



Montgomery County Family Justice Center

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From the Desk of John McCarthy, State's Attorney



Did you know that on average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States? This totals more than ten million women and men per year. And did you know that 1 in 3 adolescents in the U.S. is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds rates of other types of youth violence?

We are fortunate in Montgomery County to have the Family Justice Center, a one-stop-shop where individuals and families impacted by domestic violence can receive services and support. The State's Attorney's Office is committed to this ongoing mission—our team of specially-trained prosecutors and staff is co-located at the FJC. We work with other county agencies on a daily basis to combat domestic violence and to hold abusers accountable for their criminal actions. Every morning, we meet with our partners at the FJC to discuss any offenses that occurred the night before, and we work together to address the safety needs of those at risk. Our model works in real time, as events are unfolding, and aims to provide what is needed when it is needed.

And our collaborative efforts extend beyond the walls of the Family Justice Center. The State's Attorney's Office works hard to combat teen dating violence by going into the schools and teaching students to "choose respect" and not control in their relationships. In the last year alone, members of the State's Attorney's Office taught more than 2400 teens to recognize the signs of domestic violence, to understand that domestic violence is not just physical, that it can be emotional,



The Montgomery County
Family Justice Center
is centrally located in the
heart of Rockville, Maryland.

sexual and financial, and to recognize that technology can be used for abusive purposes (see the teen who texts 30 times an hour and tracks the exact whereabouts of his or her boyfriend or girlfriend).

This month, as a part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the State's Attorney's Office will join the Commission for Women and the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council in a continuing series of community conversations about domestic

violence. Please join us on October 14th at the Eastern County Regional Services Center, or on October 21st at the Silver Spring Civic Center, from 7-8:30 p.m., to learn more about the services available to county residents and the efforts of law enforcement to combat domestic violence.

Looking ahead, please save March 20, 2016 for the Seventh Annual Choose Respect Healthy Teen Dating Conference, a county-wide initiative that brings together teens, parents and youth providers for an afternoon of learning, and some fun too. I want to thank our sponsors Verizon Wireless, Zoomph and AWARE for their continued support of this important event. And I am thrilled to announce that this year, for the first time, Montgomery County Public Schools is partnering with us and hosting the event at Richard Montgomery High School.

I hope to see you at the FJC Gala on October 18, 2015 at the Rockville Hilton to celebrate the accomplishments of the FJC, and this year's honorees, the Honorable Karla Smith, Sheriff Darren Popkin, Laurie Duker, Mindy Thiel and Dodie Fait. I am inspired by these individuals, and I know that as a community we will continue our work to eradicate all forms of domestic violence.

Meet the FJC's Legal Assistants!



Pictured from left to right: Virginia Mumford, Nicole Brito, Madora Schrank, Christina Miles, Beth Landau, Nicole Brito, and Carla Avendano

Addressing domestic violence effectively requires thorough trial preparation and a coordinated multi-agency response. Therefore, the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office has established the Domestic Violence Unit, within the Family Violence Division. There are six Senior Legal Assistants assigned to the Unit to screen and prepare domestic violence cases for trial and coordinate with other agencies to address victim safety and more effectively hold abusers accountable for their actions. The screening and trial preparation process includes the following: contact with victims to discuss the incidents and make referrals to the appropriate victim service providers; contact with witnesses or police involved in the incident; work with police to collect evidence, such as photographs, 911 tapes, and medical records; conduct background checks and gather any prior case information on offenders; assess the legal aspects of the case; issue subpoenas; and make recommendations to the prosecutors on how to proceed.

Once the preparation process is complete, the trial ready file is then discussed and handed over to the designated domestic violence prosecutor for final assessment. There are two designated Domestic Violence Criminal Dockets that run each week. The Legal Assistants are assigned an "in court" day to assist the prosecutors and to aide victims through the criminal process. The Legal assistants are also assigned an "on duty" day to answer any questions and are available to anyone seeking assistance at the Family Justice Center. On a daily basis, the Legal Assistants work directly with victims of domestic violence, the Victim Assistants at the FJC, the detectives assigned to the Special Victims Investigative Division (SVID), and with victim service providers to effectively combat domestic violence in County.

Meet the Legal Assistants:

Carla Avendano joined the State's Attorneys Office's Family Violence Division, Domestic Violence Unit as a Senior Legal Assistant in 2011. Carla is one of the three bilingual Spanish speak-

ing Legal Assistants assigned to the Division. She prepares misdemeanor domestic violence cases for trial and attends the Domestic Violence Criminal docket weekly. She holds a Master's degree in International Peace and Conflict Resolution.

Nicole Brito joined the State's Attorneys Office's Family Violence Division, Domestic Violence Unit as a Senior Legal Assistant in 2005. Nicole prepares misdemeanor domestic violence cases for trial and attends the Domestic Violence Criminal docket weekly. In addition, Nicole is the point of contact person for all U visa's certification requests for the Office. She holds a Master's degree in Criminology.

Hilda Ibanez joined the State's Attorneys Office in 1999 and served in different units within the office, including a Felony Team as a Victim Witness Coordinator. In 2005, she joined the Family Violence Division, Domestic Violence Unit as a Senior Legal Assistance. Hilda is one of the three bilingual Spanish speaking Legal Assistants assigned to the Division. She is currently assigned to all Felony Domestic Violence Cases.

Beth Landau joined the State's Attorneys Office's Family Violence Division, Domestic Violence Unit as a Senior Legal Assistant in 2009. She prepares misdemeanor domestic violence cases for trial and attends the Domestic Violence Criminal docket weekly. In addition, she has been involved with presenting the Healthy Teen Dating curriculum to local Montgomery County High School students. Beth holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminology and is expected to receive a Master's degree in Criminal Justice Management in November 2015.

Christina Miles joined the State's Attorneys Office as a Legal Assistant in 1994. In 2000, she became the Director of the Family Violence Division, and currently holds that position. She oversees the day to day operations of the Division and supervises the Domestic Violence Unit. She holds a Master's degree in Criminal Justice.

Virginia Mumford joined the State's Attorneys Office in June 2007, serving in various units within the office. She was assigned to the Juvenile Division and the District Court Screening Unit prior to joining the Family Violence Division, Domestic Violence Unit as a Senior Legal Assistant. She prepares misdemeanor domestic violence cases for trial and attends the Domestic Violence Criminal docket weekly. Virginia is one of the three bilingual Spanish speaking Legal Assistants assigned to the Division.

Madora Schrank joined the State's Attorneys Office's, Family Violence Division, Domestic Violence Unit in 2013. Her duties are divided between collection and distribution of evidence obtained by the Police Department and preparing misdemeanor domestic violence cases for trial as a Senior Legal Assistant. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminology.

Teens, Parents and Youth Service Providers: **SAVE THE DATE!**

Choose Respect Montgomery

#RespectYourSelfie



Healthy Teen Dating Conference

*The cycle of violence ends **NOW!***

Sunday, March 20, 2016
1:00pm - 4:30pm
Richard Montgomery High School
Rockville, MD

Separate tracks for students and parents! **FREE PIZZA** at the conclusion of the conference! Pre-conference Red Carpet!

Confirmed Sponsors:



Follow Us!

Facebook: Choose Respect Montgomery
 Twitter: @choose_respect
 Instagram: @chooserespectmontgomery

Baskets of Hope

As part of its annual Women's Leadership Conference, Verizon Wireless employees assembled 30 "Baskets of Hope" for presentation to the Montgomery County Family Justice Center. Each gift basket was filled with baby essentials – from diapers to books to stuffed teddy bears – for distribution to families served by the MCFJC. In addition, Verizon Wireless announced a \$20,000 donation from its HopeLine Phone Recycling Program to the MCFJCF to support services for survivors, as well as the 2016 Choose Respect conference, which Verizon has sponsored for the past four years. Thank you so much to Verizon Wireless for your continued partnership and support – we truly could not do it without you!



Pictured, from left to right, are: Laura DeMeritt (Verizon Wireless); Marquett Smith (Verizon Wireless); Cheryl Kravitz (MCFJC Foundation Board Member); Kaddia Jameison (Verizon Wireless); Melanie Ortel (MCFJC Foundation Board Member, Verizon Wireless); Erika Robinson (Verizon Wireless); and Resa Levy (MCFJC Foundation Executive Director)



Pictured, from left to right, are: Samantha Hancock (FJC Victim Assistant); Laura DeMeritt (Verizon Wireless); Erika Robinson (Verizon Wireless); and Tom Manion (FJC Acting Director)



Family Justice Center Foundation News

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- The Honorable
Ida G. Ruben
- The Honorable
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From the Desk of the MCFJC Foundation Executive Director, Resa Levy



Resa Levy
MCFJC Foundation
Executive Director

“Out of the Darkness, Into the Light” – the theme for this year’s 6th Annual Benefit for the MCFJC Foundation, could not be more appropriate. The support of our donors, community partners, foundations and friends from throughout our County and our State has enabled us to highlight the issue of domestic violence and relationship abuse, raise the level of conversation, and further inform and educate our community, our community leaders and the many various stakeholders working on the issue of eradicating domestic violence.

The role of the Foundation is to support the work of the FJC partner agencies- those folks who are on the frontline doing the hard work everyday. We do that through several key initiatives.

Our Youth Initiative will be a major focus in the year ahead. This is a multi-faceted effort that includes helping to provide enhanced psychological services for children who have witnessed domestic violence, as well as specific therapeutic services such as Art and Music Therapy.

We support several efforts that raise awareness and help to break the inter-generational cycle of domestic violence through our partnership with Safe Start’s “Teen Talk” program and the State’s Attorney’s anti-bullying campaign in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).

We partnered with the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) on their Choose Respect Montgomery program, a day-long conference and teen PSA video contest.

The Foundation supports the DVCC’s “Coaching Boys into Men” – an outstanding joint DVCC effort with MCPS. That effort is further enhanced through secondary support from Montgomery College.

Through a grant from Verizon, we are holding statewide trainings for educators, guidance counselors and youth group leaders.

Through a partnership with the University of Maryland, School of Social Work, we will provide additional trainings to social workers during the early part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Thank you for a great first six years! Your support has truly helped to bring the issue of Domestic Violence “Out of the Darkness, Into the Light.”

Get ready for a fantastic, poignant and fun-filled evening! Please join us for our 6th Annual Benefit on Sunday, October 18, 2015 from 5:00 – 8:30 pm at the Rockville Hilton, Rockville, Maryland. If you did not receive your invitation, please contact me at resalevy@gmail.com and one will be sent to you. You can register online at mcfjcfoundation.org.

Resa Levy
Executive Director

From the Desk of MCFJC Foundation President, Tom DeGonia II



Thomas DeGonia
MCFJC
Foundation
President

There are several very rewarding aspects to working with the MCFJC and the MCFJC Foundation. Primarily, it's the knowledge that we are truly helping to strengthen and enhance the lives of the women, children and families impacted by domestic

violence.

Secondly, it has been the opportunity to share this effort with some very extraordinary men and women. Our County Executive, Ike Leggett, along with several key professionals contributed long hours discussing and planning for the MCFJC. During the last six years, our Foundation has worked to underscore their efforts and help make their dreams a continuing reality.

At the Foundation's 6th Annual Benefit

on October 18, 2015, at the Hilton Hotel on Rockville Pike, we will honor a few of those men and women who have labored long and hard to strengthen the lives of families affected by domestic violence and relationship abuse. Each, in their own capacity has provided either law enforcement, legal, judicial and/or psychological guidance and support to the victim-survivors. The Honorees include:

Inspiring Leader Award

Darren Popkin
Sheriff, Montgomery County, Md.

Marilyn Praisner Founder's Award

The Honorable Karla N. Smith
Associate Judge, Circuit Court for
Montgomery County

Forerunner Awards

Dorothy Fait, Esq.
Fait, Wise & Di Lima

Community Partnership Award

Ms. Laurie Duker
Executive Director, Court Watch
Montgomery

Community Legacy Award

Mindy Thiel, PhD., LCSW-C
Chesapeake Counseling Associates,
LLC

Looking forward to celebrating with you. Please RSVP by filling out your response card and mailing it in the envelope that was provided to you, or through our website www.mcfjcfoundation.org or email us at mcfjc.foundation.org.

We truly appreciate your support.

Tom DeGonia, President
MCFJC Foundation



You Are Invited...



6th Annual MCFJC Foundation Benefit

Sunday, October 18, 2013
5:00PM—8:30PM

Hilton Hotel
Rockville Pike



We Wish To Thank Our Wonderful Sponsors...

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Rismiller Law Group LLC; Stein Sperling Bennett DeJong Driscoll LLP

Community Advocate – Silver

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Montgomery College ; Santos, Postal & Company;
Carol Trawick; Victims' Rights Foundation; Whiteford, Taylor, Preston LLP

Honorarium Contributors

David Belkin; Bert Smith & Co.;
Josh Bokee; Cheryl Kravitz; Katherine J. Michaelian and Keith R. Jacobson;
Hon. Duchy and Dr. Alan Trachtenberg; Patience H. White, MD, MA

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