

**COCONINO COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY
REVIEW TEAM**

**ANNUAL REPORT, 2013
SUBMITTED TO:
TOM HORNE, ARIZONA ATTORNEY GENERAL**

FEBRUARY 14, 2014

2013 TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Dr. Kathleen Ferraro, Chair
Professor and Chair, Dept. of Sociology & Social Work
Northern Arizona University

Deborah Fresquez, Vice Chair
Coconino County Victim/Witness Services

Stephanie Mayer, Secretary
Family Violence Institute, NAU

Gwendolyn Adaki
Victim Specialist
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Office of Justice Services

Dr. Alex Alvarez
Professor, Dept. of
Criminology & Criminal Justice
Northern Arizona University

Bill Burke
City Attorney, Flagstaff City Attorneys' Office

Emmeleta Burrual
Native Americans for Community Action

Lieutenant Tim Cornelius
Coconino County Sheriff's Office

Lawrence Czarnecki
Coconino County Medical Examiner

Marcel Duclos, LCMHC, RLPC, RLIS, ACS
Clinical Director, Northland Family Help Center

Hiba Duval
Psychology major, Northern Arizona University

Sara Erlinder
Coconino County Deputy Public Defender

The Honorable Elaine Fridlund Horne
Coconino County Integrated Family Court
Coconino County Superior Court

Dr. Valarie Hannemann
Mental Health Professional

Wendy Kasprzyk-Roberts
Integrated Family Court Coordinator
Coconino County Superior Court

Stacy Krueger
Deputy Coconino County Attorney

Heather Marcy
Northland Family Help Center

Mandy Metzger
Coconino County Board of Supervisors

Scott Mansfield
Detective Lieutenant, Flagstaff Police Dept.

Melissa Rhodes, MSW, LCSW
Lecturer, Social Work, NAU

McDonald (Mac) Rominger
Supervisory Senior Resident Agent, FBI Flagstaff-
Gallup-Pinetop/Lakeside Resident Agencies

Judge Warren Sanford
Justice of the Peace *Protem*, Flagstaff & Williams

Maureen Schat
Coordinator, Coconino County Coordinated
Community Response Team to Domestic Violence
and Sexual Assault

Alicia Stewart
Shelter and Executive Manager
Page Regional Domestic Violence Services

Kevin Treadway
Chief, Flagstaff Police Dept.

Pam Turner
RN, Flagstaff Medical Center/Northern Arizona
Center Against Sexual Assault

Dr. Jamie Whelan
Praxis Partnership, Educational Specialties
College of Education, NAU

Barry Yoyhoema
Chief, Truxton Canyon Law Enforcement

Coconino County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team

January 31, 2014

To the Arizona Domestic Violence Community:

The Coconino County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team completed two reviews in 2013 that achieved two of our long-standing goals. First, we reviewed a homicide that occurred on the Navajo Nation, fulfilling our goal of reviewing a Native American case to investigate the unique challenges posed by domestic violence on Northern Arizona reservations. Second, we reviewed a near-death case. The expansion of A.R.S. 41-198 to include near-fatal domestic violence cases in reviews allowed us to identify a case in which both parties were available to participate in our review. This case has provided a rich understanding of high-risk domestic violence cases and the complex dynamics of victimization and offending that can escalate to a fatality. These two cases are the basis for this year's report.

After four years as a team, we have witnessed many positive developments in our community's response to domestic violence. Our fatality review team is one partner in a collaboration that includes the Coconino County Coordinated Community Response Team to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, and leaders in the law enforcement, prosecution, courts, defense, victim services, and academic community. The Flagstaff Police Department, in consultation with these stakeholders, has developed a risk assessment tool for domestic violence cases that will be implemented this month. Chief Kevin Treadway has been the force behind risk assessment, and has worked within Coconino County and with leaders throughout Arizona to refine an instrument appropriate for our community. We have benefitted from dedicated leadership and supportive collaboration to incorporate the best research and policy knowledge in crafting responses to domestic violence. In the spirit of this collaboration, we hope this report contributes to the accumulating knowledge base of the multiple dimensions of domestic violence.

Sincerely,



Kathleen J. Ferraro, Ph.D., Chair

Contact: Dr. Kathleen J. Ferraro, Department of Sociology, PO Box 15300, NAU, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5300
(928) 523-9412

Executive Summary

In 2013, our Team completed reviews of one domestic homicide and one near-fatality. During the first half of 2013, we reviewed a case in which a man killed his wife on the Western Agency of the Navajo Nation. We selected this case based on our long-standing commitment to review a Native American case occurring on a Northern Arizona reservation. MacDonald Rominger, Supervisory Senior Resident Agent for the FBI Flagstaff-Gallup-Pinetop/Lakeside Resident Agencies, provided the files for this review. It would not have been possible for us to review this case without Agent Rominger's knowledge of federal law enforcement and domestic violence on the Navajo Nation. In addition to legal documents, surviving family members of the victim attended a team meeting and discussed the problems preceding and following the homicide. The offender also answered questions we sent him by postal service.

The husband killed his wife by shooting and he is now incarcerated in a federal prison. They left behind both minor and adult children. This couple had a lengthy history of abuse by the husband, both on and off the Navajo Nation, and legal intervention to end the violence failed. Husband and wife were both alcoholics, consuming a fifth of whiskey plus an unknown amount of beer each day, according to the husband. Surviving family members provided moving testimony about the devastating effects of domestic violence and shared ideas for system-wide improvements. They described the couple's alcoholism, the wife's resignation and hopelessness and her conviction that her husband would kill her. Family members were unable to convince her to leave the relationship, and one daughter chose to live with her aunt to escape the dysfunctional home environment. The children, aware of the threat they posed to their mother, hid guns and alcohol from their father. Following the homicide, the extended family became fully aware of the financial deprivation the wife and children suffered as a result of the husband's drinking and drug use. There was little of value in their home, and the surviving sister was faced with providing basic resources to the children. The victim's sister suggested an increase in social services for victims of domestic violence and more education about the availability of help. She also believed that the offender's sentence was too lenient and that the sentencing process was not clearly explained to the surviving family members.

After careful review of the documents and the testimony provided by the family, the team developed the following recommendations:

- Misdemeanor domestic violence cases should be treated more seriously on the Navajo Nation. An initial 36-hour detention would allow for a thorough review and appropriate charging. Although positive changes have already occurred since this homicide, there is need for further improvement.
- Domestic violence incidents should be properly identified in the Navajo Police Department data collection system. Training on this process would be valuable and it would be ideal to identify specific officers to specialize in domestic violence.

- The Habitual Offender Statute accompanying the Violence Against Family Act could be a powerful tool for deterring repeat offenders.
- A victim specialist should work with domestic violence victims to explain the law and options for protection and with surviving family members in cases of homicide to provide information and support through the prosecution process.
- Ensure that guns are removed from homes where domestic violence has been documented.
- In agreement with the Report of the Attorney General's National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence, "Increase collaborative responses by police, mental health providers, domestic violence advocates, child protective service workers, and court personnel for women and children who are victimized by intimate partner violence."

The second case we reviewed in 2013 was a near fatality. This couple was married for 40 years before the wife shot the husband, inflicting serious but not fatal wounds. Although husband, wife and adult daughter describe a lengthy history of violence in the family, there were few police reports documenting this abuse. The one documented incident of domestic violence in Flagstaff resulted in the arrest of the wife for smoking marijuana and no charges against the husband. Similar to the Navajo review, both partners were alcoholics, but this couple also abused methamphetamine and marijuana. The husband inflicted the most injurious abuse on his wife and daughter prior to the shooting, but the wife was also allegedly both emotionally and physically abusive to the husband. She shot him after a day of arguing and drinking and originally claimed self-defense. Investigation revealed that she had left the home and returned, that he was lying down and that she shot him on the back of his shoulder and in the back. Charges of attempted second-degree murder were reduced to aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and the wife was placed on 5 years of standard probation. This decision was based largely on the husband's testimony that he abused his wife for 40 years, felt responsible for the crime, and did not want her to go to prison. Approximately 2 years into her term of probation, her probation was revoked for refusing to provide urine samples and she was sentenced to 2.5 years in prison. During that time, she kept in contact with her husband, daughter, and grandchildren and underwent addiction treatment. She was released in time to participate in our review of her case.

Husband and wife attended our fatality review on the same day at different times, since they were prohibited from contact. Each recounted a lengthy history of the husband's abuse in the marriage, but their narratives differed sharply in terms of the nature of the relationship and the difficulties leading to violence. While the husband focused on financial difficulties and problems raising their daughter, the wife focused on the husband's controlling behavior and her own desire to keep the abuse "her big secret." We also conducted an interview with the adult daughter outside of the team meeting, and heard yet a third account of the relationship. The daughter indicated that her view of her mother as primary victim in the relationship had shifted and she now viewed the relationship as one

of mutual combat. She believes drugs and alcohol have played a large role in the abuse between her parents and against her, and that her parents should have split up many years ago. She described an “evil triune of meth, alcohol and domestic violence.”

Lengthy histories of drug and alcohol abuse combined with mental illness lead our team to view each person’s narrative as their personal construction of events that should be understood as partial, yet meaningful, stories about their lives. We learned from this review that there are multiple truths in each case of domestic violence. A more complete view requires gathering information from various sources rather than relying on one person’s account.

Based on our review of the records, the interviews we conducted, and the experiences of team members with the family, we developed the following recommendations:

- Improve the quality and availability of mental health services, and link domestic violence, mental health, and substance abuse treatment when appropriate.
- Increase educational programming in the schools about domestic violence and provide avenues to reach out to children living in violent homes.
- Ensure that guns are removed from homes where domestic violence has been documented.
- Increase educational programming in the schools about domestic violence and provide avenues to reach out to children living in violent homes.
- In agreement with the Report of the Attorney General’s National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence, “Increase collaborative responses by police, mental health providers, domestic violence advocates, child protective service workers, and court personnel for women and children who are victimized by intimate partner violence.”
- Continue education with first responders to help identify victim intimate partner maltreatment when responding to victims in their homes and in other settings.
- Recognize the multiple dimensions of domestic violence, including the simultaneous, dual roles of victim and offender that are present in many domestic violence situations. The assumption of a “good guy” and a “bad guy” does not adequately capture the complexity of some domestic violence cases.

Important accomplishments in 2013 that respond to our prior recommendations include:

- Flagstaff Medical Center (FMC) has agreed to conduct screenings for domestic violence on all emergency room admissions and accepted a screening tool. FMC is currently in the training phase for this policy. Members of our team are working with FMC to improve the consistency of screening.
- The Flagstaff Police Department developed and is implementing a risk assessment tool that will assess the level of risk in all domestic violence cases. This new instrument gathers important information that was not standardized in previous report writing,

such as the presence of children in the home. The Coconino County Sheriff's Office will adopt a similar tool following the initial implementation phase by FPD.

- FPD also continued their educational work in the Flagstaff United School District (FUSD) with Project Alert, providing lessons on healthy relationships, drugs, bullying, and other Law Related Education (LRE). Officers also engage in one-on-one mentoring with at risk youth.
- The Coconino County Coordinated Community Response Team to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault compiled a Domestic Violence Survivor's Handbook and printed shoe cards in English and Spanish with basic information for victims. They also continued to provide training throughout Northern Arizona and to coordinate the work taking place among various agencies.
- Victim Witness Services of Coconino County now has a triage advocate housed in the Flagstaff Police Department who can accompany officers to the scene and provide immediate support to victims. This advocate also provides support to the Coconino County Sheriff's Department. Victim Witness has opened a satellite office in the Flagstaff City Attorney's office to help assist with more efficient victim contact.
- Based on last year's audit of Orders of Protection, FPD has improved the quality of forms used to track orders and to monitor prior histories of violence through I-Leads. Victims are now notified of attempts to serve orders and when orders have been put into effect.

These accomplishments reflect the ongoing commitment of leaders in Flagstaff and Coconino County to implement the recommendations from our team, as well as those from other key stakeholders. We continue to appreciate the high level of dedication and cooperation demonstrated by our leaders in law enforcement, prosecution, victim services and advocacy.

TEAM MEMBERSHIP IN 2013

Our team experienced many changes in membership during 2013. Our founding secretary, Kathy Paleski, resigned from the team in order to pursue travel opportunities. Ms. Paleski was central to the initial organization of our team and its efficient operation for the first three years. Stephanie Mayer, of the Family Violence Institute at NAU, is a volunteer who assumed the duties of secretary in the fall of 2013, and has helped move our process to a more secure method of record keeping and information sharing. She now records our confidential conversations about case information in a document separate from our public minutes, and these are stored in Dropbox, along with confidential case information. We also elected a new Vice-Chair, Deborah Fresquez, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Advocate at Victim Witness Services for Coconino County. Ms. Fresquez is a founding member of the team and has been a key resource in all aspects of our work since 2009. Through her role with Victim Witness Services, she was able to arrange all the interviews for our near-fatality review and also to collect information from the perpetrator in our review of a homicide on the Navajo Nation. Her contacts and reputation in our community are essential to our work. She replaces Sheriff Bill Pribil who served as Vice-Chair for our first 3 years of work and who supported the team's development and review processes. We are extremely grateful for the contributions of Ms. Paleski and Sheriff Pribil.

Two team members left the team due to retirement, including Kim Cvetkovich, Adult Probation, and Det. Lt. Mike Powers, Flagstaff Police Department. Det. Lt. Scott Mansfield is now our representative from Flagstaff PD, in addition to the continued commitment of Chief Kevin Treadway. Beya Thayer, who represented the CCRT, was replaced by Maureen Schat, the current chair of the CCRT. Supervisor Liz Archuleta, our representative from the Coconino County Board of Supervisors, cycled off the team and was replaced by Supervisor Mandy Metzger. Ron Kanwischer, Flagstaff Assistant City Attorney was replaced by William Burke, the City of Flagstaff Prosecutor. One of our student members, Greg Neville, completed his MA in Criminology and Criminal Justice and moved to Phoenix. Our remaining student member changed her name this year from Hiba Abdelhalim to Hiba Duval. We also have enlarged our group with several new representatives. Emmeleta Burruel is a Program Specialist at Native Americans for Community Action. Alicia Stewart is the Shelter and Executive Manager for Page Regional Domestic Violence Services. Warren Sanford is a Judge Protem for Flagstaff and Williams courts. Melissa Rhodes, Social Work Lecturer at NAU, is experienced in working with traumatized children and Native American children. And Jamie Whelan is a Senior Lecturer in Educational Specialties at NAU with expertise in emotional and behavioral disabilities. These new members enhance our team's resources to address issues of secondary victimization, diversity, and misdemeanor domestic violence cases. We are sincerely thankful to those who served our team, and to our valuable new and continuing members.

MISSION AND GOALS OF THE TEAM

The Coconino County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team has as its mission and goals the following:

Mission Statement

The mission of this team is to analyze the circumstances of past fatalities and near fatalities in an effort to better understand the dynamics of such deaths and make recommendations for prevention and system improvements. The purpose of this project is not to lay blame, but rather to actively improve all systems that serve persons involved with domestic abuse, and to prevent violence and fatalities in the future.

Goals

- To improve the response to domestic violence and abuse within Coconino County.
- To promote better coordination and communication among and between agencies, departments, and organizations that work with victims of domestic violence and abuse.
- To make effective and specific recommendations designed to positively impact the ability of the community and relevant agencies to assist and serve the victims of domestic violence and abuse.
- To prevent domestic violence fatalities.

PROCESS

The team is organized democratically and decisions are made collectively. The process we follow involves case selection, collection of relevant materials, individual review of the materials, summarization of case materials by the Chair, interviews with family members and other relevant community members, interview of the perpetrator, when possible, team discussion of facts and creation of the timeline, summation and development of findings and recommendations.

Case Selection. We have developed case selection criteria in accordance with authorizing legislation, ARS 41-198 (Attachment D). Any homicide, suicide, or near-death that is traceable to domestic violence, as defined in ARS 13-3601, is suitable for review. However, deaths occurring from law enforcement intervention are not considered for review. The Team selects cases in which:

- The fatality occurred within the geographical boundaries of Coconino County
- No criminal legal issues remain unresolved
- There is adequate information on which to base a review
- The review process will aid in coordinating the response to domestic violence and in preventing domestic violence fatalities

The Team strives to review cases that represent that broadest range of characteristics and concerns surrounding domestic violence fatalities. We rely on the list of domestic violence fatalities maintained by the Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence to identify possible cases for review. Team members also monitor deaths attributable to domestic violence through their work and routine review of news reports. We are also assisted by the Coconino County Medical Examiner, Lawrence Czarnecki, who has information on deaths throughout the county that may not appear in the news media.

Homicides within Coconino County: Twenty-one deaths traceable to domestic violence occurred in Coconino County between 2000 and 2013. In 2013, there were no domestic homicides within the boundaries of Flagstaff, and one death traceable to domestic violence within Coconino County. A woman in LeChee committed suicide two days after a severe beating from her domestic partner. There has been a steady decline in domestic homicides within Coconino County, from eight deaths in 2011 to four in 2012 and one in 2013.

Our completed reviews this year were of a shooting death of a wife by a husband and a near-fatality resulting from a wife shooting her husband.

Review of Cases: Upon selection of each case, Team members obtained relevant documents from their agencies. In the near fatality case, these documents were then scanned by the agency or by the Team Chair and delivered electronically to all Team members via Dropbox. The documents for the homicide review were provided in hard copy to all members by Team member Mac Rominger, FBI. Prior to receiving electronic documents, all participating Team members read and signed a confidentiality form explaining the

importance of maintaining the confidentiality of documents and the prohibition on sharing information with anyone not an official member of the Team (Attachment E). Each Team member reads the documents prior to a meeting. The Team Chair announces the meeting time and place electronically by sending an agenda through e-mail. The announcement of the meeting is posted in accordance with public meeting law. The Team meets on Friday afternoons, the second Friday of each month, from 1:30 to 3:00 at the offices of the Coconino County Attorney. Once any public business has been concluded, the Team adjourns to Executive Session to conduct the review.

Once all members are familiar with the case, we generate a time-line for the case. The Chair suggests a tentative time-line that is then modified and expanded upon by the entire Team. After the first meeting to review the case, we identify missing information and assign team members to seek out that information. This has involved interviews with community members, neighbors, and family members as well as clarification of system involvement. The broad range of participants representing most relevant agencies and possessing experienced interviewing skills has been vital to our success in obtaining case information.

Findings and Recommendations: In the final phase of our process, we discuss all the information we have gathered and identify the timeline, red flags, and agency intervention. The Team then determines any actions that would help move toward recommended changes or help the Team clarify issues. Upon completion of the review, all documents are shredded.

SUMMARY OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW, 2013

Case 1: Joe and Verna (pseudonyms)

Perpetrator's background: Joe was born in 1962 and is a member of the Navajo Nation. Our knowledge of his childhood is limited to what he provided in his written response to us. He described his childhood as "good." He was raised by his grandmother in New Mexico, returned to his parents for a few years and then was in a program in California. He finished high school in Utah. He was not a good student, but did well in sports. He began drinking once he was out of school. He was trained as a welder and earned a good income while he was able to work.

Perpetrator's criminal record: Joe reported that he was arrested for underage drinking and DUI while young. Records from the Navajo Police Department indicate that he was arrested for 16 counts on 12 separate occasions between 1979 and 2009. All arrests appear to have some relationship to alcohol abuse, including disorderly conduct, public intoxication, possession of liquor, and being under the influence of intoxicating liquor. In December, 2003, he was arrested for endangering the welfare of a minor, unlawful carrying of a weapon, unlawful use of a weapon, and threatening. He was ordered to attend rehabilitation therapy for these offenses. There is no indication that he was prohibited from possessing weapons following these weapons charges. Most other arrests resulted in small fines. He had several arrests in Page, including a DUI, reckless driving and illegal

consumption of liquor, for which he spent 10 days in jail (1980); shoplifting (1985) and a domestic violence assault (1994) for which he was sentenced to 14 days in jail. He was also arrested in Colorado for carrying a concealed weapon (a .45 semi-automatic pistol) and menacing residents at a motel. The outcome of this arrest is unknown. In addition to alcohol abuse, witness statements refer to his cocaine use and reliance on prescription pain killers following a work related accident.

Perpetrator's assaults on the victim. Joe was arrested in 2007 while living off-reservation in Colorado for assaulting Verna. Witness statements from teenaged children and Verna about this incident indicate the family was eating dinner when Joe arrived home and started an argument. He was intoxicated and accused Verna of cheating on him. The children indicated these were false accusations because they were always with their mother during the times he accused her of cheating. He left for a time and returned more intoxicated, broke the door in, threw things around the apartment and yelled at everyone. The children hid Joe's gun because they were afraid he would shoot them and their mother. Verna called the police after Joe threw her against the wall. Joe took a plea of guilty to harassment and was sentenced under a deferred judgment to complete domestic violence counseling under one year of supervised probation. He was evaluated for domestic violence and assessed as low risk. He completed the 26-week domestic violence program. There are no other official reports of domestic violence available to us, but witness statements following the homicide indicate there were many instances of Joe's physical and emotional abuse over the years preceding Verna's death.

Family's and friends' knowledge of abuse: The family and friends of this couple were well aware of the long-standing abuse in the relationship, as well as the alcoholism of both people. Witness statements from the victim's grandmother, children, and friends all described Joe's abuse, their fear for Verna's life, and Verna's hopelessness. Friends and family had encouraged Verna to get help for her drinking and to leave Joe. Verna did not believe she could stop drinking and told friends and family that she still loved Joe. On the morning of the day she was shot, she told a friend and her mother that Joe was going to kill her and asked her friend to look after her children. Verna reported to her friend that Joe had tried to choke her the previous night and that he would shoot her that day. She reportedly said, "let him and we'll see how he does without me." She told her friend not to call the police because the police wouldn't help her. The children tried to keep guns from their father because they were afraid he would kill their mother. One of the older daughters had left home to live with her aunt due to the abuse and alcoholism in the home. Their oldest son testified that he often intervened in their arguments in an attempt to protect his mother and that he had asked her many times why she didn't leave. She told him "I can't leave. I have to be there for the little ones." Joe assaulted the second eldest son the night before the homicide and broke his nose. Their eight-year-old daughter saw Joe retrieve the gun prior to the shooting and begged him to stop. She heard the shot and went for help. She told officers, "My dad shot my mom."

The victim: Most of our knowledge of Verna's life was provided by her sister and brother-in-law in their meeting with the Team. Her sister reported that they were actually half-sisters, although she viewed her as her full biological sibling. They were raised together

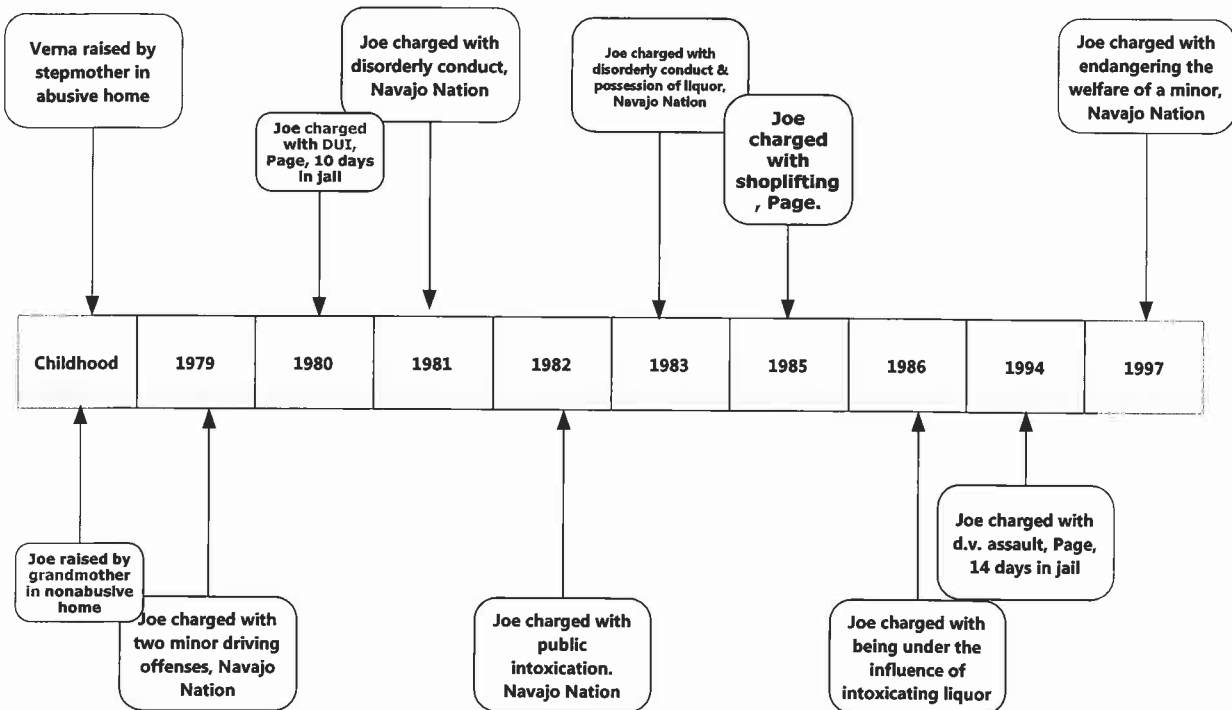
and Verna was the only child in the family who was physically and sexually abused. Her sister knew of the abuse and knew that it affected Verna and was at the root of her alcoholism and hopelessness. Verna was a very private person who did not like to talk about the past or her current problems, but she did confide in one friend. It was well known in the community that Joe had many adulterous relationships, including having sex with another woman in the family home while Verna was in the house. Verna had tried to quit drinking, but was unable to remain sober. She had one arrest for aggravated DUI with a passenger under 15 years of age, outcome unknown. She felt there was no escape from her situation and told people that she knew Joe would kill her.

The Homicide: On the day of the shooting, Joe and Verna were arguing about Joe's relationship with another woman. According to one witness statement, that woman was also at the home that morning. All three had been drinking and arguing about the affair. Verna walked the other woman out into the yard and then sat in their truck, eventually passing out. Joe entered the home to retrieve his gun and went outside and put the gun to his head. According to a friend who witnessed the homicide, Joe pulled the trigger twice but nothing happened. Joe also reported that he was playing Russian roulette. Joe then pointed the gun at Verna and shot her. She was already dead when the EMTs arrived. Joe walked a short distance from the shooting and passed out on the ground behind an old shed. He initially claimed the shooting was an accident, but he accepted a plea to second-degree homicide. In his written statement to the team, he wrote that he did not remember much about the incident due to his high level of intoxication at the time. He was sentenced to 200 months (16.6 years) in federal prison and five years of supervised probation upon release.

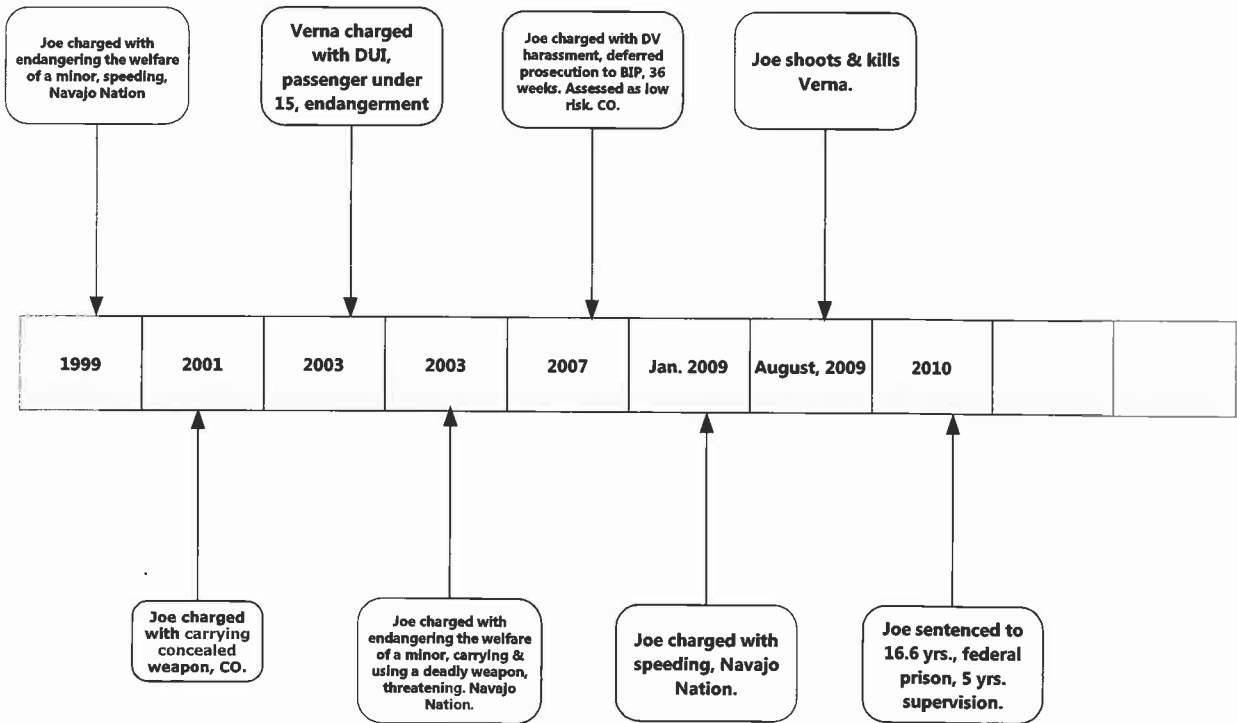
Red Flags:

- Verna experienced abuse as a child and did not receive counseling.
- Joe had a long history of alcohol abuse and more recent history of drug abuse.
- Joe had a long history of physically and emotionally abusing Verna.
- Presence of guns.
- Joe's sexual infidelity, sometimes in Verna's presence.
- Joe's threats to kill Verna.
- Verna's belief and statement to others that Joe would kill her.
- Joe's alleged attempted strangulation of Verna.
- Economic stress.

Timeline 1



Timeline 2



Recommendations:

- Misdemeanor domestic violence cases should be treated more seriously on the Navajo Nation. An initial 36-hour detention would allow for a thorough review and appropriate charging. Although positive changes have already occurred since this homicide, there is need for further improvement.
- Domestic violence incidents should be properly identified in the Navajo Police Department data collection system. Training on this process would be valuable and it would be ideal to identify specific officers to specialize in domestic violence.
- The Habitual Offender Statute accompanying the Violence Against Family Act could be a powerful tool for deterring repeat offenders.
- A victim specialist should work with domestic violence victims to explain the law and options for protection and with surviving family members in cases of homicide to provide information and support through the prosecution process.
- Ensure that guns are removed from homes where domestic violence has been documented.
- In agreement with the Report of the Attorney General's National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence, "Increase collaborative responses by police, mental health providers, domestic violence advocates, child protective service workers, and court personnel for women and children who are victimized by intimate partner violence."

INPUT OF SURVIVING FAMILY MEMBERS

Verna's sister and brother-in-law generously shared their experiences with the Team. Both indicated that domestic violence affects nearly every family they know in their area of the reservation. They also believe that there are insufficient services, particularly with regard to safe shelter for victims. Although everyone was aware of the abuse, violence and alcoholism in this family, no one was able to provide effective intervention or know how to help Verna or Joe. They felt unsupported in their efforts to provide care to the surviving children. They had to purchase beds, clothing, and a new vehicle large enough to transport all the children. They were not happy with the sentence imposed on Joe feeling it was too lenient. The process of sentencing was not adequately explained to them, and the sister felt particularly distressed about her testimony. Her cultural traditions dictate forgiveness and efforts to restore harmony following a crime, and the prosecutor encouraged her to share the positive aspects of Joe's life. She did not realize that by doing so she was contributing to a mitigated sentence. Both Verna's sister and brother-in-law requested better information about the process of prosecution in any future domestic homicides. They also feel strongly

that there needs to be more education, resources, and law enforcement for domestic violence on the Navajo Nation.

Case 2: John & Jane (pseudonyms)

Note: Although Jane is the perpetrator in the near-fatal shooting, both people in this relationship were violent and abusive over many years. We will therefore not refer to victim and perpetrator in this case, but only to the pseudonyms, John and Jane.

John's background: John was born in 1947. By his report, both his parents were alcoholics and fought with each other but did not abuse him physically. They divorced when he was 13 and he saw little of his father after that. His father died in a naval accident when John was a teenager. John joined the Navy and began drinking before age 17. According to one report, he was dishonorably discharged and was living on the streets when he met Jane in northern California. He described his life to the Team as "40 years of hard living."

Jane's background: Jane was born in 1952 and her parents were married until her father was run over and killed when Jane was in her 40s. The family lived on large acreage in northern California. Her father was an evangelical preacher who attempted to hold revival meetings on their property, but with little success. When Jane was 15, she became pregnant. She met John shortly thereafter and they married. They lived in a small house on her parents' property. By some accounts, Jane's extended family was involved in dealing methamphetamine and there were often many people staying in her parents' home who used drugs. Jane reported beginning to use marijuana and alcohol at age 15.

Criminal records: Prior to the shooting, neither John nor Jane had any serious criminal history. Both had misdemeanor reports for minor traffics and dog related incidents (their dog bit another dog in the park). There was a report made by Jane's mother that Jane and her daughter, Mary, had stolen her credit card, but she declined to press charges. There were also a number of incident reports involving Mary's former boyfriend's violence. In these reports, Jane is described as being verbally aggressive and abusive to responding officers. There is only one report for domestic violence. Jane called the police after she and John argued. John left the residence and on arrival police smelled and discovered marijuana. Jane admitted it was hers and she was arrested. Charges were dropped.

Subsequent to the shooting, John was arrested and charged for assaulting Mary's boyfriend with a brick. Their son, Gary, was also involved in this assault. John was sentenced to batterer's intervention treatment, which he completed. In his interview with the team, John stated that the counseling was the best thing that ever happened to him and he wished he'd met the counselor 30 years sooner.

History of abuse: Despite the absence of formal police reports, John, Jane and their daughter Mary described a lengthy history of abuse in the marriage. Following the shooting, John wrote a letter to the court explaining that he had physically abused Jane for the past 13 years. In Jane's meeting with the Team, she said the abuse began as soon as

their son was born in 1969, a year after their marriage. She said John had assaulted her when she insisted on exercising her right to vote. Her family encouraged her to leave John, but she loved him and did not want to end the relationship. By her report, she entered a domestic violence shelter at age 21 and was advised to end the relationship. She said she did not want her children to be poor, loved John and wanted to maintain the family. For 40 years, Jane has maintained that she does not want to be divorced or let others know about the abuse, which she referred to as "my big secret." Daughter Mary, in an interview with several team members, said she could not recall a time when her father did not abuse her mother and her. She recalls seeing her father "punch Mom in the face like he would punch a man in a fight," and worrying that her mother would die during the night. For most of her life, Mary viewed her mother as the primary victim in the relationship. Since the shooting, however, Mary has reassessed the relationship and feels that her mother was abusive to her father, although Jane suffered the most severe physical consequences due to differences in size and strength.

While Jane traced the abuse to the earliest years of marriage, John told us the early years of marriage were good. They both indicated they moved from California to Flagstaff to start a new life and escape the drug scene, but Jane told us the move was a positive change while John described the move as negative. John said that he had more work and a better lifestyle in California, but he struggled financially in Flagstaff and felt their standard of living had deteriorated. Jane said the move allowed the entire family to get clean from drugs and that she and John got along better here.

The principle source of conflict in the marriage, according to Jane, John, and Mary, was Jane's belief that John had an affair. She contracted a venereal disease and continuously argued with John about its origin. He eventually told her he contracted it from having sex with a man, which upset her even more. John says this was untrue and he simply told her this to be cruel. All parties describe deterioration in Jane's mental health following this revelation and her increased abuse of alcohol and marijuana. John also indicated that raising Mary was difficult due to her mental health problems. Mary was in treatment for mental health issues from a young age and is on permanent disability. It is unclear, however, if these issues predate the violence and abuse in her home or are a consequence of them. John also told us that CPS was never involved in his children's lives, but Mary told us she was removed from their home and placed in foster care. According to Mary, she was in foster care for about a year, then sent to live with her grandparents, but when her grandfather was killed, she hitchhiked back to her parents' home.

Methamphetamine and alcohol played a large role in the abuse in this family. John told us that without alcohol, the shooting probably would have never taken place.

The Shooting: On the day of the shooting, John and Jane had consumed most of a fifth of whiskey by mid-afternoon and smoked marijuana. They became embroiled in a verbal argument, during which John called Jane names and pointed a gun at her threatening to kill her. He then went into the bedroom to lie down. Jane retrieved another gun and shot 7 bullets at John, hitting him twice in the shoulder and arm from the back. John left the residence and went to his son's home for help. When officers arrived, Jane admitted she

shot John. During her interview that evening, Jane said she had been choked by John and thought she was going to be killed. She also indicated that she intended to kill John when she shot him. Although the forensic evidence indicates John was lying down and his wounds were on the back of his arm and shoulder, Jane maintains she acted in self defense. Jane does, however, accept responsibility for the shooting and knows she should not have done it. She and John both quit drinking after the shooting and received substance abuse and domestic violence counseling. John's injuries were not life threatening.

Sentencing and probation revocation: We were able to discuss the case with both the prosecutor and the defense. The prosecutor indicated that because of John's letter and statement about his abuse of Jane, a trial conviction for attempted second-degree murder would have been problematic. Both prosecutor and defense found the sentence of probation unusual given the severity of the offense. The probation report and the judge determined that Jane would benefit from removal from the situation and domestic violence and substance abuse counseling. Although she participated in some counseling, she submitted several urine samples that revealed the presence of marijuana and eventually refused to submit samples. She also continued to have contact with John despite the conditions of her probation requiring no contact. On several occasions she was aggressive and hostile to her probation officer and her daughter, Mary. After two years and several months on probation, Jane was sentenced to 2.5 years in prison for probation violation due to her continued use of marijuana.

Since the shooting: Many of the police reports provided on this case are based on crimes involving Mary and two of her violent intimate partners. She has been assaulted on numerous occasions by these two men, one of whom is currently serving prison time for an assault against her. Approximately 1.5 years after the shooting, John and their son Gary assaulted one of Mary's boyfriends by striking him in the head with a brick. Jane was also implicated in encouraging this assault. The family believed that the boyfriend had sexually abused one of Mary's daughters and retaliated with this assault. As a result, John was arrested and mandated to batterer's intervention treatment. As mentioned above, John believes this treatment changed his life and wishes it would have happened sooner.

Their daughter Mary continues to have conflicts with John and Jane as well as her former boyfriends. Jane lives with Mary in a unit attached to the home occupied by John. She feels that her mother's mood swings are unpredictable and dangerous and she is afraid of her father's violence. She described severe assaults against her by John in the recent past that are not documented since she did not report them.

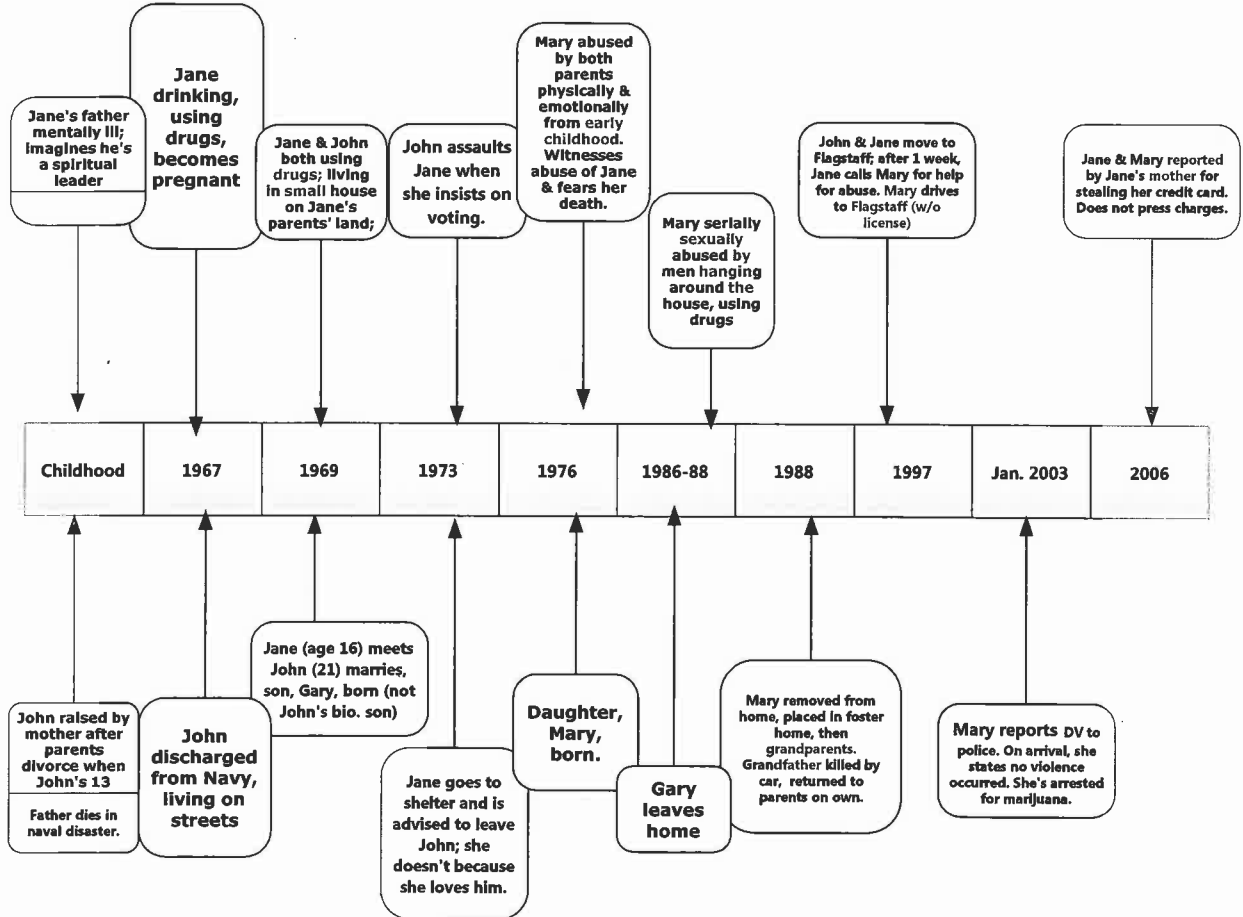
Jane and John want to reunite and will be permitted to do so some time in February. There is grave concern in the family and among our Team about what this reunion will mean for the safety and well being of the entire family.

Red Flags:

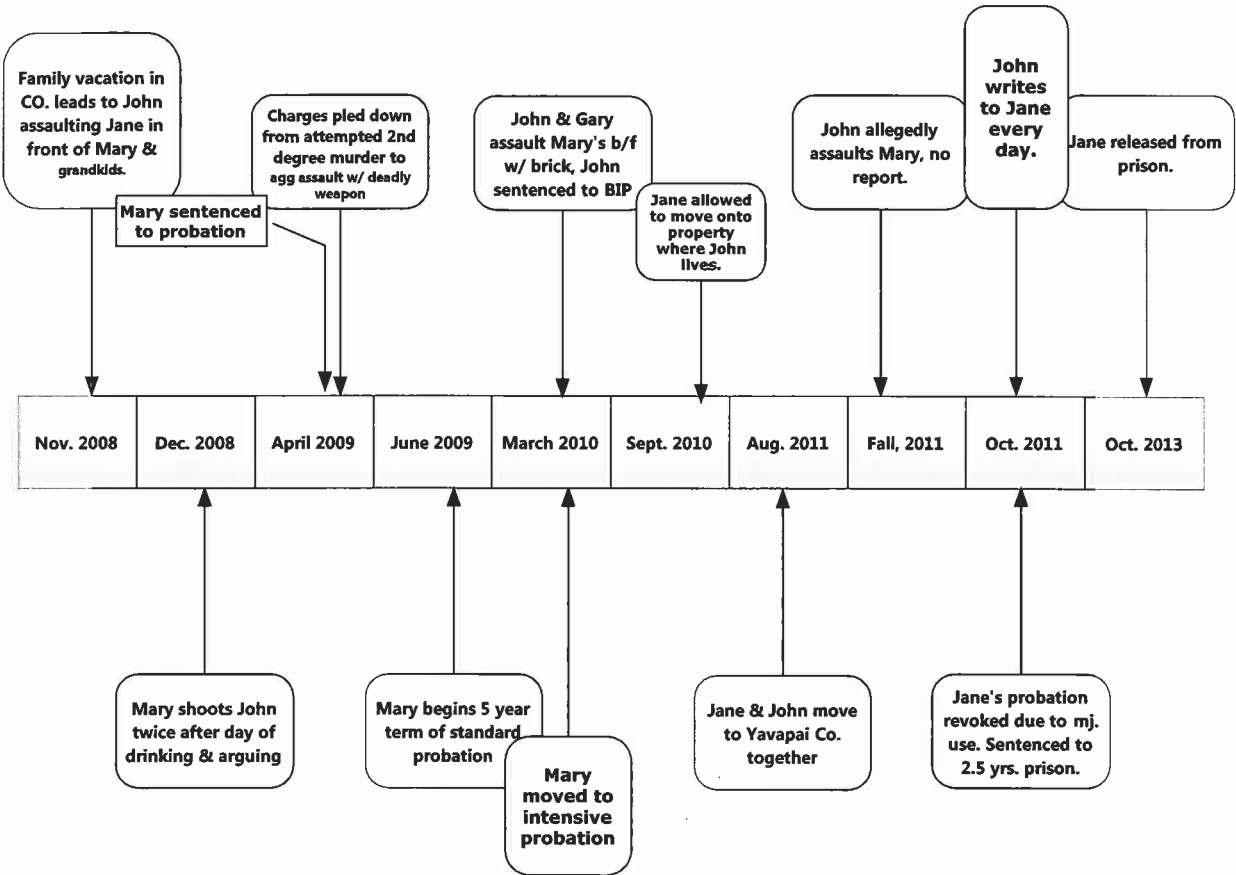
- Both parties grew up in abusive households.

- Both parties began abusing drugs and alcohol as teen-agers.
- Jane was only 15 at time of marriage to John who was 21. Jane was pregnant with another man's child at time of marriage.
- Presence of a non-biologically related child.
- John's controlling behavior toward Jane from an early age.
- Jane's obsessive jealousy and fixation on an affair that may or may not have occurred.
- John's physical abuse and Jane's emotional abuse of daughter Mary from early age into adulthood.
- Methamphetamine use by both parties throughout adulthood.
- Alcohol abuse by both parties throughout adulthood.
- Prior domestic violence by both parties against one another, with more serious injuries from John to Jane.
- John's physical violence toward others outside the immediate family.
- Presence of guns.
- John's alleged attempted strangulation of Jane.
- Physical violence followed by sexual relations in front of child.
- Threats to kill on the part of both parties.
- Economic stress.
- Lack of formal education for both parties.
- Intergenerational mental health issues in Jane's family, including her parents, herself, and her daughter.

Timeline 1



Timeline 2



Recommendations:

- Improve the quality and availability of mental health services, and link domestic violence, mental health, and substance abuse treatment when appropriate. Increased funding for Flagstaff's mental health court is being sought. The specialty courts, including the Drug Court and Mental Health Court are providing support to domestic violence victims and perpetrators, in addition to the Guidance Center, the Veteran's Administration, and the Coconino County jail Exodus program. Further support for these programs would contribute to the reduction of harm from domestic violence.
- Increase educational programming in the schools about domestic violence and provide avenues to reach out to children living in violent homes.

- In agreement with the Report of the Attorney General’s National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence, “Increase collaborative responses by police, mental health providers, domestic violence advocates, child protective service workers, and court personnel for women and children who are victimized by intimate partner violence.”
- Ensure that guns are removed from homes where domestic violence has been documented.
- Continue education with first responders to help identify victim intimate partner maltreatment when responding to victims in their homes and in other settings.
- Recognize the multiple dimensions of domestic violence, including the simultaneous, dual roles of victim and offender that are present in many domestic violence situations. The assumption of a “good guy” and a “bad guy” does not adequately capture the complexity of some domestic violence cases.

OTHER ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY OUR WORK TO DATE

As many members of the Team work daily with domestic violence victims, offenders, or both, we note some continuing concerns. The level of mental health resources available for people experiencing domestic violence is inadequate. Rather than cut funding for mental health services, we need an expansion of both the quantity of available services and an increase in services that address the co-occurring conditions of domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental illness. This is particularly true in reservation communities that are in need of more law enforcement and prosecution personnel as well as treatment resources.

We are also concerned that in both cases reviewed this year, and in most cases reviewed previously, children witness ongoing abuse between their parents, and in Joe and Verna’s case, the homicide of a parent. We support all the recommendations of the Attorney General’s National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence (<http://www.justice.gov/defendingchildhood/cev-rpt-full.pdf>) which emphasize the importance of providing trauma informed care to all children who witness violence in their homes and communities and training educational personnel to recognize and respond to these children. The Flagstaff Police Department is working with FUSD to provide education on domestic violence, but there is not standard, required training for educational personnel to identify and respond effectively when students are experiencing domestic violence in their homes. Additionally, children who lose a parent to domestic violence require specialized intervention from the moment of death. Several team members attended a conference where Dorothy Lennig, of the House of Ruth in Baltimore, MD, one of the oldest domestic violence programs in the country spoke about child witnesses. She has developed a response team that attends to all domestic homicides with surviving children and explained the problems children encounter when they are not allowed to talk about the incident and their feelings. We believe that a similar program is needed in Arizona and that funding is required to establish a program with highly qualified staff.

Both cases reviewed this year involved attempted strangulation. We have a statute addressing strangulation in domestic violence cases, but lack funding to provide the exams to document the effects of strangulation. The Coconino County Attorney's Office is exploring the possibility of establishing a strangulation unit, but again, this is an area requiring more funding. FPD has just introduced a revised domestic violence supplemental form that includes a full page on strangulation providing officers with specific questions and direction on gathering evidence in strangulation investigations.

Finally, several Team members expressed concern about the quality of training offered on domestic violence. Some members attended trainings last year that promulgated dated, inaccurate information about domestic violence. We know of no easy solution to the uneven quality of training presented throughout our state, but note that there are still trainers who use materials from the 1970s that are no longer useful or appropriate. For example, one trainer in Flagstaff presented "the battered woman syndrome" without any discussion of the critique of this idea. Perhaps a more thorough review of trainers' credentials prior to arranging trainings in any location would reduce the dissemination of inaccurate information.

Team Member Profiles

Kathleen J. Ferraro, Chair

Dr. Kathleen J. Ferraro earned her doctorate in Sociology from Arizona State University in 1981 and is the Chair and a Professor of Sociology & Social Work at Northern Arizona University. Prior to moving to NAU in 2003, she was an Associate Professor and Director of Women's Studies at ASU where she served as a professor for 20 years. She began work in the domestic violence movement in 1975 as a shelter volunteer at Rainbow Retreat in Phoenix. Since then, she has published 37 scholarly journal articles, book chapters and reports on domestic violence. Her research has examined domestic violence policing and prosecution, victim's coping strategies, the role of faith, incarcerated women and debates within domestic violence scholarship. Her book *Neither Angels nor Demons: Women, Crime, and Victimization* was a Choice Outstanding Academic Title in 2007. It is an analysis of the lives of women who kill their abusive partners or engage in other serious crime as a result of intimate partner victimization. She has also given numerous presentations and trainings on domestic violence in the United States and Europe. She has been a member of the Arizona Governor's Commission to Prevent Violence Against Women, the board of the Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative and the founding boards of several shelters and community programs for women. She has served as an expert witness on the effects of battering in over 120 criminal, civil and clemency cases.

Deborah Fresquez, Vice-Chair

Deborah Fresquez has been the leading expert Domestic Violence Victim Advocate for Victim Witness Services for Coconino County for the past eight years. In 2009, she was recognized by the Coconino County Coordinated Response Team to domestic violence for her contributions to victims of domestic violence. She holds a Bachelor in Liberal Studies with an emphasis in Psychology from Northern Arizona University. In 1995, Fresquez retired as a Deputy Sheriff for the Coconino County Sheriff's Department where she held the position as Detective. She completed the Arizona Victim Assistance Academy in Flagstaff, Arizona in 2007 and the National American Victim Assistance Academy in Louisville, Kentucky in 2008. She currently sits on the Coconino County Coordinated Response Team to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and is vice-chair of the Coconino County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board. In 2011 Deborah was appointed by Dr. Neil Websdale, Director of the Family Violence Institute at Northern Arizona University and of the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative as Coordinator of the Fatality Review and Safety Audit for Coconino County. In 2010 Deborah created the first Domestic Violence Support Group for women and children in Coconino County. In 2014 Deborah was appointed as co-chair of Children of Incarcerated Parents committee.

Stephanie Mayer, Secretary

Stephanie Mayer works at the Family Violence Institute at Northern Arizona University.

Gwendolyn Adaki

Gwendolyn Adakai, member of the Navajo Nation, is a Victim Specialist with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Division of Law Enforcement Services, duty stationed in Flagstaff, Arizona. She has been in the position for over 1 year. Before she was a social worker providing direct human services to Native American tribes surrounding Phoenix, Arizona. She has 10 plus years in direct human services and administration. Gwendolyn Adakai holds a Master of Social Work degree from Arizona State University and a Bachelor of Social Work from Arizona State University.

Alex Alvarez

Dr. Alex Alvarez earned his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of New Hampshire in 1991 and is a Professor in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Northern Arizona University. From 2001 until 2003 he was the founding Director of the Martin-Springer Institute for Teaching the Holocaust, Tolerance, and Humanitarian Values. His main areas of study are in the areas of collective and interpersonal violence, including homicide and genocide. His first book, *Governments, Citizens, and Genocide* was published by Indiana University Press in 2001 and was a nominee for the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences book of the year award in 2002, as well as a Raphael Lemkin book award nominee from the International Association of Genocide Scholars in 2003. His other books include *Murder American Style* (2002), *Violence: the Enduring Problem* (2008), and *Genocidal*

Crimes (2009). He has also served as an editor for the journal *Violence and Victims*, was a founding co-editor of the journal *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, was a co-editor of the H-Genocide List Serve, and is an editorial board member for the journals *War Crimes*, *Genocide*, and *Crimes Against Humanity: An International Journal*, and *Idea: A Journal of Social Issues*. He has been invited to present his research in various countries such as Austria, Bosnia, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden. Dr. Alvarez also gives presentations and workshops on various issues such as violence, genocide, and bullying.

Bill Burke, City Attorney, Flagstaff City Attorney's Office

Bill Burke is currently the chief prosecutor for the City of Flagstaff. He has 18 years experience as a prosecutor in Flagstaff and Mesa. He has taught at various police academies as well as for the Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council on such subjects as domestic violence and DUI prosecution and enforcement. Bill holds a Bachelor of Arts from the State University of New York at Stony Brook in History as well as a Juris Doctorate from the John Marshall Law School in Chicago, IL.

Emmeleta Burrual, Program Specialist, Native Americans for Community Action

Tim Cornelius, Criminal Investigations Lieutenant, Coconino County Sheriff's Office

Tim Cornelius is currently the Criminal Investigations Lieutenant for the Coconino County Sheriff's Office. During his 19 year career with the Coconino County Sheriff's Office, Tim has worked in the Jail Division, Flagstaff Patrol, Corporal in Flagstaff Patrol. In January of 1998, Tim was promoted to Detective and transferred into the Criminal Investigation Division. He became a member of the Arizona Homicide and International Homicide Investigators Associations. He was directly involved in 12 homicide investigations and was the lead detective in four homicides. All were solved, and all of the suspects were convicted. Tim was promoted in 2004 to the rank of Lieutenant for the Williams and the Grand Canyon sub-stations. In 2006 he was transferred back to the Flagstaff patrol division. Time was transferred to the Criminal Investigations Division in May of 2010. He began supervising one sergeant and six detectives and two Cold Case detectives.

Lawrence Czarnecki, D.O.

Dr. Lawrence Czarnecki has been a medical examiner for the Coconino County Health Department for 5 years. He worked as a medical examiner in Kansas for a few years prior to moving to Arizona. He attended Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine and trained at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix for five years in a combined Anatomic and Clinical Pathology residency. He then trained at the University of New Mexico in a one

year Forensic Pathology fellowship. He is board certified in Anatomic, Clinical and Forensic Pathology.

Marcel A. Duclos, MTH, MED, NH-LCMHC, MLADC, LCS; AZ-RLPC, RLISAC

Marcel A. Duclos, Professor Emeritus of Psychology, Human Services, and Alcohol/Drug Counseling, held faculty appointments at the New Hampshire Technical Institute in Concord, NH for twenty-eight-years. A professional educator and counselor for three decades, he holds credentials as a NCC, CCMHC, ACS, LADC and LCS LCMHC CCMHC. He is a certified Body Psychotherapy Specialist in the treatment of Addictions and Trauma. He has served as a Consultant/Therapist in a Child Welfare Demonstration Project for the Division of Children, Youth and Families in Child Protective Services. He is the former Executive Director of Headrest, Inc. in Lebanon, NH. He has training in Philosophy, Theology, Developmental Psychology, Pastoral Psychology, Jungian Analytical Psychology, EMDR, Core Energetic Evolutionary Therapy and Internal Family Systems Therapy. He is the co-author, with Connie Robbilard, of *Common Threads: Stories of Life After Trauma*. Currently he serves as the Clinical Director at Northland Family Help Center.

Hiba Duval

Hiba is a psychology student at Northern Arizona University. She was voted onto the team in February 2012. Hiba is working to be an active member of the Flagstaff community and on the NAU campus. She participates in Theatrikos Community Theater, working mostly with the Theatrikids program, and is a part of the Resident Hall Association for the Courtyard Community.

Sara Erlinder

Sarah is an attorney with the Coconino County Public Defender's Office. She represents people charged with felony and misdemeanor offenses throughout Coconino County, including domestic violence offenses. Sarah graduated from Wesleyan University and the University of Wisconsin Law School. During law school she was a board member of the Wisconsin Journal of Law, Gender & Society where she put on the journal's annual symposium, which addressed gender issues in the criminal justice system.

Valarie Hannemann

Dr. Valarie Hannemann earned her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California in 1990 and is a Visiting Professor in the Psychology Department at Northern Arizona University, the Clinical Advisor to the EXODUS Program at the Coconino County Jail, and a Licensed Psychologist for over 25 years who provides psychotherapy to adolescents and adults in a private practice setting. One of her specialties is working with women and men who have experienced domestic violence. One of her main areas of interest as Clinical Advisor for the

EXODUS Program (a life-skills program aimed at reducing recidivism) at the Coconino County Jail is designing and implementing programming and interventions which address the mental health issues surrounding domestic violence and drug/alcohol abuse. She has given numerous presentations on how mental health issues impact domestic violence.

Wendy Kasprzyk-Roberts

Wendy Kasprzyk-Roberts is the Integrated Family Court Coordinator for Coconino County Superior Court, managing 18 programs and services for the court as well as grant writing, training and outreach for court programs. She has been with the court since January 2012. Prior to joining the superior court, Wendy was the Victim Services Grants Program Coordinator for the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) where she managed the statewide Crime Victim Assistance Grants and had an active role in outreach, communication and training with professionals in the criminal justice system. Wendy was appointed to Governor's Commission to Prevent Violence Against Women in November, 2013. She has extensive experience working with victims of crime, the criminal justice system and victim rights.

Stacy L. Krueger

Stacy Krueger is a Deputy County Attorney for Coconino County Attorney's Office for 3½ years. Her caseload consists of felony prosecution, primarily focused on felony domestic violence offenses. Stacy regularly trains law enforcement, both locally and statewide, on domestic violence issues and also serves as a panel member for the Coconino County Domestic Violence Impact Panel. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Toledo College of Law. During her time in law school, she participated in the college's domestic violence clinic and was also a member of the Reinberger Fellowship Program in prosecution. Stacy also holds a Master's degree in higher education counseling from Youngstown State University.

Heather Marcy

Heather Marcy graduated from Northern Arizona University in 2005 with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Criminal Justice. Through NAU she interned at Sharon Manor, a program providing transitional housing to victims and survivors of domestic violence. From 2006-2007 she was employed at Sharon Manor as a facilitator of youth groups. In 2007, she began working at Northland Family Help Center where she currently serves as Residential Case Manager. Northland Family Help Center is an emergency domestic violence shelter for women and children that offers legal advocacy, counseling, and community outreach. As Residential Case Manager, she meets with residents weekly to work on their goals related to self-sufficiency, healing from trauma, and beginning a new life.

Det. Lt. Scott Mansfield

Scott Mansfield is currently assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division at the Flagstaff Police Department. He not only supervises the Detective Division but also the METRO Narcotics Street Crime Task Force, SWAT Team, Bomb Team, and Negotiations Team. Scott has worked in the department as a patrol officer, patrol corporal, Detective, Selective Enforcement Sergeant, Patrol Sergeant, Detective Sergeant, and has served on the SWAT team. While being assigned as the Criminal Investigation Lieutenant, Scott has worked on some notable projects such as implementing a new and revamped process for the service of Orders of Protection and Injunctions Against Harassment. This new process has increased the service levels of these documents dramatically. The latest project Scott has completed was the implementation of the new Lethality and Coercive Control Risk Assessment Tool for the Flagstaff Police Department. With this new project, the Flagstaff Police Department is working with Victim Witness to provide services to the victims of Domestic Violence in hopes to stop the cycles of violence in abusive relationships.

Coconino County Supervisor Mandy Metzger

Elected to the Coconino County Board of Supervisors in 2008, Mandy Metzger is currently vice chairwoman of the Board and first vice-chair of the Arizona County Supervisors Association. As a supervisor, Mandy represents District 4, which encompasses nearly 6,000 square miles and is home to 20 communities including portions of the Hopi Tribe and Navajo Nation.

Mandy's past service as a senior policy advisor on Capitol Hill in the issue areas of public lands, judiciary and education, has made her a strong supporter of programs and policies that provide for safe communities, enhanced educational opportunities, improved infrastructure and sustainable economic development.

Mandy works to keep a pulse on issues within the County and her district by meeting regularly with local, tribal, legislative and congressional leaders. She also serves on numerous boards and commissions to advocate for healthy and resilient communities.

Melissa Rhodes

Melissa Rhodes, MSW, LCSW is currently teaches full time in Northern Arizona University's Bachelor of Social Work program and does clinical social work with Navajo children and their families. The past eleven years have been dedicated to clinical work with Hopi and Navajo children and adolescents, trauma work in Flagstaff and psycho-educational services through the Coconino County Integrated Family Court. Prior clinical social work has included individual and family therapy with child, adolescent and adult clients in private practice, school and community mental health settings. Melissa has a long-standing interest in helping children and families heal from trauma and loss of all origin. She is also

involved with Coconino County Victim Witness Services as a volunteer victim advocate and has assisted with the Domestic Violence Support Group.

McDonald Rominger

McDonald Rominger is the Supervisory Senior Resident Agent for the FBI Flagstaff-Gallup-Pinetop/Lakeside Resident Agencies.

Honorable Warren Sanford, Justice of the Peace Protem

Warren Sanford is a third-generation Flagstaff resident and has served as judge protem for the Flagstaff and Williams courts since 2001. He earned a Master of Public Administration degree and undergraduate degrees with honors in philosophy and justice studies from NAU, with emphases in restorative justice and international justice models. He currently serves as a board member of Coconino County Citizens Against Substance Abuse and the Flagstaff Leadership Program, and as a judicial panelist with the Coconino County DUI and Domestic Violence Impact Panels. He continues to work collaboratively with area agencies to identify and respond to crime and its destructive aftermath. Warren actively engages his passion for collaborative and restorative justice programs through community service and post-conviction outreach. He believes in a responsible approach to crime and justice, and accountability for one's actions. Part of his professional involvement in collaborative justice is working toward solutions for domestic violence and a path of healing for victims, offenders and the community as a whole.

Maureen Gisele Schat

Maureen Schat has worked in the field of domestic and sexual violence prevention since the mid-80's in varying capacities, ranging from prevention educator to advocate to board member. Maureen has a BA in Sociology with a minor in Criminology. In May of 2013, Maureen accepted the position of CCRT (Coordinated Community Response Team) Coordinator for Coconino County; she is an employee of Northland Family Help Center. Maureen currently teaches a Healthy Relationships class in the Exodus program at the Coconino County jail (CCSO).

Alicia Stewart, Executive Director and Shelter Director, Page Regional Domestic Violence Services

Alicia M. Stewart currently lives in Page, Arizona where her six children and three grandchildren reside. A survivor herself, Alicia has worked for the movement serving survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking, as well as their families, since July 2006 with Page Regional Domestic Violence Services (PRDVS). After six months as a Shelter Advocate, she assumed the position as the Shelter Manager and in July 2012 additionally assumed a position as part of the Executive Management Team which absorbed the duties of the former Executive Director position. Along with being a strong

mindful advocate and leader, Alicia assists with PRDVS grant writing and reporting, has written and implemented agency policies as well as developed a comprehensive Emergency Action/Preparedness Plan. Alicia currently serves on the CCRT Steering and Sub-Committees as well as the DVFRBT. Alicia has co-facilitated the Survivor Making Change groups for six years and the Making Change Offender Intervention Program for the past four years. Previous to working with PRDVS, Alicia worked in tourism for 12 years. She is currently pursuing a Degree in Social Work.

Kevin Treadway

Chief Kevin Treadway has been with the Flagstaff Police Department for 27 years. He holds a BS in Business Administration, and a Masters in Educational Leadership, both from NAU. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, and the FBI LEEDs (Law Enforcement Executive Development) seminar. He served on the Board for the Arizona Chapter of the FBI National Academy Associates for 5 years, and was the President in 2010. He also attended the West Point Leadership in Police Organizations Course. He has worked in the department as a patrol officer, DARE instructor, hostage negotiator, accident reconstructionist, and spent 9 years in criminal investigations in a variety of functions. Prior to becoming Chief, he was a Deputy Chief in Support Services and Operations for 6 years.

Pam Turner

Pam Turner is a Registered Nurse in the Emergency Department at Flagstaff Medical Center (FMC). Pam has been employed at FMC for the past 29 ½ years. Pam has specialty training in Forensic Nursing and is a Certified Adult/Adolescent Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner. She also is a Certified Forensic Nurse and specializes in the care of domestic violence patients, sexual assault patients and other patients that are victims of crime. She is co-chair of the Family Advocacy Council and a member of the County Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. She was one of the founders of Northern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault (NACASA) in 2001. In 2009, she was awarded the Arizona Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award for Advocacy/Direct Service and in 2008 she was selected as the Arizona Daily Sun Female Citizen of the Year for her tireless efforts on behalf of victims' rights and assistance and for making Flagstaff a better place.

Jamie L. Whelan

Praxis Partnership, Educational Specialties, College of Education, NAU

Jamie L. Whelan earned a BA from Lack Haven State University and an MA in Learning and Behavioral Disorders from Northern Arizona University. She is a senior lecturer and the Supervisor of the Praxis Partnership Program in the College of Education at NAU. She works with public, private, and charter schools in an effort to maintain student rights and clarification of IDEA principles and their application in a school setting. She is a past president and current board member of Coconino County Victim Witness Services.

Barry Yoyhoeoma

Chief Barry Yoyhoeoma, a member of the Hopi Nation, is the Chief of Police for Supai.

The following individuals were members of the team for portions of 2013 and made important contributions to our work: Supervisor Elizabeth Archuleta, Lee Harsh, Kim Cvetkovich, Gregory Neville, Kathy Paleski, Mike Powers, Ronald Kanwischer, Fanny Steinlage, and Beya Thayer.

ATTACHMENT A

41-198. Fatal or near fatal domestic violence review teams; duties; membership; report; confidentiality; violation; classification; definitions

A. A political subdivision of this state or a combination of political subdivisions may establish a fatal or near fatal domestic violence review team to:

1. Examine fatal or near fatal incidents of domestic violence to better understand the dynamics of these fatalities or near fatalities.
2. Report to the office of the attorney general its findings and recommendations as to how fatal or near fatal incidents of domestic violence may be prevented and how the system can be improved. The report shall not contain any information that identifies individuals in specific incidents of domestic violence related fatalities or near fatalities.
3. Determine the number and type of incidents it wishes to review.

B. A review team shall not review a fatal or near fatal incident of domestic violence until a criminal investigation or proceeding connected with the fatality or near fatality is completed.

C. A review team shall designate one of its members to serve as chairperson. The chairperson shall call meetings as necessary and is responsible for submitting the report prescribed in subsection A, paragraph 2 of this section.

D. All information and records acquired by a review team are confidential and are not subject to subpoena, discovery or introduction into evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding or disciplinary action. Information that is otherwise available from other sources is not immune from subpoena, discovery or introduction into evidence through those sources solely because they were presented to or reviewed by a review team.

E. A member of a review team or any person who presents information to a review team shall not be questioned in any civil or criminal proceeding or disciplinary action regarding the information presented. This subsection does not prevent a person from testifying regarding information obtained independently of the review team or as to public information.

F. Review team meetings are closed to the public and are not subject to title 38, chapter 3, article 3.1 if the review team is reviewing a fatal or near fatal incident of domestic violence case. All other review team meetings are open to the public.

G. The political subdivision shall establish the membership of a review team. Each review team may be comprised of the following:

1. A representative from a county or municipal law enforcement agency.
2. A representative of a county or municipal court.
3. A representative of a county or municipal prosecutor's office.
4. A representative of a local domestic violence prevention program.
5. A victim of domestic violence.
6. A representative of a county or state public health agency.
7. A representative of the office of the county medical examiner.
8. If child protective services received a report on any person residing with the victim before the fatal or near fatal incident of domestic violence, a representative of child protective services who serves the area covered by the review team for the duration of the review of that fatality or near fatality.
9. A representative of a statewide domestic violence coalition.

H. The office of the attorney general shall receive the reports of the review teams and distribute copies of them to the president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, the governor, the peace officer standards and training board, the state domestic violence coalition and the chief justice of the supreme court, on or before January 31 of each year. Copies shall also be provided to the secretary of state.

I. When a review team concludes a fatal or near fatal incident of domestic violence review, the review team shall return all information and records concerning the victim and the family to the agency that provided the information or, if directed by that agency, shall destroy that information.

J. A person who violates the confidentiality requirements of this section is guilty of a class 2 misdemeanor.

K. For the purposes of this section:

1. "Domestic violence" has the same meaning prescribed in section 13-3601.
2. "Fatal incident of domestic violence" means a homicide or suicide that is committed by a party to the domestic violence and not committed by an on-duty police officer acting within the scope of employment.
3. "Near fatal incident of domestic violence" means an assault that is committed by a party to the domestic violence where the victim suffered life threatening injuries.
4. "Political subdivision" means a county, city or town.

ATTACHMENT B

COCONINO COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW TEAM

BY-LAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

ARTICLE I - ORDINANCE AUTHORITY

The Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team is created/appointed by the Flagstaff City Council and the Coconino County Board of Supervisors in accordance with A.R.S.41-198 and as subsequently amended.

ARTICLE II - MISSION

The mission of this Team is to analyze the circumstances of fatalities and near fatalities in an effort to better understand the dynamics of such deaths and make recommendations for prevention and system improvements. The purpose of this project is not to lay blames, but rather to actively improve all systems that serve persons involved with domestic abuse, and to prevent violence and fatalities in the future.

ARTICLE III - POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW TEAM (DVFRT)

- A. **Advisory Body.** THE DVFRT is an advisory body to the Arizona Attorney General's Office. The DVFRT will serve as a resource to Membership, law enforcement agencies, the City, Country, and State on issues related to domestic violence. Its powers are advisory only, unless additional powers and authority is provided by ordinance or state of federal law or regulation.
- B. **Powers and Duties.** The powers and duties of the DVFRT shall be:
 - 1. Examine incidents of domestic violence related fatalities and near fatalities to better understand the dynamics of these incidents.
 - 2. Report to the office of the Arizona Attorney General, the Flagstaff City Council, the Coconino County Sheriff's Office and Coconino County Board of Supervisors its findings and recommendations as to how incidents of domestic violence related fatalities and near fatalities may be prevented and how the system can be improved. The report shall not contain any information that identifies individuals in specific incidents of domestic violence related fatalities.
 - 3. Determine the number and type of incidents it wishes to review.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP AND OFFICERS

- A. **Membership.** Membership shall include, but not be limited to, representatives of each of the following agencies. Those representatives shall be appointed by the Mayor of the City of Flagstaff and Chair of the Coconino County Board of Supervisors, upon recommendation of the respective agency head.

- Child Protective Services
- Coconino County Attorney’s Office
- Coconino County Domestic Violence Probation Officer
- Domestic Violence Shelter Professional
- Flagstaff City Attorney’s Office
- Flagstaff Police Department
- Medical Examiner
- Public Defender
- Sheriff’s Office
- Superior Court/Family Court Judiciary
- Victim Services

Based on a majority vote of the Team, other members may be recommended for appointment by the Mayor and the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, based on demonstrated expertise in the field of domestic violence.

- B. **Appointment.** The Mayor of Flagstaff and the Chair of the Board of Supervisors shall appoint members for a three-year term. Team members and the agency each represents will sign a confidentiality agreement.
- C. **Term.** Members shall serve terms of three years and may be reappointed to successive terms. In the event a member becomes incapacitated or resigns or is unable to perform the duties of the office or is otherwise removed, the Mayor and Chair of the Board of Supervisors shall appoint another member to fill the unexpired term of the member replaced.
- D. **Removal of Members.** A Team member may be removed by the Mayor and the Chair of the Board of Supervisors for non-attendance at three consecutive meetings, conviction of a crime involving more turpitude, repeated disruptive behavior after warning, or when in the opinion of the Mayor and Chair of the Board of Supervisors removal is in the best interest of the Team.
- E. **Officers.**

1. **Chairperson.** The Chairperson shall be elected by a majority of the members of the Team at a properly noticed and constituted meeting to serve for a term of three years. The Chairperson may be re-elected to serve successive terms as deemed appropriate by the Team members. In the event the Chairperson resigns, becomes incapacitated or unable to perform the duties of office or is otherwise removed, the Team members will elect a replacement for the unexpired term by a majority vote at a properly noticed and constituted meeting.

Duties of Chairperson. The Chairperson shall be responsible for:

- a. establishing a regular meeting schedule;
- b. presiding over Team meetings, including deciding upon all points of order or procedure;
- c. appointing a chair and board members to serve on committees, ad-hoc committees, and subcommittees of the Team;
- d. preparing agenda items for future meetings prior to Team meetings, and in consultation with other board members;
- e. considering other such matters and concerns of the Team as set forth in these by-laws or as directed by the Mayor and Chair of the Board of Supervisors.

2. **Vice Chairperson.** The Vice Chairperson shall be elected by a majority of the members of the Team at a properly noticed and constituted meeting to serve for a term of three years. The Vice Chairperson may be re-elected to serve successive terms as deemed appropriate by the Team members. A vacancy in the office of Vice Chairperson shall be filled for the unexpired term by a majority vote of the Team members.

Duties of Vice Chairperson. In addition to such other duties, if any, as may evolve upon the Vice Chairperson by virtue of the meetings of the office, or as assigned by the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall preside over meetings of the Team in the Absence of the Chairperson.

3. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall be elected by a majority of the members of the Team at a properly noticed and constituted meeting to serve for a term of three years.
Duties of the Secretary. The Secretary shall take all minutes of Team meetings and keep all Team reports in accordance with Arizona

statutes. The minutes of all Team meeting shall be provided to the Team in summary/verbatim form.

4. **Legal Representation.** The City and/or County Attorney, or their designee shall provide legal representation and advice to the Team as necessary.
5. **Committees.** The Team shall establish such committees, ad-hoc committees, and subcommittees as the Team deems necessary and appropriate for carrying out Team business. The Chairperson shall appoint the members of the committees, ad-hoc committees, and subcommittees created. Such committees report to the Team in an advisory capacity and such committees shall exist only so long as necessary to fill the purposes for which they were created. Members of committees, ad-hoc committees, and subcommittees are not required to be DVFRT Members. The Chairperson may remove a committee member at any time with or without cause. Removal of a committee member who is also a Team member does not remove that individual from the team; it merely relieves the individual from his/her duties on that committee.

The Chairperson of a committee, ad-hoc committee, or subcommittee will be appointed by the Team Chairperson only so long as necessary to fill the purposes for which the committee was created. The Chairperson of such committee must be a Team member.

Meetings shall be called by the Chairperson of such committee or upon petition by a majority of the committee's members. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern meeting procedures.

Committee recommendations are to be forwarded to the DVFRT for official action.

6. **Compensation.**

The Membership of the Team as well as officers serve in a voluntary capacity.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

- A. **Schedule.** When there exists business to be conducted and a quorum can be obtained, the Team shall meet quarterly and at such other times when called by the Chairperson after consultation with Team members.
- B. **Quorum.** A quorum of the Team shall consist of a majority of its appointed members. Any action voted on by a majority vote of the quorum present

shall be considered an action of the Team. In the event a quorum is not present for a meeting, the Team is prohibited from discussing any items from the agenda and the meeting shall be rescheduled. In the event a quorum is present at the beginning of a meeting and is not maintained throughout the meeting, no votes requiring action may be taken after the loss of a quorum.

- C. **Open Meetings.** The Team and its committees, ad-hoc committees, and subcommittees shall hold all meetings and conduct all business in accordance with Arizona Open Meeting Law A.R.S. 38-431 *et seq* and shall be open to the public. DVFRT meetings are closed to the public and are not subject to Title 38, Chapter 3, Article 3.1 if the Team is reviewing a domestic violence fatality or near fatality case.
- D. **Procedure Not Contained in By-Laws.** All meetings of the Team shall be, to the extent not in conflict with these by-laws, conducted according to the latest edition of Roberts Rule of Order, with the exception the Chairperson of the DVFRT, committee, ad-hoc committee, or subcommittee shall be permitted to vote on any motion.
- E. **Proxy Voting, Electronic and Telephonic Participation.**
 - 1. Proxy voting shall not be permitted.
 - 2. Electronic and telephonic participation may be permitted where, in the opinion of the Chairperson, members can participate fully.
- F. **Agenda Items.** Any member of the Team may propose items for the agenda. The Chairperson shall approve the agenda for each Team meeting.

ARTICLE VI – MISCELLANEOUS

- A. **Conflict of Interest.** Any member of the Team who has a substantial interest as defined in A.R.S. 28-502 in the outcome of any matter brought before the Team shall make known that interest and the minutes of the meeting shall reflect that the member made such fact known. The member shall refrain from voting or in any way participating in that matter.
- B. **Amending the By-Laws.** The By-Laws may be amended at any meeting of the Team after not less than seven (7) days notice has been given to all members of the Team and a copy of the proposed amendment sent with notice. Any change in the By-Laws shall require a concurring vote of three-fifths of the members present.

ATTACHMENT C

**COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
RESOLUTION NO. _____**

**FLAGSTAFF CITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION NO. 2009-42**

**A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FLAGSTAFF,
ARIZONA, AND THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF COCONINO COUNTY,
ARIZONA, ESTABLISHING A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW
TEAM.**

WHEREAS, the Coconino County Board of Supervisors and the City of Flagstaff City Council have long supported efforts to prevent and reduce domestic violence in Coconino County; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence is a pattern of behavior that includes the use of or threat of violence and intimidation for the purpose of gaining power and control over another person; on average three women are murdered by their partners in the United States every day; in Arizona 95 people were killed in domestic violence related homicides in 2005, 111 people were murdered in 2006 and 126 people in 2007; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence accounts for over 50% of female homicides in the United States; and

WHEREAS, examination of incidents of domestic violence fatalities can help assess how law enforcement, court systems, and social services can be improved to help prevent such incidents; and

WHEREAS, employees of the Coconino County Sheriff's Office, the City of Flagstaff Police Department, and the Coconino County Attorney's Office are highly trained in investigation and prosecution of domestic violence matters; and

WHEREAS, A.R.S. § 41-198 authorizes Coconino County and the City of Flagstaff, political subdivisions of the State of Arizona, to establish a domestic violence review team; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors and the City Council finds that consideration of the public safety, health, and general welfare of potential domestic violence victims warrants the formation of a domestic violence review team;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FLAGSTAFF AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. That the Board and Council hereby authorize the establishment of a domestic violence fatality review team in accordance with Section 41-198 of the Arizona Revised Statutes. The Board delegates to the County Manager and the City Council delegates to the City Manager the authority to appoint members of the team. In addition to the appointed members, the Team, with the concurrence of the County or City Manager, may invite additional persons to review specific cases when those persons have information directly relevant to the case under review. The Team has no subpoena power and no authority to compel attendance at its meetings.

Section 2. That pursuant to subsection 41-198.F, Arizona Revised Statutes, team meetings to review a domestic violence fatality case shall be closed to the public, but all other team meetings shall be open to the public and subject to Title 38, Chapter 3, Article 3.1 of the Arizona Revised Statutes (the Open Meeting Laws of the State of Arizona).

Section 3. That the Board and Council delegate to the County Manager and the County Attorney the authority to assure the meetings and conduct of the team comply with all applicable law.

Section 4. That the Team will submit a report to the Office of the Arizona Attorney General, with copies to the Board and Council, prior to January 31 of each calendar year in which the Team reports its findings and recommendations as to how incidents of domestic violence related fatalities may be prevented and how the system can be improved. The report shall not contain any information that identifies individuals in specific incidents of domestic violence related fatalities.

Section 5. That the authorization for the Team automatically terminates on January 31, 2014, unless re-authorized by the Board and Council prior to that date.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Flagstaff City Council on this _____ day of _____, 2009, and by the Coconino County Board of Supervisors on this _____ day of _____, 2009.

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

MAYOR

ATTEST:

ATTEST:

CLERK OF THE BOARD

CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

COUNTY ATTORNEY

CITY ATTORNEY

ATTACHMENT D

Case Selection Criteria

The Coconino County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board will select cases to review in accordance with authorizing legislation, ARS 41-198. Any homicide or suicide that is traceable to domestic violence, as defined in ARS 13-3601, is suitable for review. The Board will select cases in which:

- The fatality or near-fatality occurred within the geographical boundaries of Coconino County
- No criminal legal issues remain unresolved
- There is adequate information on which to base a review
- The review process will aid in coordinating the response to domestic violence and in preventing domestic violence fatalities

The team will strive to review cases that represent that broadest range of characteristics and concerns surrounding domestic violence fatalities.

ATTACHMENT E

COCONINO COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW TEAM CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

By signing this form, I do hereby acknowledge and agree to the following:

I agree to serve as a member of the Coconino County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team (CCDVFT). I acknowledge that the effectiveness of the fatality review process is dependent on the quality of trust and honesty team members bring to it. Thus, I agree that I will not use any material or information obtained during the CCDVFT review process for any reason other than that for which it was intended. I further agree to safeguard the records, reports, investigation material, and information I receive from unauthorized disclosure. Pursuant to A.R.S. § 41-198 (I), I will destroy all information and records concerning the victim and the family at the conclusion of a review. I will refrain from representing the views of the CCDVFT to the media. I understand and acknowledge that the unauthorized disclosure of confidential records, reports, investigation materials and information may result in civil or criminal liability and exclusion from the CCDVFT. **Violation of the confidentiality provision of A.R.S. § 41-198 is a Class 2 Misdemeanor.**

Name

Signature

Date

ATTACHMENT F

HISTORY OF THE COCONINO COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW TEAM

Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams were first created in Arizona after Arizona Revised Statute 41-198 (ARS 41-198) was signed into law in 2004 (Attachment A). This piece of legislation authorized the creation of fatality review teams within the state. ARS 41-198 stipulated that these teams would be organized at the local level of government, established rules for confidentiality, protected these same teams from litigation, and suggested membership representation from relevant agencies. In 2008, the Governor's Commission to Prevent Violence Against Women decided to refocus its efforts in order to reach out to areas beyond Phoenix and Pinal County and, accordingly, in late 2008 and early 2009 work began on creating a Fatality Review Team for Northern Arizona. Sonja Burkhalter, Executive Director of Northland Family Help Center, attended the initial meeting on revitalizing fatality review teams hosted by the Governor's Commission and requested that Deborah Fresquez and Myra Ferrell-Womochil, Co-Chairs of the Coconino County Coordinated Community Response Team, initiate efforts to develop a fatality review team. They contacted representatives from Flagstaff city government, Coconino county government, city and county law enforcement, the Coconino County Attorney's office, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff Medical Center, and various non-profit agencies, such as the Northland Family Help Center and Victim Witness Services, who began meeting in December, 2009 to form a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team.

Fatality review is a recently developed tool designed to address the issue of domestic violence related deaths. According to the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative, Domestic violence fatality review refers to the "deliberative process for identification of deaths, both homicide and suicide, caused by domestic violence, for examination of the systemic interventions into known incidents of domestic violence occurring in the family of the deceased prior to the death, for consideration of altered systemic response to avert future domestic violence deaths, or for development of recommendations for coordinated community prevention and intervention initiatives to eradicate domestic violence."¹ Importantly, these teams tend to operate with a "no-blame and shame" philosophy designed to encourage honest and open participation from a wide variety of relevant agencies. In short, the mission of the team is to analyze the circumstances of past fatalities in an effort to better understand the dynamics of such deaths and make recommendations for prevention and system improvements.

Working through the first half of 2009, the interested parties established an Oversight Committee that was dedicated to the establishment of a local fatality review team. This

¹ National Domestic Violence Fatality Review webpage, http://www.ndvfri.org/?page_id=323. Accessed January 22, 2011

process involved discussing the needs and concerns of the affected city and county governments and agencies, meeting with leading experts on Fatality Review and representatives from the State Government, as well as having members attend various trainings and workshops on fatality review. In June 2009 the oversight committee developed two subcommittees in order to finalize the creation process. One designed and drafted a resolution for the city of Flagstaff and Coconino County, while the other worked on developing a set of bylaws and rules of procedure that would guide the operation of the proposed team (Attachment B). One important decision point was the choice that this team would operate as a joint team for both the city of Flagstaff and Coconino County. This is a fairly unique organizational structure and could potentially serve as a model for future teams. Finally, on August 10, 2009, the resolution was presented as a discussion item at a Flagstaff City Council and Coconino County Board of Supervisors joint meeting (Attachment C). Subsequently, the Flagstaff City Council voted approval of the resolution on September 8, 2009, followed by the County Board of Supervisors on November 17.

These votes and adoption of the resolution officially appointed the 26 members of the oversight committee to the new Fatality Review Team by the City and County Managers. These members represent a diverse range of organizations and agencies that allow the team to draw upon a wide range of experience and insight and also allow for a great deal of information to be gathered during the review process itself. Team officers were subsequently elected and the team began an assessment of all the potential cases that could be reviewed. The first case to be reviewed was selected from a possible pool of 11 domestic homicides that occurred between 2000 and 2009 within Coconino County. Given the relatively small population of the city and county, the team found that the pool of possible cases was somewhat limited when compared to larger urban areas.