



CDVSA Executive Director's Update

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October – December 2022
FY2023 Quarter 2

An update of CDVSA activities/highlights October – December 2022

Staffing and personnel

As reported last quarter, our staff now equals eight – our Administrative Assistant position is still vacant. We have continued to recruit but have not found the right candidate. With the addition of Elaine Bell as our Administrative Officer 2, we feel we can get by for a while until we find the right candidate for the AA2 position.

We are very close to making an offer for our new Grant Administrator 1-2. We are awaiting final approval to make an official job offer and hopefully, this position will be accepted by the time of our December 1-2 Board meeting, with a clear starting date. Fingers crossed!

The new Program Coordinator 2, also received in our FY23 budget, has not yet been fully established; I am working to create the position description (PD) and look forward to getting it submitted to Online PD for review and approval. Once a few other deadlines are checked off my to-do list, I will get back to finalizing the Project Coordinator 2 position description. With the conclusion of the Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup, the need for this new PC2 position becomes more critical.

Coming up in April 2023 our longest-serving staff person, Ann Rausch, is retiring. Ann joined CDVSA in September 2008 first as an Associate Coordinator to a Program Coordinator 1 and in 2011 to a Program Coordinator 2. She has worked with the Victim Services programs, Battering Intervention programs, and her most enduring work, establishing and growing a strong DVSA prevention program within CDVSA. Ann will be greatly missed, and we support her in her new adventure! Ann and I will be doing transition planning for her critical position, beginning to solicit for a new Prevention Program Coordinator in February, hoping to not experience a gap in filling the position. Thank you, Ann, for your passion, your commitment to prevention and to CDVSA, and your kind and supportive ways. You will be missed!



The rest of our staff positions are stable and fully engaged in doing the work of the Council. I want to give kudos to the CDVSA staff that continues to move our agency and agenda forward each and every day. During the last couple of years, with vacancies and COVID, our staff has worked hard to keep our work centered and our community-based grantees funded, supported, and monitored. The last few years have been challenging for CDVSA and for everyone we work with and for—our sub-grantees, their participants, our communities, and our partners. I am thankful every day for the great staff we have at CDVSA.

CDVSA Funding Challenges

No significant changes from the information presented in last quarter's Director's Report. Because we were without an Administrative Officer for a couple of months at the beginning of the new fiscal year, it has taken us time to get all our FY23 funding accounted for, encumbered, and correctly entered into the state IRIS system. Elaine has been diligently working to understand our complicated federal formula grants and the multiple FFYs that we have open and available each year. While our budget is always complicated due to the number of federal formula grants we receive each year, the last two state fiscal years (SFY22 and SFY23) are more complicated due to the number and type of "emergency" or one-time funds we received (ARPA, CSLFRF, OVC Disc. and 1-time GF relief funding). In late September, I was asked to update the CDVSA funding report I submitted to Randy Ruaro, Governor Dunleavy's Chief of Staff in August 2021. A copy of my updated report is enclosed in your Board packet for a discussion during our meeting on December 1. Please review this report and the updated projected grant funds available for SFY2024.

As you can see, if we want to maintain our current level of grant funding, especially for our victim services/enhanced services sub-grantees we need an additional \$3.8 million in SFY2024. This is especially important for the next fiscal year because we will be starting a new funding cycle on July 1, 2023. A Request for Proposals will be issued in spring 2023 for the following year, and we need to begin a new funding cycle with a stable dollar amount that will be available for the 3-year grant cycle. If the projected amount of stable grant funding for all grant programs is \$17.9 million, instead of \$21.8 million, we will only be able to award grants equaling our available funding. This scenario is not ideal, and yet we must live within the funding we have available. Without additional stable funding (more than temporary relief funds) our available FY24 victim/enhanced service grant funds will be reduced by approximately \$3.8



million or 18%. Additionally, with a new Request for Proposals, the available funds and submitted proposals will be competitive, and all agencies meeting the eligibility criteria, will be able to apply and compete for funding.

The VOCA Crime Victims Fund (CVF) continues to create a funding challenge as it remains at lower-than-expected funding levels. VOCA funding to Alaska in FFY21 was \$2.8 million; in FFY22 our VOCA allocation is \$3.57 million. It is now looking like a stable funding level of around \$3.5-\$3.8 is our new reality. While we were hoping for a stabilized base of around \$4.0-4.5 million per year for Alaska, we do not feel as hopeful that VOCA funding will increase to that level soon, if ever.

The Governor's FY24 budget will be released by December 15; at that time, we will have a better idea of what our starting operating budget will look like, as the new legislative session begins in January.

CDVSA Priority Projects Update

- **STOP/VAWA 4-year State Plan** – Good news! The Alaska STOP/VAWA State Implementation Plan has been approved.

Additionally, we received approval from our OVW Project Officer to non-compete our Victim Services Cultural Set-Aside allocation. As stated last quarter we recommended a plan to expand and increase the amount of funding we set aside for culturally focused training and support to improve services for Alaska Native victims and survivors. The required distribution of funds for Victim Services equals 30% of the overall STOP grant award, with 10% identified for culture-specific training. Because our STOP grant is under \$900,000, the 10% cultural set-aside is just over \$25,000—not enough to adequately provide a statewide or regional approach for cultural training. Our plan is to use a greater portion of the required percentage of funds for this category by using a share of the discretionary allocation and adding additional GF dollars to equal \$100,000 for this activity. We have invited the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center to accept these funds to expand their current cultural training and support activities—leveraging our OVW funds and their OVW funds for greater impact.

Once we finalize a plan for awarding these funds, Ann will work directly with Tami Jerue, Director of the AKNWRC, to establish a training, support, and outreach plan to expend these STOP funds.

- **Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup** – The work of the Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup has come to an end, but the hard work to revise and renew our BIP programming is just beginning. The last event for the PR Workgroup (WG) was to host a Stakeholder Input meeting to present the Concept Paper that captured the overall effort of the Workgroup and to solicit feedback and dialogue about the WG considerations. The hybrid meeting was held on October 4 with 13 people attending in person and 26 attending virtually.

Additionally, there was an opportunity to provide written comments/feedback with input due by October 18. Included in your Board packet are a copy of the final PR Workgroup Concept Paper, a meeting report from the Stakeholder Input meeting, and the Stakeholder online input log. All comments, remarks, and input are being reviewed and will become part of the final approach to creating improved programming to serve those who use violence in their relationship(s).

During our FY23 Q. 1 Board meeting Dr. Rei Shimizu, UAA School of Social Work, provided an overview of her separate, but complimentary, **Stakeholder Interview Project: Examining the State's Response to Domestic Violence**. Dr. Shimizu has finalized the project report, and it too is included in your Board packet for your review.

Now that the WG and Stakeholder Input meetings have concluded the internal CDVSA work will begin to implement the identified changes, work with DOC to update related regulations, and establish a new process for agencies to apply to become a state-approved perpetrator rehabilitation program. We are working to establish our new Program Coordinator 2 position, with the intent to hire a Program Coordinator who will work exclusively (for at least a year) on reestablishing the application process, based on the new program considerations, and creating an effective and efficient program approach, including an ongoing plan for monitoring and regular review and re-approval of programs.

Denali Daniels, WG Facilitator, and I are excited to present the full Concept Paper and WG process during our FY23 Q. 2 Board meeting, looking for Board input and dialogue

regarding the next steps. Please review the Concept Paper, Stakeholder Meeting Report, Online Input log, and Dr. Shimizu's project report prior to our presentation on December 2 at 9:35 a.m. I am hoping for a lively discussion to help guide our work moving forward.

- **Alaska Sexual Assault Response Leadership Team** – Our fall Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) training was scheduled for the week of November 7, in Anchorage. This would have been our first in-person SART training since the pandemic began in March 2020. Unfortunately, due to a key trainer being unavailable because of a family emergency, it was decided there was not a viable replacement trainer on such short notice, so on Friday before the training was to happen, we made the difficult decision to cancel. Kudos to Marjie and the Sexual Assault Response Leadership Team for quickly pulling together and contacting all registered participants and our event contractor. Because of their quick action, the cancelation occurred with only a few hiccups! Because of such busy training schedules, the fall training will not be rescheduled, instead, all fall participants will be moved into the planned spring SART event!

Due to the passage of HB 325, five significant changes will impact cases of domestic violence and sexual assault, including the definition of 'consent' in sexual assault cases, amending the definition of "crime involving DV" to include harassment 2, and more timely testing of sexual assault kits. Because these changes will impact how law enforcement and prosecutors respond, it is important that training on the impacts of HB 325 is created and offered widely. The SA leadership team is assisting with support to provide every opportunity to make this training available to everyone impacted who needs to understand these legal changes.

During our November 22 ASARLT meeting, we invited Adam Rutherford, Deputy Director of DOC's Health and Rehabilitation Services, to discuss the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) and how we can assist to improve advocacy and support services for inmates who experience rape in one of our state institutions. The goal of our meeting was to hear the status of institutional sexual assault and what service gaps DOC is experiencing with finding support from outside and inside the DOC system. We hope to have a great conversation and will continue to work together to better serve this very vulnerable population of victims.

Remember to check out our new SA website information and design at [Sexual Assault - Services - CDVSA - Alaska Department of Public Safety](#).

- **CDVSA Language Access Plan** – We are making excellent progress in implementing CDVSA's Language Access Plan. Our contractor, Alaska Institute for Justice (AIJ), has completed most of the requested translations for posting to our website. We have translations in the 8 primary languages spoken and used in Alaska--Spanish, Tagalog, Korean, Russian, Hmong, Samoan, Yup'ik, and Chinese. We chose to begin with translating our Complaint Form and Procedures regarding language access. Next, we translated an overview of the types of services our sub-grantees have available, and finally, we translated information about each service program we fund and support – shelter programs, advocacy services, mental health, child advocacy centers, legal services, and battering intervention programs.

We created a Language Access website where individuals can select which language they want to use and can then click through the programs to find one they feel can meet their needs. The website is being worked on by AIJ and DPS IT collaboratively. While most of the changes/translations are complete, we have not yet gone live with the page. The next steps are to make sure there is clear information on our homepage to allow those with limited English skills to find where the Language Access Page is located and how to use it. We are excited to go public with diverse information about language access and availability in multiple languages.

Once we go live, we will inform the public and our partner agencies about the availability of this new information that will broaden who has access to victim service information regardless of their English proficiency. We intend for this information to be of great value to our funded sub-grantees, by providing them with all the translations completed and available for them to link directly to our Language Access webpage. As the page begins to be used, we may expand the information we have translated, to offer the best outreach available to guarantee those who need services will now have access and choice about what services they want to use. A big thank you to MaryBeth Gagnon, who was the CDVSA lead on this project, and to Indra Arriaga and Kari Robinson from the Alaska Institute for Justice. Both Indra and Kari will provide a demonstration of the new page on Day 1 of our Board meeting.



Communications, Outreach, and Media

CDVSA staff are busy working on writeups focusing on key FY2022 accomplishments for the FY2022 Annual Report. Since our last report was delayed due to staff shortages and COVID, we plan to have the FY22 Annual Report completed no later than mid to late January 2023. I am working closely with our contractor Walsh|Sheppard who will again design and complete our report, with an electronic/online version and a limited run of hard copies for distribution.

Ann Rausch continues her work with contractor Walsh|Sheppard to refresh existing media messages, as well as create new messages for use throughout the year. In February we will focus on Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, in Alaska and nationally. Ending all forms of domestic and sexual violence in teens, as well as adults and seniors requires a consistent and ongoing media presence to make sure messages reach everyone across the state.

Our goal is to have clear, consistent communications, messaging, and outreach and have a regular presence on social media, radio, and television. It takes all of us to encourage our communities, families, and friends to take action and join activities to end domestic and sexual violence in Alaska.