



Legal Services Committee
June 15th, 2023

Amy Smith	HCDVCC
Rebecca Councill	HCDVCC
Kristen Cates	Tahirih Justice Center
Deborah Alexis	HCDVCC
Amanda Martinez	BATP
Stefanie Hayes	HCDVCC
Maisha Colter	AVDA
Celina Wells	KCM- Crisis Center
Vidal Argueta	HCDVCC

Amy Smith opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Introduction were made.

Amy Smith gave an update on the Criminal Justice Training. It will be an all day in person training that will include panels with Police Officers and Crime Victim Liaisons as well as an overview of the Criminal Justice System, laws, charges and how to navigate through the process. After discussion it was decided to try to have the training on Sept. 13th. Amy will look for a location.

Kristen Cates said Tahirih is moving through the hiring process and should be staffed up soon. They are hoping to be able to take on new clients soon. You can still call them for advice.

Amy Smith gave an update on the Criminal Justice 101 Training. It is scheduled for Wednesday September 13th from 8 am to 4 pm at Crime Stoppers.

The tentative agenda

- Discussion around a story to get people thinking.
- Activity – Dissecting the Power and Control Wheel
- Supporting Victims and the Impact of Traumatic Events
- Understanding who makes up the Criminal Justice System and what are their roles.
- Explanation of the Role of the D.A.'s Office- Laws, Types of Charges, MOEPs, etc.
- Panel Discussions
 - Law Enforcement Officers from Patrol to Investigations
 - Including information on calling the police for emotional abuse
 - Calling police and then not wanting to make report.

- The police' s role to arrest/remove abuser from the home.
- System Based Advocates- What do they do and how they support survivors.
 - Law Enforcement Victim Advocate
 - D.A's Office
 - DVD Social Worker
 - Victim Assistance Coordinator

Deborah Alexis mentioned education is needed around P.O.'s. It was decided the Committee will host a virtual 2-hour training in November to cover P.O.'s. This training will be recorded so it stays on websites for future use.

Amanda Martinez stated Bay Area Turning Point is busy and full. Katisha left so they are short staffed.

Stefanie Hayes gave an update on Expect Respect. She just completed a Summer Program with Galena Park ISD that will continue in the fall. Next week she will start a Summer Program at the Oxford Apartments.

Deborah Alexis stated there is a need to provide education and assistance to Pro Se applicants. She and her intern Vidal have created an Applicant Guide and a FAQ sheet. Both have been approved by the Judge and will go on the 280th's website. Right now, it is in English, but Vidal is translating it into Spanish. If other languages are needed, we will try to see if we can get them translated.

Maisha Colter announced AVDA is hiring a licensed attorney.

Celina Wells stated KCM/Crisis Center is extremely busy with complicated cases. They are working with the FBI and the High-Risk Team. They are also losing a Counselor but hope to fill it quickly. She also stated their Sexual Assault Hospital Accompaniments have tripled with 80% being young adults who met someone online and at their first meet up they are drugged and assaulted. They are trying to rethink the name support group so they can appeal to teens. Methodist Hospital has made some inroads into Katy ISD and are going to try to include KCM for counseling. Celina stated it seems that when teens are sexually assaulted, they do not want to deal with it but will eventually open up when they get older.

Amy Smith will work to get the details of the training ironed out and a flyer will be sent out soon. It was decided not to meet in July and August.

Our next meeting will be after the September 13th training on September 21st at 11:30 via ZOOM.

Meeting adjourned.