REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As our past year, our staff members brought passion and dedication to our work with the Centre, whether it was our regular monthly meetings to help with agency governance or the many committees in which we participate. Of particular note this year was our effort to expand our relationship with our local community partners. As part of this, we became involved in some of their many community events – from registering and cheering on hard-working athletes at the Triathlon of Compassion, to event planning that invites men and their loved ones to step up and step out for the best turn-out and fundraising effort to date for Walk A Mile in Her Shoes, to joining agency’s TC10K team to enhance the agency’s community visibility, to walking with our community to speak out about missing Aboriginal women at the Memorial March for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women – and many actions in between.

For us, these events are about much more than simply raising critical funds to support the Centre, or raising awareness about VWSAC’s services – although these are important goals unto themselves. These events allow us to educate the public about our community about very challenging issues – sexualized violence, gender inequality, and the cycles of oppression that support them. And each year, we are always grateful to our many volunteers, donors, and sponsors who come up and taking pledges to support our organization use creative multimedia tools (a form of peer to peer education) to explain to potential sponsors why we need financial support to WSAC.

We rely on the generous financial support of the community to sustain our services. Thank you all for your support, whether through volunteerism and/or fundraising, we recognized two individuals this year with the Emily Ellingsen Achievement Award. Christy Smith courageously shared her lived experience as a survivor in Oct 2010 when she launched a social media campaign around her participation in the GoodLife Fitness Marathon raising an amazing $12,000. An article in the Times Colonist prompted a call from a generous donor, Rudi Hoenscon, whose gift of $7,500 brought her overall total to an astounding $20,000! This was followed by a personal letter included in our holiday mail campaign that brought in another $34,000. In April 2011, Christy organized a fundraising event at Willow Stream Spa where she unveiled her personally designed Sh! Campaign t-shirts that raise awareness about the issue of sexualized violence and are now on sale at LeBian Boutique with all proceeds benefitting WSAC. Christy’s goal is to break the silence that surrounds this issue and to let survivors know that they are not alone.

Niki Hodgkinson was the recipient of the second Emily Ellingsen Award at the Tri of Compassion in July. Niki launched her fundraising efforts in the spring by doing a spin demo for six hours in the front window of the lululemon store in downtown Victoria. Together with her fellow spin instructors, Niki brought her overall total to an astounding $20,000! This was followed by a personal letter included in our holiday mail campaign that brought in another $34,000. In April 2011, Christy organized a fundraising event at Willow Stream Spa where she unveiled her personally designed Sh! Campaign t-shirts that raise awareness about the issue of sexualized violence and are now on sale at LeBian Boutique with all proceeds benefitting WSAC.

On behalf of outstanding achievement, and support through volunteerism and/or fundraising, we recognized two individuals this year with the Emily Ellingsen Achievement Award. Christy Smith courageously shared her lived experience as a survivor in Oct 2010 when she launched a social media campaign around her participation in the GoodLife Fitness Marathon raising an amazing $12,000. An article in the Times Colonist prompted a call from a generous donor, Rudi Hoenscon, whose gift of $7,500 brought her overall total to an astounding $20,000! This was followed by a personal letter included in our holiday mail campaign that brought in another $34,000. In April 2011, Christy organized a fundraising event at Willow Stream Spa where she unveiled her personally designed Sh! Campaign t-shirts that raise awareness about the issue of sexualized violence and are now on sale at LeBian Boutique with all proceeds benefitting WSAC. Christy’s goal is to break the silence that surrounds this issue and to let survivors know that they are not alone.

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Sincerely,
Jules Wilson

EMILY ELLINGSSEN ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

These are special awards given throughout the year who contribute thousands of hours of their volunteer time in support of WSAC. In fact, we could not deliver the services and programs that we do without them. We are very fortunate to have dedicated volunteers on our Sexual Assault Response Team, our Board of Directors and our Admin team. We also have hundreds of volunteers who help us at events and who organize fundraising and awareness events on our behalf. Heartfelt and warmest thanks to all of you!

Thank you, Christy and Niki, for going above and beyond, and thank you volunteers, participants, organizers, sponsors and donators for making such a huge difference in the work that we do.

Tracy Lubick, Resource Development Manager

Our Donors

We rely on the generous financial support of the community to sustain our services. Thank you to all of our donors whose gifts make a difference in the lives of many. We extend special recognition to the following:


THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS & GRANT PROVIDERS

- Community Funding Grant through the Province of BC – Project Respect & youth focused counsellor
- Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General – EV7 and Workshops for Employees of Correctional Facilities – Project Respect
- Thrifty Foods – Smile Card Program
- United Way of Greater Victoria – Project Respect
- Victoria Foundation – Trauma Informed Practices
- Victoria Foundation – Vic High – Youth in Philanthropy grant
- Walk BC – Walking to the Wilds Group
CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE IN THE CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

Over the past year, there have been a number of stories in the media about sexualized violence. These stories were first in response to police investigations into high profile criminal investigations of sexual assault, and then over recent months, stories exploring survivors’ experiences. Our work, as researchers and as practitioners, is informed by the experiences of police, medical, and social service providers such as WSAC, and the social held beliefs and values that may make it difficult for survivors to come forward with their experiences. Through these stories, a public dialogue has been enriched and new understandings have developed, and people are asking, ‘what is happening in our community?’

We’ve been so encouraged to see how our local media have sustained the conversation beyond the initial stories of public stronger assaults. Reporters such as Danielle Pope at Monday Magazine have invited Victorians to think more deeply about sexualized violence by covering a range of stories from the recent flashings in Victoria, to coverage of Christy Smith, who has transformed her healing path into a campaign to raise awareness/social action initiative to take a stand against websites that promote sexualized violence through gossip that degrades girls’ and women’s sexuality (e.g. through labels like “slut”). In particular, we were inspired and motivated by the actions of the many reporters such as Danielle Pope at Monday Magazine, Christy Smith and Project Respect. Project Respect is well matched with a number of initiatives that we have been working on this year. These include the Regional Media Project which is a collaboration between Project Respect and the Media Co-op, the Media Cooperative. A number of stories have been published in the Victoria Social Media Ninjas ($700). Our presenting sponsor, RBC, was once again our top fundraising team and had over $28,000 as a top fundraiser at the Mile event, raising an amazing $34,000 in pledges for WSAC. In addition, an anonymous couple from Victoria gave $28,000 as a matching gift. Everyone did a phenomenal job of fundraising and we extend special thanks to our top fundraisers: Dwayne Ford ($5,935), Mike Kroeger ($1,525), Howard Liptrot ($1,135), Bruce Bryant-Scott ($1,130) and Leopold Bienkowski-Gibbons ($1,109). (We extend a special apology to Mike Kroeger for not being publicly acknowledged as our top fundraiser at the top fundraiser recognition event and thank him for being so gracious in accepting our apology.)

PROJECT RESPECT - PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Project Respect works to prevent sexualized violence among youth aged 14-19 by providing safe and skillfully facilitated spaces for young people to begin to think critically about, to act, and to resist positive alternatives to harmful (yet normalized) messages they receive about gender, relationships, sexuality and violence. Project Respect addresses individual, relationship, and societal level influences by focusing on knowledge change, skill-building, attitude change, and social change.

Project Respect reached 1020 youth during the 2010/11 school year through 55 two-part workshops in schools and community-based organizations, including 5 new partners. The emphasis this year was on innovative approaches to target the most vulnerable. We focus on innovative uses of social media to engage youth to participate and get involved in the work. There are 2 major areas of work: 1. youth in schools and organizations serving marginalized youth. This allows us to engage with more young people living in contexts that produce greater risk of victimization and/or perpetration. We also facilitated 4 Young Men’s Groups and 6 Young Women’s Groups, with specialized curricula. In addition to working with young people who face a lot of structural barriers, another focus has been on doing more work with young men to engage male youth and to create gender-based violence. Our Young Men’s Groups are facilitated by two man -identified facilitators and specifically explore: the gender expectations of the ‘Man Box’, sexualized labels, enthusiastic consent and positive sexuality, and creating alternatives to violent masculinities. We were also able to engage a new group of young men in a similar way of our annual Walk-a-Mile in Her Shoes fundraiser. At our event, we had a “Break out of the Man Box” graffiti wall, which participants wrote comments and thoughts that challenge dominant expectations of being a man. A few people also shared their perspectives on video camera at our speaker’s corner. This footage will become part of a larger video project we are starting, through which Project Respect will create video resources featuring boys and girls discussing their thoughts and ideas about gender roles.

RESPECT REVOLUTION CAMPAIGN

This year Project Respect partnered with Girls Alternative the campaign to create the Fierce Youth Revolution Empowering (F.Y.R.E) Facebook group as a public awareness/social action initiative to take a stand against websites that promote sexualized violence through gossip that degrades girls’ and women’s sexuality (e.g. through labels like “slut”). In particular, girls wanted to stand up against a website called therdity.com that has targeted several girls and women in the Victoria area. We then promoted (and continue to promote) the Facebook group via our main Facebook page and through Vaughan to as well as at events like Walk a Mile in Her Shoes. The F.Y.R.E. Facebook group currently has 153 members.

TRIATHLON OF COMPASSION – JULY 2011

Wow! This year’s Triathlon organized by island Triathlon and sponsored by Fort St Cyle and Frontrunners brought out over 250 participants and raised a record $25,000! We thank everyone for making this event a tremendous success and extend special recognition to our top fundraisers: Niki Hodgkinson ($2,925), Bjorne Hansen ($2,015.01) and Jules Wilson ($1,625).

5TH ANNUAL WALK A MILE IN HER SHOES

In May 2011, we had another successful Walk a Mile event, raising an amazing $34,000 in pledges and involving over 600 people. In addition to an anonymous couple from Victoria who gave $28,000 as a matching gift. Everyone did a phenomenal job of fundraising and we extend special thanks to our top fundraisers: Dwayne Ford ($5,935), Mike Kroeger ($1,525), Howard Liptrot ($1,135), Bruce Bryant-Scott ($1,130) and Leopold Bienkowski-Gibbons ($1,109). (We extend a special apology to Mike Kroeger for not being publicly acknowledged as our top fundraiser at the top fundraiser recognition event and thank him for being so gracious in accepting our apology.)

Our presenting sponsor, RBC, was once again our top fundraising team and had over 50 employees join in the walk and volunteer. Team RBC ($20,416), CFUV 101.9FM ($1,746), Bruce & the Boys ($1,130) and Victoria Social Media Ninjas ($700).