



June, 2004

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## RICE COUNTY-HOPE CENTER JOINS PROTOCOL WORK

Finding the right balance between supporting existing multidisciplinary sexual assault protocol teams and funding new teams is the challenge! The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) at the Department of Public Safety and the SVJI have worked with sites to answer this challenge. OJP administers the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) STOP block grant funds which have been the main support of the SMART team process in the 8 counties in Minnesota.

Beginning with the next state fiscal year, July 1, 2004, five of the original sites will experience a significantly reduced funding level and the onus of supporting the teamwork will fall more squarely on the local community. With this potential in mind, many

of the teams have worked over the past several months to institutionalize some steps of the protocol writing, training and evaluating process. The goal is to guarantee the ongoing scrutiny and modification of the system to ensure the best service to victims.

The bright spot in this

funding change is that one new team was awarded funding to begin the 8-step protocol development process. The new team will be located in Rice County and the grant is held by the Hope Center, an advocacy program in Faribault..

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***Mission:***  
***“Dedicated to promoting justice for victims of sexual violence through multi-disciplinary collaboration, leadership and resources.”***

## SVJI Hosts Advocacy Training

If you are a sexual assault advocate have you always wondered why most sex offenders in Minnesota are released on bail pre-trial? Or, why it may take law enforcement several

weeks to investigate a case? Have you tried to explain to a victim that a probation sentence doesn't mean the offender has no consequences after a guilty plea? To address these

and other questions, the SVJI recently hosted two full day trainings on legal advocacy for sexual assault advocates. The SVJI believes that one key to successful community teamwork is an advocate who is well versed in the criminal justice process in Minnesota. Over 50 volunteer and paid staff

***One key to successful community teamwork is an advocate who is well versed in the criminal justice process.***

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## Rice County—Hope Center Begins SMART

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According to Leah Lutz, Executive Director of Hope Center, this is work that the county has been ready to do for some time. “The county attorney, law enforcement agencies, colleges and emergency medical teams have been meeting for several months and are eager to begin this work in earnest. We

have all the critical players on board and look forward to developing our protocols.” The Rice County SMART will start up in July, attend a mandatory 3 day training in early September and launch their community needs assessment work over the following several months.

## LEGAL ADVOCACY TRAINING

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advocates participated in the trainings which were held in Mankato and Bemidji.

In addition to the SVJI staff, presenters at the two forums were Joann Holt-Angerman, advocate from Victim Services in Rochester; Beth Olson, PAVSA advocate; Sergeant Eli Umpierre, Rochester Police Department; Investigator Jeff Oxtan, St. Cloud Police Department; Susan Jamros, St. Marys Medical Center, Duluth; Karen Klinger, Mayo Health System nurse, Mankato; Janelle Kendall, Stearns County Attorney; Lisa Swenson, Assistant Olmsted County Attorney; and Sherry Hill, agent with the Department of Corrections.

Based on evaluations, the training met the needs of the attendees.

Many of the attendees noted that legal advocacy training specifically for sexual assault advocates has not been readily available in the state. Attendees were also invited to participate in a by-invitation-only listserv for those legal advocates who were trained. That listserv is available to assist advocates with legal advocacy issues and will be expanded when new advocates are trained.

Because of the success of this trial run, the SVJI is planning on holding future legal advocacy trainings. Watch for announcements of future forums. To better serve the topic and the attendees, future trainings will be expanded to 2 days.

*A legal advocacy manual detailing Minnesota statutes and including commentary for advocates will be available soon from the SVJI. Stay tuned!*

### **SVJI Welcomes Michelle Knudson**

Michelle Knudson is the Program Coordinator for the SVJI, the criminal justice arm of MNCASA. Prior to her work at SVJI, Ms. Knudson was the Law Enforcement Liaison at Central MN. Sexual Assault Center located in St. Cloud, MN. Through this position, she created and established a multidisciplinary four county trainings for law enforcement officers to heighten response to victims of sexual assault. The collaborative, inter-agency trainings also involved revising and or updating counties protocols.

Ms. Knudson has presented the multidiscipline approach in many forums. She was active on the St. Cloud Hospital Task Force, Stearns County Family Violence/Sexual Assault Council and facilitated Victim Empathy Groups at the St. Cloud State Reformatory.

Ms. Knudson’s responsibility at the SVJI is to provide technical assistance and outreach to the Sexual Assault Multidisciplinary Response Teams.

# LEGAL RESOURCES UPDATE—DRUG FACILITATED RAPE

By Kaarin Long  
Staff Attorney

In speaking with victim advocates and with medical professionals about sexual assault investigations, a theme began to emerge over the last year: drug facilitated sexual assault is rampant and is not being prosecuted! SVJI began hearing repeated stories from advocates who were working with victims who reported the symptoms of drug facilitated sexual assault, but for one reason or another, sufficient evidence was not available with which to charge these offenders. The Legal Resources Program at SVJI decided to do something about this problem.

We began by talking more specifically with the professionals on the Legal Resources Team – prosecutors and law enforcement who specialize in sexual assault investigations. These professionals confirmed that it is quite difficult to charge a suspect with drugging the victim, or with taking advantage of an incapacitated victim if the evidence of drugs in the victim’s system is not collected.

Upon hearing this, SVJI began meeting with two enormously helpful professionals at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) lab in St. Paul. In the toxicology section of the lab, Lindsey Seida works to test urine and blood samples for the presence of drugs or alcohol. She is also an expert on the symptoms of the use of such drugs.

Equally knowledgeable is Jacqueline Kuriger of the biology section at the BCA. She is closely connected with determining the contents and instructions in the BCA rape kit – used around the state in sexual assault forensic exams. She has been very interested in our work to evaluate the rape kit and determine whether any changes might improve the collection of evidence in potential DFSA cases.

Together with Seida and Kuriger, we developed new ideas about collecting the proper evidence and potentially modifying the instructions or even the content of the rape kit to catch these elusive cases. One thing we heard clearly in speaking with Seida was that many drugs used to accomplish DFSA are eliminated rapidly from the body and must be collected within perhaps 6 hours of ingesting the

drug.

Before suggesting any bold changes, we wanted input from both the criminal justice and medical professionals who would be affected by a modification in the collection of DFSA evidence. We presented some of our ideas to the Legal Resources Team for comment, and also communicated with various nurses who conduct sexual assault examinations. After hearing from those who know best, we were ready to make some recommendations about an improved method for collecting DFSA evidence in sexual assault exams.

As a result of all this work, SVJI and the BCA laboratory decided that the best practice for obtaining DFSA evidence is to *automatically* obtain a urine and blood sample in *every* sexual assault examination as early as possible. Thus, if a suspicion of DFSA emerges in the investigation, the sample was collected immediately and is available for testing. If a decision made not to test the sample, it can be discarded. The details of this recommendation, and suggested protocols for medical, law enforcement, advocacy, and prosecution professionals can be obtained by contacting SVJI. We hope professionals will take these best practices to their home juris-

***...drug facilitated sexual assault is rampant and is not being prosecuted!***

***A metro BCA training is set for July 7 at the University of Minnesota. Call SVJI to register.***

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dictions and implement them, modifying them as needed for local practices.

Once we realized we were asking professionals to change the way they conduct sexual assault examinations, we decided that we should train state-wide on the changes so that professionals all over the state could improve their chances of investigating and

prosecuting these cases. That decision resulted in a collaboration by SVJI and the BCA on six trainings scheduled in June and early July, from Marshall to Virginia and many places in between. If you haven't registered for another training, we will present the training on July 7 at the University of Minnesota campus. Registration forms are available from SVJI. The training is free.

A legal advocacy manual detailing Minnesota statutes and including commentary for advocates will be available soon from the SVJI. Thanks to several law students and Betsy Parrell for their input to this project. Stay tuned!

## SITE UPDATES . . .

### **CARVER COUNTY**

**Beth Olson, Site Coordinator,  
Sexual Assault Interagency Council**

During the past several months, the Carver SAIC decided to expand the protocols to include victims thirteen to eighteen years old. This additional piece will be written with help from similar protocols prepared by other teams.

The team has been working to define cultural competence and implement a plan to ensure the team operates in a culturally competent manner. We again are able to draw on the experience of other teams. We are pleased that we have the resources to update all of our resources and translate them into Spanish.

Due to funding decreases in all the member agencies, the Carver County Team has lost members. This is a challenge that the team works at every meeting to address. The team is recruiting new members who work with youth either in the schools or community.

Looking forward, we decided, with the help of SVJI to prioritize training and monitoring/evaluation this year. We plan to schedule quarterly training for all new hires within the county and all other member agencies. The training will take place at various member

agencies and be presented by two team members each time. We will also discuss the monitoring checklists regularly and work to improve services.

Three team representatives attended the state Crime Victim's Conference in June.



### **ISANTI COUNTY**

**Brenda Skogman, Site Coordinator,  
Sexual Assault Interagency Council**

Isanti County had a busy April with the sexual assault awareness month. We held a community forum which 192 people attended. We heard many positive comments and received requests from attendees who wanted more information. On the same day we hosted a nurse/advocate training on the protocol and sexual assault evidence kits. All the nurses are now trained on the protocol. We also have two new advocates who attended that training and forum and who will be participating in the advocate training at the sexual violence center in St. Cloud. We have fielded many requests for a community forum on the fall and are planning on focusing on the treatment and recovery of sexual assault victims. Our first forum focused on the dynamics of perpetration and how victims may

consider strategies for self protection given this information. An additional training in May focused on training our road deputies on the law enforcement protocol. We are currently working on setting up a training for the dispatchers. We also will have a booth at the Isanti County Fair in July in order to give out information and answer questions and concerns.



### **WINONA COUNTY**

**Cami O'Laughlin, Site Coordinator  
Sexual Assault Interagency Council**

The team is awaiting final decision on a site coordinator after the loss of the last site coordinator to funding cuts. The team is being assisted in the interim by Cami O'Laughlin, victim services coordinator for Winona County Attorneys Office. The team is preparing for fall trainings with Winona State University. High on the team agenda this summer will be plans to respond to the reduction in funding. The team members will work to ensure that training, protocol revision, victim experience surveys and protocol monitoring all happen routinely as the funding decreases.



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**RAMSEY COUNTY  
Nicole Allbaugh, Site Coordinator  
Sexual Assault Protocol Team**

The Ramsey County Sexual Assault Protocol (SAP) Team has been very busy the last 6 months! They completed their second version of the protocol in March of 2004 and are now in the process of planning a training that can be presented to staff at member agencies. Evaluations will be provided at the end of the trainings to assist in improving training and the protocol. Partnering agencies are also in the process of renewing their interagency agreements to show their commitment to participating on the team and implementing the protocol into their policy and procedures. Subcommittees are being set up to work on developing two Victim Experience Surveys. One will focus on the immediate crisis and how services were provided by law enforcement, advocacy, and medical personnel. The second survey will focus more on the experience later with law enforcement, prosecution, and possibly corrections. The team is also actively recruiting representatives from colleges and universities (counselors, security, resident advisors, etc.) in Ramsey County that would be interested in participating on the team. If you know of anyone, please have them contact the site coordinator at 651-241-5864. Books are also available by calling the same number.



**OLMSTED COUNTY  
Sexual Assault Interagency Council  
Submitted by Jeanne Martin, Victim  
Services Coordinator**

The past quarter has been one of change and transition for the Olmsted County team. Sadly, we bid farewell to our expert SAIC coordinator, Melissa Larson. Melissa, who served as our coordinator for more than five years accepted a position with the Austin Public Schools. The Olmsted County SAIC is proud of our achievements,

and the level of commitment evident in the team. Melissa, played a huge role in advancing the work of the team and contributing to the overall group cohesiveness.

The Olmsted County team together with the other original teams has worked to adjust to the 50% decrease in grant funding. The team worked on several proactive solutions to augment the funding in hopes that the efforts of the group could continue at their current level. As of this writing, unfortunately, none of these efforts have succeeded in bringing in additional dollars to support the SAIC. The initial impact of the decreased funding was the loss of our coordinator. Secondly, the Rochester Police Department made the decision to not continue as the fiscal host of this project. By agreement, the grant was transferred to Olmsted County Victim Services. The longer-term affect on the sustainability of our efforts is yet to be seen. One thing is for sure: the Olmsted County SAIC is an awesome group of dedicated professionals committed to an excellent system's response to victims of sexual assault.



**MILLE LACS COUNTY  
Cinnamon Quale, Site Coordinator  
Sexual Assault Multidisciplinary Action  
Response Team**

Mille Lacs County (MLC) SMART has been a work in progress. In the last two years, we have been able to improve system relationships, clarify roles, and work together as a team. Speaking openly and honestly with one another has been important to all team members and has strengthened our ability to assist victims. We are nearing the end of our protocol writing with only two more agency protocols to finalize! It has taken our team approximately nine months for the actual writing of the protocols, but we have been fortunate enough to view other county protocols while writing our own. The largest barrier that SMART has experienced was team members unable to

attend our monthly meetings due to emergencies or low number of agency staff on duty.

To move into our next step, we have condensed our victim survey from 100 questions to 25 with the hope of greater responses. We will use the surveys to monitor SMART agencies in order to assess where areas of improvement are needed.



**SOUTHERN ST. LOUIS COUNTY  
Sue Marks, Site Coordinator  
Sexual Assault Multidisciplinary Action  
Response Team**

Within the next few months, the advocacy, medical, prosecution, and law enforcement protocols will all be brought to the full SMART team to be adopted. The SMART team will continue its work through new subcommittees. The new subcommittees will be focused on training, monitoring and evaluation, cultural competency, SANE, college/university protocols, and raising public awareness.

A cultural competency subcommittee has recently been formed, with representatives of various groups who are at higher risk for being sexually assaulted and face increased barriers within the system. The subcommittee will be writing their own protocols and reviewing the other protocols to ensure cultural competence within each discipline. The subcommittee to write protocols for the colleges and universities had its first meeting and will be inviting new members to join in order to ensure an effective process.

Finally, at the beginning of the SMART process, one of the primary goals identified was to set up a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program. A preliminary training was held in June for all members of the community who are interested in the program. The program will be set up as community-based and overseen by PAVSA, and has the full cooperation of the hospitals.

**Sexual Violence Justice Institute**

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***NEWS AND NOTES:***

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- ◆ SVJI Attorney Kaarin Long has been invited to be a faculty instructor at the National Advocacy Center, a training facility for prosecutors in South Carolina. The training, to be held August 2-6, is “Silenced Voices” and will focus on working effectively with victims of sexual assault within the criminal justice process.
- ◆ SVJI staff recently attended the 2004 National Crime Victim Law and Litigation Conference in Portland, Oregon. As a result, the SVJI has new resources and information about prison rape, sexual assault in the military, crime victim rights action, and shared wisdom from the sexual assault movement and the crime victims rights movement—what we have to learn from one another.

***YES!*** I would like to support the work of the Sexual Violence Justice Institute with my tax deductible donation:

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