



VERMONT NETWORK



2019 Annual Report

**Uprooting the causes of violence
so all Vermonters can thrive**



Our purpose is to create a world free of oppression where actions, beliefs and systems support all people to thrive.

Cover Photo: Storytellers look on at SHINE, the Vermont Network's Annual Party with a Purpose, featuring stories of hope and resilience.



Dear Supporter,

Liberation. There is nothing about this word not to love. In 2019 the Vermont Network invested in liberation. Liberation from violence, liberation from toxic relationships, liberation from a worldview focused on domination, extraction, exploitation and fear. We imaged and lived into a worldview where all people live in mutuality. Where relationships (personal and professional) are built on authenticity and respect. A world where harm doers are supported to change through loving accountability. Where white supremacy culture is challenged and transformed. Where all people thrive.

Liberation is a choice made thousands of times each day. It is a choice between hatred and love, a choice between isolation and community, a choice between standing with and holding down, a choice between all of us and some of us. In 2019, the Vermont Network chose liberation, in favor of a world in which all people thrive.

Karen

Changemakers:

Training and Leadership Development

Our Changemakers Program **provides training to a multitude of advocates** each year, **offers leadership development and mentoring** for advocates, **convenes a biennial statewide conference** on domestic and sexual violence and **brings activists across disciplines together** to collaborate.

In 2019, we:

- Offered Foundations of Dialogue Education to victim advocates to build their capacity to provide meaningful training in communities across Vermont.
- Oriented hundreds of professionals to the movement to end domestic and sexual violence.
- Convened dozens of social justice activists across Vermont for training on navigating crucial conversations for social justice.



*Advocates at one of the Network's **Basic Advocacy Training** offerings, which provides an orientation to the anti-violence movement to new advocates.*



"The Network offers training and leadership development, building the skills of leaders of today and tomorrow and inviting us to each consider how to show up in community in order to build a world free from violence."

**— Dr. Aron Steward, Chief of Psychology at UVM Health Network
and Co-Chair Vermont Human Trafficking Task Force**

Connecting Communities:

Support for Direct Service

Our Connecting Communities program provides support for direct services organizations serving victims of domestic and sexual violence. We **support organizations to align and take action, strengthen the organizational health** of our Member Organizations, **engage communities around survivor-centered responses and connect national innovators to local approaches.**

In 2019, we:

- Supported **advocacy learning communities** which bring advocates together to grow their expertise and skills and nurture their enthusiasm for the vital work they do.

- Offered **healing residencies** with our Member Organizations to help strengthen cultures of well-being so advocates can do their best work – supporting survivors and engaging communities.
- Celebrated **Advocacy Week** to recognize the work of Vermont’s community advocates who support people impacted by sexual and domestic violence and work with communities to address a culture that gives rise to violence. We closed the week with a festive picnic that brought together advocates from Member Organizations all across Vermont in joyful and purposeful community.



Advocacy Week Picnic at Allis State Park.



Healing Residency at Voices Against Violence.



“The Vermont Network brings advocates together to provide feedback, promote connection and advocate for change.”

**— Foresta Castañeda,
Transitional Housing
Coordinator at WomenSafe**

Uprooting the Causes of Violence: Organizing and Campaigns

Our Uprooting the Causes Program engages in public campaigns to **involve the public, illustrate the impact of gender-based violence** in Vermont, and **promote a vision** for a violence-free future in Vermont.

In 2019 we:

- Hosted **SHINE**, our annual party with a purpose. The night was anchored by seven true tales of joy and resilience shared by the incredible women pictured below.
- Collaborated with partners to offer a two-day workshop to create digital **Stories of Connection and Joy: Growing healthy individuals, relationships and communities.**

- **Organizing and engaging through Storytelling**
The issues of domestic and sexual violence impact all of us. Yet for many Vermonters it is easy to turn a blind eye and believe that these issues don't impact us. National movements, such as #MeToo, have made it increasingly difficult to ignore the pervasive toll violence takes on our communities. Storytelling is a critical strategy in mobilizing our communities to call for change. When we can see ourselves in the stories of our neighbors, we know we are all in this together.

“Stories are the thread between our past, present, and future; enabling us to process what we have learned so that we can make choices about what is next.”

— Nadia Owusu, Living Cities



The featured storytellers at SHINE.



Participants of the digital Stories of Connections and Joy workshop.

**“The Network
weaves the depth
and breadth
of individual
storytelling into a
fabric of evidence-
informed supports.
The impact is
tantalizing and
I’m thrilled to
be a part of it.”**

**— Natanya Vanderlaan,
Digital Storytelling Consultant**



Elevating Voices:

Public Policy Advocacy

The Vermont Network serves as Vermont's leading statewide expert on domestic and sexual violence through our Elevating Voices program. We **lobby for survivor-centered laws, engage survivors and activists** in advocating for change and **activate networks of individuals to take action**.

In 2019, we:

- Reformed the **statute of limitations** for civil claims of child sexual abuse. As a result, Vermont now has the strongest law in the nation.
- Created **housing protections** for victims of domestic and sexual violence.
- Advocated for improved conditions and enhanced programming for **incarcerated women** in Vermont.



Advocates gathered at the Vermont Statehouse for the Vermont Network's Legislative Advocacy Day.



“The Vermont Network’s presence in the State House gives a voice to those who need it most. It has been a privilege to work side by side with the Vermont Network.”

**— State Representative
Tom Stevens,
Washington-Chittenden
District**

Supporting the Margins: Statewide Direct Services

The Vermont Network supports some of Vermont's most marginalized survivors by providing statewide direct services. We provide **legal representation for victims** through our Justice for Victims Clinic, provide **advocacy and support for incarcerated women** at Vermont's only women's prison, **provide first-language advocacy for victims who are deaf/hard of hearing** and improve Vermont's **medical response to violence**.



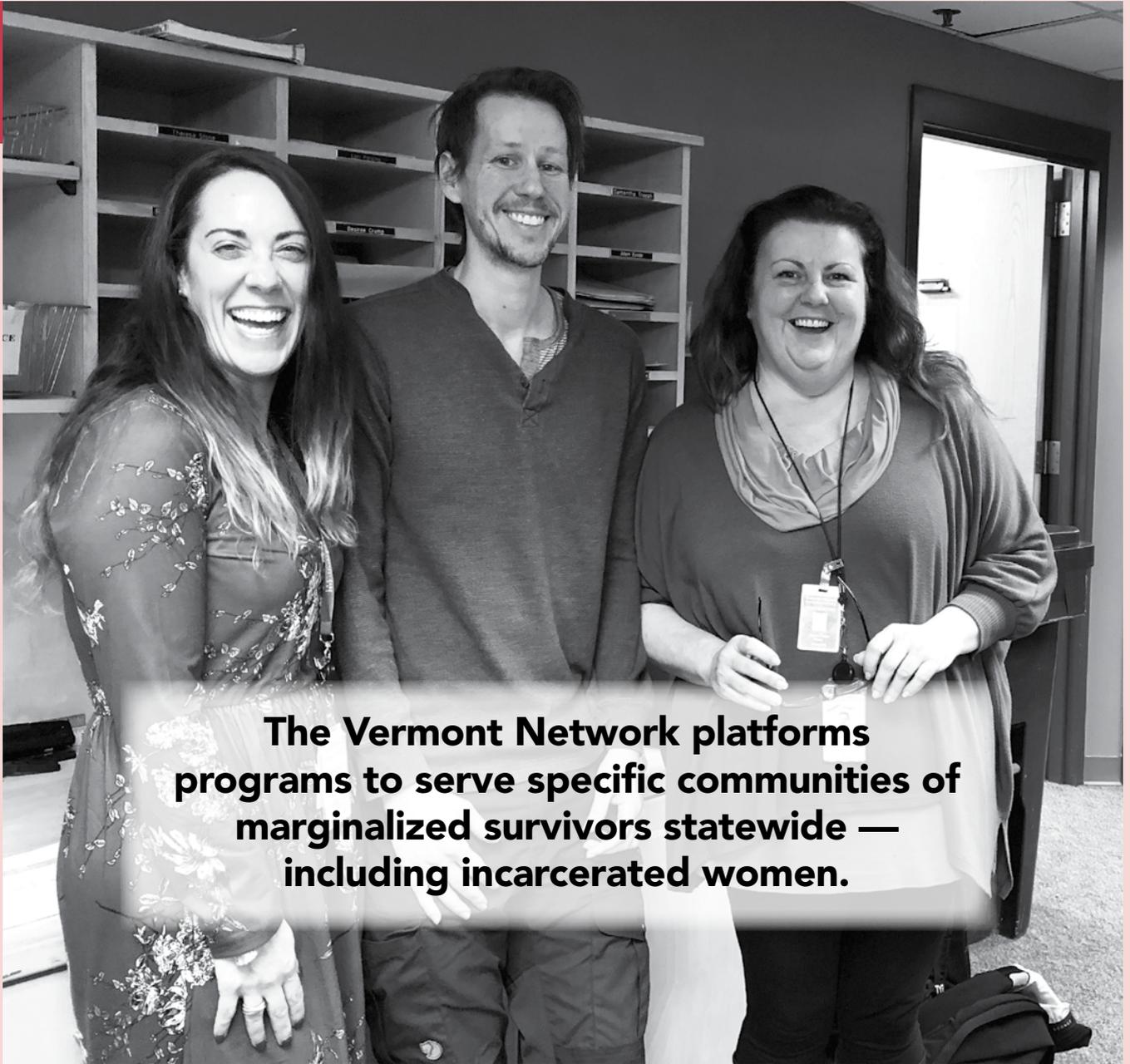
The Justice for Victims Clinic team (from left to right) Michele Olvera, Legal Director, Eddie Poff, Staff Attorney, Heather Holter, Clinic Administrator. (Breanna Weaver, Staff Attorney, is on maternity leave.)



Founder and former Director of DVAS, Keri Darling (right) with new Director, Rebecca LaLanne.



2019 class of Vermont Forensic Nurses after completing their training course.



The Vermont Network platforms programs to serve specific communities of marginalized survivors statewide — including incarcerated women.

The DIVAS team: Anera Fočo, Administrative Coordinator (right) and Direct Service Co-coordinators Kira Krier (left), Tom Nececkas (center) and Kylene Vielleus (not in photo).

The Membership

Organizations Serving Survivors

Member Organizations of the Vermont Network



AWARE, Inc., *Hardwick*

Circle, *Barre*

Clarina Howard Nichols Center, *Morrisville*

H.O.P.E. Works, *Burlington*

NewStory Center, *Rutland*

PAVE, *Bennington*

Pride Center of VT SafeSpace Program, *Burlington*

Safeline, Inc., *Chelsea*

Sexual Assault Crisis Team, *Barre*

Steps to End Domestic Violence, *Burlington*

Umbrella, The Advocacy Program, *St. Johnsbury & Newport*

Voices Against Violence, *St. Albans*

WISE, *Lebanon, NH*

Women's Freedom Center, *Brattleboro & Springfield*

WomenSafe, *Middlebury*



"As a Member of the Vermont Network, the Pride Center has access to vital points of professional development and community support. We could not be more thankful to partner with them in their work moving forward!"

**— Skylar Wolfe, Director,
Safe Space at Pride Center of Vermont**

Our Team

Staff

Karen Tronsgard-Scott
Executive Director

Jessica Barquist
*Director of Policy and
Organizing*

Alex Bottinelli
Resource Coordinator

Kara Casey
*Director of Economic
Empowerment*

Heather Holter
Legal Clinic Administrator

Michele Olvera
Legal Director

Dana Paull
Finance Director

Eddie Poff
Legal Clinic Staff Attorney

Kelli Risitano
*Director of Advocacy and
Trauma Healing*

Sarah Robinson
Deputy Director

Anne Smith
*Director of Training &
Leadership Development*

Chani Waterhouse
*Director of Member
Relations*

Breanna Weaver
Legal Clinic Staff Attorney

Contractors

Anera Fočo
*DIVAS Administrative
Coordinator*

Kiona Baez Heath
*SANE and DV Council
Program Coordinator*

Heather Holter
*VT Council on Domestic
Violence Coordinator*

Kira Krier, Kylen Veilleux
and Tom Nececkas
*DIVAS Direct Services
Co-Coordinators*

Rebecca Lalanne
Director of DIVAS

Raenetta Liberty and
Tracey Wagner
*SANE Clinical
Coordinators*

Amy Torchia
*Children's Advocacy
Coordinator*



*Vermont Network staff with
strategy consultant Norma
Wong in September 2019.*

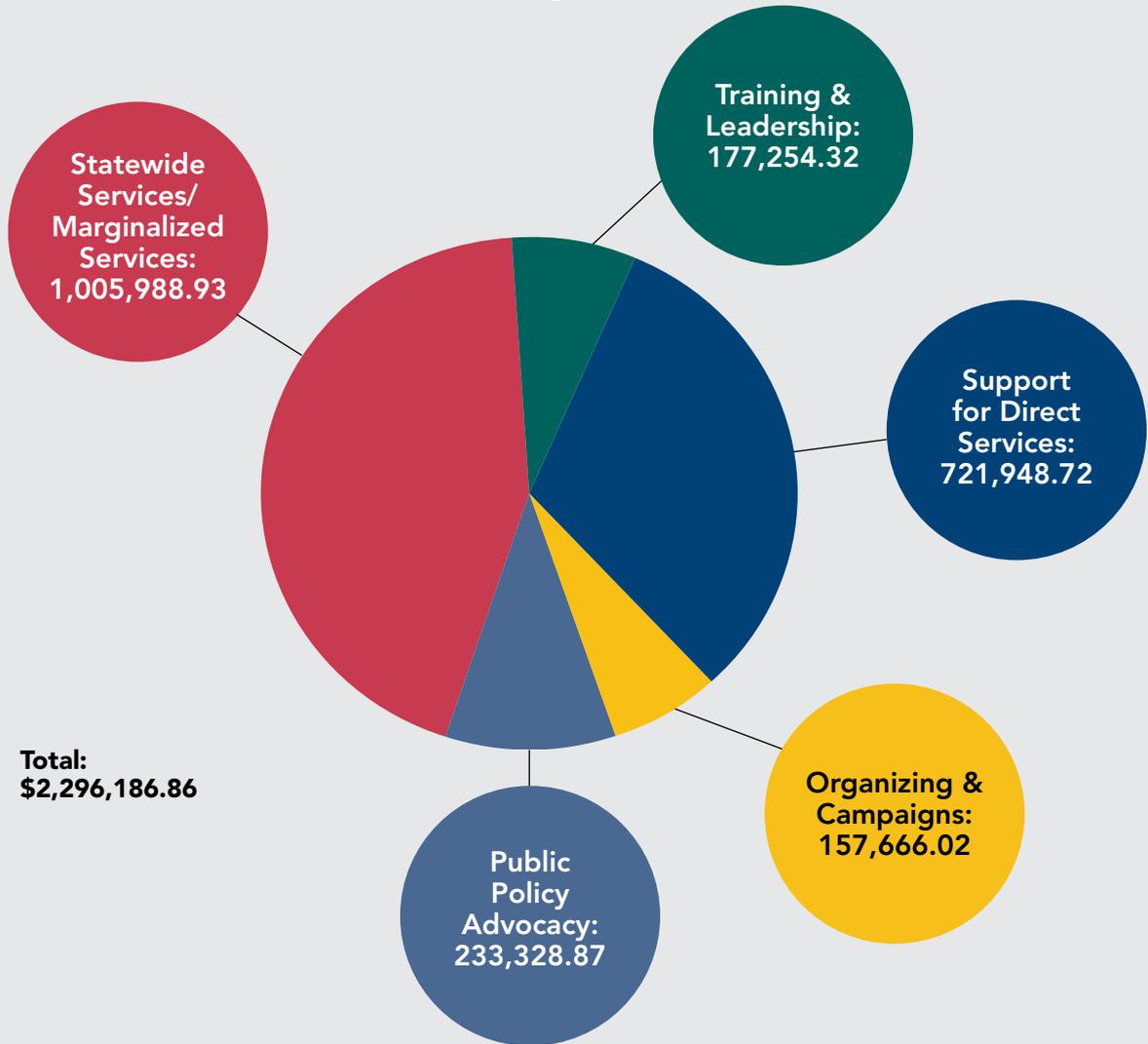
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2019 Expenses



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our donors and supporters**





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