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U.S. Department of Justice Funds Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center's Domestic Violence Prevention Model

Office on Violence Against Women awards grants to implement promising DVHRT model

NEWBURYPORT, Mass., September 30, 2014 – The U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) has awarded \$2.6 million in grants to support ongoing training and implementation of the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center's (JGCC) Domestic Violence High-Risk Team (DVHRT) Model, identifying the DVHRT as a promising model that reduces domestic violence homicides. The announcement was made by Attorney General Eric Holder who said that implementation of evidence-based strategies will allow communities to "anticipate potentially lethal behavior, take steps to stop the escalation of violence, and – ultimately – save lives."

The OVW grants will support Phase II of the Domestic Violence Demonstration Initiative launched in 2013 to help reduce domestic violence homicides. Twelve communities in states across the country received Phase I funding to assess their ability to implement the DVHRT model. The two sites selected to implement the DVHRT model are the Borough of Brooklyn, New York, and Cuyahoga County, Ohio. The JGCC will continue to manage all facets of DVHRT training and implementation at these sites.

"We are pleased that our partners in the communities of Brooklyn, NY and Cuyahoga County, Ohio will receive additional funding from the Office on Violence Against Women to advance our DVHRT model," said the JGCC's Chief Executive Officer, Suzanne C. Dubus. "The DVHRT model has shown great promise, but there is still much work to be done. The Phase II funding will allow us to continue to refine the model by linking research with practice, partner with local officials to effectively implement the program, and ultimately replicate our success in communities across the nation."

The Center developed the DVHRT model in 2004 following the murder of a client in 2002 who was receiving services at the Center. The model is based on research conducted by Dr. Jacquelyn C. Campbell from Johns Hopkins University, a leader in the study of intimate partner violence. The DVHRT model identifies predictable patterns that escalate in violence and severity, and brings together a multidisciplinary team comprised of law enforcement, courts, probation and batterer's intervention and correction to identify the most dangerous cases of domestic violence and to implement interventions to prevent cases from escalating to lethal levels. The model holds offenders accountable, gives victims a safe, socially-just alternative to shelters, and recognizes that domestic violence homicides are both **predictable and preventable**. Since 2005, there have been no domestic violence homicides in its nine-town service area.

In addition to its work with OVW, the Center has developed curriculum materials and trained more than 4,000 criminal justice professionals, judges, prosecutors and victim advocates in 42 states and has provided technical assistance on the adaptation and replication of the DVHRT model nationwide and across Massachusetts.

Along with the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center, the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) will oversee Phase II implementations of their Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) in Pitt County, North Carolina, and Contra Costa County, California. To learn more about the grant announcement, the full video of the Attorney General's message is available at: <http://www.justice.gov/agwa.php>.

About the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center

For 32 years, the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center has been helping individuals and families at risk because of domestic violence. What began as the compassionate mission of several volunteer parishioners of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Newburyport in 1982 has grown into a nationally recognized nonprofit organization serving victims of domestic violence from Amesbury, Merrimac, Georgetown, Newbury, Newburyport, Rowley, Salisbury, West Newbury, and Groveland. The mission of the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center is to empower community members to live free from fear, intimidation, violence or the threat of abuse by providing support, advocacy, and education. For more information, call 978-465-0999, visit www.jeannegeigercrisiscenter.org or call the 24-hour confidential crisis hotline at 978-388-1888.