**DC VICTIM ASSISTANCE NETWORK (VAN)**

**MINUTES (DRAFT)**

*Friday, August 23, 2013*

**Present: Jenny Brody**, *DC Volunteer Lawyers Project*; **Brant Miller**, *DC Center for the LGBT Community*; **Allison Jackson**, *Children’s National Medical Center*; **Nikki Charles**, *Network for Victim Recovery of DC*; **Malik Washington**, *William Kellibrew Foundation*; **Andrea Rodriguez***, CARECEN*; **Gillian Chadwick**, *Ayuda*; **Natalia Otero**, *SAFE*; **Heather DeVore**, *DC Forensic Nurse Examiners*; **Bobbi Mason**, *District Alliance for Safe Housing*; **M. Teresa Vandergriff**, *Ramona’s Way*; **Jennifer Clark**, *US Attorneys’ Office*; **Lauren Vaughn**, *My Sister’s Place*; **Jacqueline King**, *Ramona’s Way*; **Tonya Turner**, *Break the Cycle*; **Akosoa McFadgion**, *Howard University*; **Zenobia Lai**, *APALRC*; **Jaime Farrant**, *Ayuda*; **Allison Medina**, *The Women’s Center*; **Amara Tek,** *API DVRP*; **Sarah Lu**, *Fair Girls*; **Daniel Gizaw**, *Ethiopian Community Services*; **Anne Seymour**, *Anne Seymour Consulting*; **K. Rose Gordy**, *Safe Shores*; **Laura Banks Reed**, *Crime Victims’ Compensation Program*; **Santa Molina-Marshall,** *DC Rape Crisis Center*; **Wemi Peters**, *Legal Aid Society of DC*; **Winifred Wilson**, *House of Ruth*; **Shakeita Boyd**; *District Alliance for Safe Housing*; **Rachel Friedman**, *Men Can Stop Rape*, **Sasha Ponappa**, *Deaf Abused Women’s Network*; **Eric Angel**, *Legal Aid Society*;  **Bridgette Harwood,** *Network for Victim Recovery of DC*; **Daniel Rappaport**, *American University*; **Carol Loftur-Thun**, *The Women’s Center*, **Tyria Fields**, *Metropolitan Police Department Victim Services Branch*

**Introduction of FY 2014 VAN Members**

* Each attendant of the meeting introduced themselves, their agency or organization, and their project.

**Introduction of VAN Expectations and Items for Discussion (Melissa Hook)**

* **VOCA Regulations.** Melissa Hook announced that she just returned from the annual VOCA conference and has information on the new regulations that are currently in the public notice period. Anyone interested in providing comment on the new regulations should check the OVC website. The link to the OVC website will also be included on the DC OVS website for easy access.
* **Mass Violence Preparation**. Also at the annual VOCA conference was a roundtable of victim service providers from states in which there was a recent episode of mass violence (CT, CO, AZ). Funding for response to mass violence comes through the State VOCA Administrator (which is OVS for DC) and the state compensation authority (which is CVC in DC). We should establish a Mass Violence Committee of the VAN to ensure that victim services within the District are coordinated and collaborative in the aftermath of an episode of mass violence.
* **Legislation.** Recently we’ve had two pieces of legislation that significantly impacts the victim service community introduced in the DC Council.
	+ **DV Hotline legislation.** This legislation was introduced and was passed in the last Council session. DC OVS has been designated by the legislation to establish and coordinate a Task Force to set up the hotline over the next year. **Melissa Hook** asked the VAN to appoint 2-3 representatives from the VAN to serve on behalf of the VAN on the DV Hotline Task Force.
	+ **Other legislation.** Recently there has been other legislation introduced that came from outside of the victim assistance community. **Melissa Hook** urged the VAN to think about establishing a policy and legislative committee of the VAN so as to establish a precedent of bringing legislation to the VAN before submitting it to Council.
* **OJP Guidelines regarding Fee-for-Service Operations**. OJP has clarified their policy regarding services that receive funding from local VOCA or VAWA administrators and also have a fee-for-service portion of their business. Fee-for-service counseling organizations who accept a client for free services that are provided as part of their VOCA or VAWA funding may not ever convert that client to a fee-for-service client.
	+ **Laura Banks Reed** of *Crime Victims Compensation* clarified their policy. If an organization has a grant or contract with OVS to provide counseling, that contract has to pay first as CVC is the payer of last resort. CVC is only able to be paying what the victim should be paying.
	+ **Melissa Hook** clarified that if you are receiving funding from OVS for the purpose of providing counseling per a grant or an MOU with other providers, victims of crime served under that grant or MOU may not ever convert to a fee-for-service client.
	+ The question remains as to whether a client can ever convert to fee-for-service, particularly in cases where there is a significant mental health diagnosis which may result in years of counseling need for that victim. **Melissa Hook** encouraged the VAN to develop a committee that will be dedicated to establishing a policy for serving crime victims.

**VAN Charter Review (Cortney Fisher)**

**Cortney Fisher** reviewed the key aspects of the VAN Charter:

* DC VAN must meet no less than every two months
* Revisions to membership to the VAN must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the current membership
* Each agency may have one vote only even if there are multiple representatives that attend the meeting
* Agencies and organizations who do not receive grant funds from OVS may apply for membership and must be accepted by a 2/3 vote of the membership
* VAN members must be present at 2/3 of the official meetings and sit on at least one Working Committee to satisfy their obligations of membership
* The VAN is governed by the VAN Leadership Council, which is a group of between 5-7 members nominated by a member of the VAN and voted onto the Council by vote of the VAN members
* The VAN Leadership Council has limitations with regard to discipline and service area that are outlined in the VAN Charter
* The VAN Leadership Council will establish Working Committees, one of which will be the Standards and Accountability Board whose mission is to establish standards of service for VAN members

**Review of FY 2014 Requests for Membership (Cortney Fisher)**

Five agencies or organizations have applied to be members of the VAN during FY2014:

* **Polaris Project**. The Polaris Project is an organization whose mission is to serve human trafficking victims. Since 2003, Polaris Project DC has provided service for 600 victims of human trafficking in DC.
* **United States Attorney’s Office Victim Witness Assistance Unit**. The USAO Victim Witness Unit provides direct service to victims of crime when their case is within the US Attorneys’ Office for adjudication.
* **William J. Kellibrew Foundation**. The William J. Kellibrew Foundation is an organization established by William J. Kellibrew after his mother and brother were killed in front of him. The Kellibrew Foundation provides mentorship opportunities for young people who have been victimized.
* **DC Superior Court Crime Victims Compensation Program**. The Crime Victim Compensation Program is the District’s crime victim compensation agency, providing reimbursement to qualified crime victims for certain out-of-pocket expenses related to the crime.
* **American University Sexual Assault Prevention Program**. The American University Sexual Assault Prevention Program provides sexual assault prevention services and direct victim advocacy for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking on the campus of American University.

VAN members should vote YES or NO on membership for each of the five agencies or organizations named above. After the meeting, a SurveyMonkey will be sent via email to all current VAN members for voting.

**Nomination of Leadership Council Members for FY 2014 (Cortney Fisher)**

**Cortney Fisher** distributed a nomination form for VAN members to nominate themselves or someone else for a seat on the Leadership Council. Nomination forms should be completed and turned in to **Cortney Fisher** by the end of the VAN meeting or soon after the end of the VAN meeting.

Voting for the VAN Leadership Council will be completed via online voting through a Survey Monkey tool to be sent via email at the conclusion of the meeting.

**Adjourned**

***Next meeting scheduled for October 18 @ 10 am***

***Wilson Building, Room 527***