



**To protect, shelter  
and empower people  
impacted by domestic  
and sexual violence.**

NEWSLETTER | FALL 2021

## **The Direct Connection Between Oppression and Domestic Violence**

By Juliette Schultz

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***The past several years have been rife with injustice and violence both here and abroad. Most recently, our community made national headlines after a group of mostly white high schoolers decided it would be fun to assign a dollar value to black and brown students.***

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It's not fun. It's Oppressive. And Abusive.

It is time we elevate the conversation in our community and act. It is not okay to simply sit idly by while someone makes

racist, dehumanizing remarks. As Advocates for survivors of domestic violence, we know that verbal abuse is used to exert power and control over another. This type of behavior also contributes to the systemic oppression that is present within our own community.

Domestic violence (including physical, mental, economic, and sexual abuse) affects people of all races, gender, ethnicities, and socioeconomic status. As an organization that cares for survivors of domestic violence, it is important for us to share with you how violence is connected to racism and oppression. This newsletter features my friend and guest columnist Grace Lubwama, CEO of YWCA in Kalamazoo with her thoughts on this very important topic.

We recently adopted the following Vision Statement: *the WRC will foster a culture of inclusion and belonging through the*

*enhancement of advocacy and empowerment of survivors that is supported by a diverse and sustainable funding model.*

This Vision statement underscores our commitment to making sure that the WRC is intentional about ensuring that **every survivor feels welcome and safe.**

We will do this by: educating ourselves and identifying ways to become even more inclusive and diverse, engaging in the community conversation about equality, and continuing to reject all forms of oppression and violence.

**Thank you** for joining us on this journey of understanding and transformation. We don't have all the answers. But as our friend Grace said *"...you don't need to know it all. If you know that racism and oppression isn't right, that's enough."*

**WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER**

## With Gratitude

*We needed you, and you were there. Your generous contributions helped us provide free and confidential life-saving shelter and advocacy to survivors in our community.*

Survivors have been comforted and encouraged by the outpouring of generosity and support from extraordinary people, organizations, community groups, small businesses and corporations that have stepped up to support our Mission: to protect, shelter and empower people impacted by domestic and sexual violence. Thank you for answering our call for help, YOU made a difference in the lives of others, and together we can continue to provide services with inclusion, integrity, compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence.

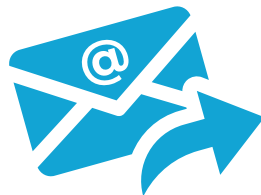
With Gratitude,

- DTE Foundation
- Rotary Goodworks
- A.A. VanElslander Foundation
- Cherryland Electric
- Oleson Foundation
- Schmuckal Foundation
- St. Andrews Presbyterian Church
- Redeemer Lutheran Church of Interlochen Katharine Guild
- Plum Blossom Tea Company
- Heart of Zen

Thank you to the family and friends who donated to the WRC in loving memory of:

Alexandria Piluras  
Ann and Jim Miller  
Beverly Lardie  
Carrie Donald  
David A. Abel  
Diane K. Sholberg  
Janet Ready  
Marlee Trahey  
Norman Bowers

*If you would like to make a donation in honor of a loved one, please contact Jamie Bell at 231-941-1210.*



If you would prefer to receive future newsletters via email, please email Jamie Bell at [Jbell@wrcgt.com](mailto:Jbell@wrcgt.com).



## Support Survivors

October 18 – 22:  
**Higher Grounds Trading Co.**  
Round up your order to support.

October 19:  
**Oryana** (both locations)  
Round up your order to support.

October 25 – 31:  
**Grand Traverse Resort and Spa**  
\$5 contribution made for every spa service offered.

## Taking the Call to Care for Survivors

**October is Domestic Violence Awareness month and at the WRC, it is a time for all of us to pause and reflect on the good work that we are doing.**

Caring for survivors is humbling and at times it can be heart-wrenching too. Our trained Advocates are here everyday taking calls 24/7/365 from survivors from all walks of life.

I happened to pick up the phone the other day and there was a survivor on the other end of the line in tears. She told me that "someone said she needed to call us..." then she paused, her voice cracked, and she started to cry. I waited and while she caught her breath, and I said: "you called the right place."

Typically, when a survivor calls on us, it's not their best day. They may have been verbally abused or physically assaulted. They may feel embarrassment. Humiliation. Fear.

At the WRC, our sole focus is providing whatever support the survivor needs in that moment. Our Advocates are here to provide a safe place for them to let down and share their story. Confidentially.

This last year, our crisis calls increased nearly 70% from last year and we were here to take the call.

For more than four decades, the WRC has been the area's primary support for domestic and sexual violence survivors, providing free-and-confidential shelter, emergency financial assistance, advocacy, and immediate crisis intervention. Do you or someone you know need help?

**The WRC is here 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week: 231-941-1210.**



## A Call to Advocate for All Survivors

Dr. Grace Lubwama, CEO YWCA Kalamazoo

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***It is very clear that Domestic violence impacts individuals from all genders, races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. However, research has shown us that sexual violence is intricately tied to oppression. This unfortunately disproportionately impacts the experience of people and women of color across communities and around the country, compared to their White counterparts.***

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As organizations and individuals in the movement to end sexual and domestic violence, we need to be aware of the dynamics for replication of oppression, power imbalances, and racism within our community. This is our call to be true advocates of **ALL survivors and victims of abuse.**

Domestic violence victims from historically oppressed groups are constantly faced with so many social challenges and barriers to receiving services. On top of that due to systematic oppression or institutional racism, women of color especially black women might fear calling the police on their partner due to the history of non-positive, bias experiences, discrimination, and systematic racism in the criminal justice system.

If we are committed to caring for **ALL victims and survivors** of domestic violence, we have to be intentional about including our most vulnerable survivors in those conversations. We have to be open to understanding the social dynamics which include how historical discriminations in our own communities have an impact on some survivors' lives and well-being. This is a critical moment for each one of us that cares to do the right thing, to have an open mind of how we can do better for all our residents. These women and children are counting on you!



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*Dr. Lubwama, CEO of the YWCA in Kalamazoo envisions a world without racism. Dr. Lubwama believes "that equity is achieved through policies, practices, and procedures that catalyst systems change and close disparities".*  
[www.ywcakalamazoo.org](http://www.ywcakalamazoo.org)

## Staff Spotlight

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**Meet Jamie Bell, WRC Development Coordinator**

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The WRC is thrilled to welcome Jamie Bell, our new Development Coordinator! Jamie joined the WRC in June with a passion and energy for the Mission. Her focus is to build relationships with supporters in the community who can help propel the Mission. Most recently she was with local organization, Higher Grounds Trading, where she worked in sales and outreach, educating the Northern Michigan Community on the importance of fair trade and social justice through conscious consumerism.

While reflecting on her time during the pandemic, Jamie knew she was dedicated to working in a place of service. She describes the WRC as handling enormous life-issues that affect many people. She has always wanted to be a part of the solution. Jamie shared, "The pandemic afforded me lots of time to reflect on how I want to make an impact, and the WRC seemed like a natural fit."

An upcoming project that Jamie is very excited and dedicated to, is her participation in the development of a new sub-committee to expand diversity and inclusion. She is looking forward to reviewing current practices as the WRC continues to grow as an inclusive and welcoming environment.

Jamie is a Traverse City native and loves to spend time with her two daughters, aged 3 and 7 and her Partner, Matty. A favorite activity is to go on walks at the Brown Bridge Quiet Area. Jamie is also a certified yoga instructor. She loves the practice of yoga, as it brings balance into her life and keeps her connected to her community. She believes this is increasingly important with the nature of her work and the current world situations we face.

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*If you would like to speak with Jamie or donate, please call at 231-941-1210.*

## A Bountiful Collaboration

Featuring: Goodwill Northern Michigan's Food Rescue Program

***It's 8:00 a.m. on a Wednesday morning and Taylor Moore, Food Rescue Manager has been on the road since 6:00 a.m. He pulls up to the WRC's emergency shelter, Helen's House and opens the door to the refrigerated van, showcasing the generosity of local farmers and grocery stores in what Moore describes as "The season of fresh."***

Food Rescue's Mission is to increase access to healthy food and reduce food waste. They do this by delivering roughly 8,000 pounds of food Monday through Friday to 70 pantries, meal sites and baby pantries on the Northwest Food Coalition routes in Leelanau, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Antrim and Kalkaska counties. Moore coordinates the daily operational efforts and understands the importance of providing fresh, nutritious food. Because 90% of Food Rescue's work is done on routes, they are able to rescue and provide fresh produce, perishables, meat/fish, dairy products and premade meals daily. He envisions a community where people have access to the food they need. "There is an ebb & flow to the amount of food, but there has never been a time where there wasn't food. The need is great." Moore shared.

Food Rescue is not a food pantry. Food Rescue distributes food. While they don't provide direct service; they are grateful to partners like the WRC who execute

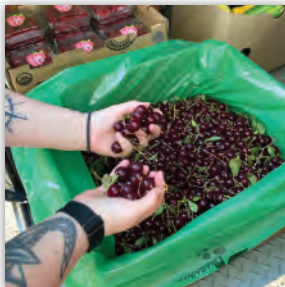
the critical direct service part. The collaboration between the WRC and Food Rescue originated 13 years ago with a Thanksgiving delivery to Helen's House consisting of 20 pounds of baked goods and 70 pounds of produce. To date, the WRC has received over 103,489 pounds of food from Food Rescue. In July 2021, 969 meals were served to shelter clients.

Kristi Boettcher, Director of Residential Advocacy expressed, "Being able to rely on Food Rescue is budget relieving and they deliver fresh food to the shelter three times a week! The assortment of food allows us the opportunity to accommodate our guests in shelter who have different dietary needs, whether due to medical reasons (allergies, diabetes, celiac, etc.) or personal beliefs (kosher,

vegan, etc.)" Boettcher finds comfort knowing that Food Rescue also supplies to local food banks, and that there is another way survivors who are not guests in the shelter can receive fresh food when they are in need.

Undoubtedly, this is an important resource to have if a survivor is struggling after leaving shelter, knowing they have access to food.

Thank you, Food Rescue, for all you do for the survivors we care for!



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Juliette Schultz

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### WRC THRIFT STORES

Thrift Store - South Airport

1331 W. South Airport Road

231-421-3033

Thrift Store US-31

3030 US-31 South

231-946-4180

Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm

### CONTACT

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Web: [www.womensresourcecenter.org](http://www.womensresourcecenter.org)

24-hour Helpline: 1-800-554-4972

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