Memoriam

The RICADV would like to honor the lives of Rhode Island victims of domestic violence homicides in 2020:

Erika Belcourt
Derek Desjardin
Tanya Gagnon
Kristine Ohler
Vincent A. Sebastian
Cheryl Smith
Paul Zois

MEMBERS OF THE RHODE ISLAND COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



CENTER FOR SOUTHEAST ASIANS | CROSSROADS RI | FAMILY SERVICE OF RI | MCAULEY MINISTRIES | PROGRESO LATINO | YWCA RI

A Task Force of
the RICADV