

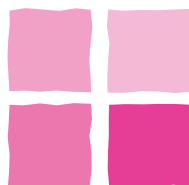


When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild nations,  
To bring peace among all,  
To make music in the heart.

-Howard Thurman

Peace in the home, peace on earth.

St. Martha's Hall  
Annual Report  
July 2015 - June 2016



SAINT MARTHA'S HALL  
BREAKING THE CYCLE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I often say “there is no such thing as a coincidence.” Every time you receive what some call a coincidence or an answered prayer, I believe it’s a direct and personal message of reassurance from God to you—what many call a Godwink. We experience these “winks” on a regular basis here at St. Martha’s Hall.

Sometimes it takes years to realize the why or what of these “winks.”

Seven years ago we experienced severe money crunch, like so many of us all, and we lost the funding that helped us provide the breakfast meal for our residents. A most caring middle school teacher heard about this and she started a breakfast food drive for us at her school. She and her students have continued this for us every year since.

When we go and pick up carloads of cereal the teacher gathers the students so that we may personally thank them, tell them about our shelter and domestic violence. This past September we once again went and spoke with the students. Right before the Thanksgiving break one of those students asked to talk with the teacher. The student told her how for years the student’s father had beaten their mother. This child had never told anyone about this and even though the family was now safe the effect on the children was still severe. The student said that when that lady from St. Martha’s Hall spoke there was a realization that the emotional pain had never healed. That teacher called us and asked for guidance on how to help this child. Hopefully what we encouraged and suggested will help this student. Time will tell.

Here is the Godwink- We lost funding, a teacher came to our aid, a student in pain reached out to the teacher and the teacher reached out to us and now hopefully the student will begin to heal. On the surface losing that money over seven years ago seemed like a crisis. Crisis or Godwink? We will go with the Godwink.

We wish you all many “coincidences” and Godwinks this year and always.

Peace and Perseverance,



Michelle Schiller-Baker

Executive Director

## WHO WE ARE

Since 1983 St. Martha’s Hall has been providing confidential emergency shelter and support services to abused women and their children.

We provide a supportive environment with a strong emphasis on peer support; implement a self-help philosophy to enhance self-esteem and decision-making skills; provide accurate information and referrals to abused women and their children and when appropriate to their abusers; provide advocacy services; provide individual crisis, group and family counseling; and offer community education to increase public awareness and understanding of domestic violence.

The program tries to ensure community effort, cooperation, independence and support of the women and their children that reside here. The staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors of St. Martha’s Hall are dedicated to empowering women to live violence-free lives.

## ETHICS AND VALUES

Our primary value is for human dignity and life. Ethics are our code of conduct.

Dignity is the sacred respect for others and self. Ethics are the actions we implement in our work to help assure the dignity of our clients, co-workers, community representatives and volunteers. Our specific values and ethics focus on violence against women and how oppression is played out and implemented through well-defined and systemic use of power and control.



## NAME AND LOGO

St. Martha lived in the time of Jesus. She was recognized for her nurturing and caring ways as well as her courage and outspokenness. She was highly respected for her service to others and recognized for such by the Catholic Church. Our logo, a cross, which also resembles a windowpane, gives a sense of place - representing a window of opportunity and a balance of power. Our logo was designed by Brian Woolbright.

## MISSION

Motivated by Christ's imperative to love neighbor as self, we dedicate ourselves to improving the dignity of family life and of the persons involved by meeting the challenge and resisting the evil of all forms of abuse: physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual.

Our mission is to help abused women and their children break the cycle of violence in their lives. St. Martha's Hall is guided by the social justice teachings of Jesus Christ. We attempt to accomplish this by providing safe shelter and supportive services that empower women to rebuild their lives.

## ENVISIONED FUTURE

Peace and safety for all women and their children.

## 2015-2016 AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS

### Shelter Program and Collaborations

#### Court Watch Project – Completes First Year with Office on Violence Against Women Funding!

Last September we received a three year grant from the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women to fund our Court Watch Project. This grant allowed us to hire someone to implement and coordinate the Project.

Brief history of this project: St. Martha's Hall is a member agency of the St. Louis Ending Violence Against Women Network -SLEVAWN. SLEVAWN is a network of organizations and individuals who serve in the interest of victims of domestic and sexual violence. Its mission is to end this violence.

In the fall of 2013 St. Martha's, as a member of SLEVAWN, became the lead agency in reigniting what is known as the Court Watch Project. The Court Watch Project is a volunteer staffed project under the auspices of SLEVAWN, in which court proceedings in the St. Louis Circuit Courts are monitored. Its mission is to make the justice system more effective and responsive in handling cases of domestic violence perpetrated against women and children and to create a more informed and involved public.

Trained volunteers attend court on specific days to observe Civil Protection Order cases and record case outcomes on a form. A report is then sent to the judge whose courtroom proceedings were monitored. The judge is then invited to meet and discuss the findings.

Nina Balsam, was hired to be the Court Watch Project Coordinator. This first year has been interesting, uplifting and filled with growing pains. For example our Department of Justice Grant Program Specialist came to St. Louis to observe the court dockets, meet with a judge and members of the Court Watch Project. We have seen an increase in court room safety and have recognized the flaws in our observations. We worked with the Center for Court Innovations to change our observation forms and to provide a training on risk assessment for both judges and advocates. We had thirty-five volunteer monitors observe close to 70 dockets.

We are proud to be a part of this project and are committed to advocating for our women and children in the judicial system. We are also gratified by the positive responses received by our judges. We are grateful for our judicial system.

#### Expert Witness Testimony

Jessica Woolbright our Children's Program Coordinator and Michelle Schiller-Baker our Executive Director have been qualified to provide expert witness testimony in criminal domestic violence cases. It is the experience and knowledge on the nature and dynamics of domestic violence that these staff members have that they have been qualified as experts by the court. Michelle was first qualified by a judge in 2002 and Jessica in 2010. Both staff members have now begun to provide this testimony on a more frequent basis. In the last year requests from prosecuting attorneys to use our staff in the prosecution of criminal domestic violence cases has increased. This year they provided expert testimony in four felony cases, 1 misdemeanor case, and 1 felony sentencing.

As expert witnesses they testify to victim and perpetrator behavior in general in an attempt to educate the jury. They do not testify to specifics of the case or crime. In each case the goals are to dispel myths and misconceptions about domestic violence, to highlight the controlling behavior of the abuser, and to explain typical victim behavior. Neither St. Martha's Hall nor these staff members are paid for this service. It is done as an extension of our mission to end violence against women.

### **Father's Support Center-Parenting in Partnership Women's Classes**

For the last five years we have had a wonderful partnership with the Father's Support Center. The Center, a nonprofit, provides services to parents, with a particular focus on fathers. The Center's program, Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood Family Formation Project, seeks to strengthen the role of fatherhood in the family. St. Martha's Hall provides on-going domestic violence orientation to Father Support Center staff and Jessica Woolbright, our Children's Program Coordinator facilitates monthly classes working directly with the fathers providing education about the effects of domestic violence on children.

This past year our Children's Advocate, Toni Ritcher, began facilitating bi-weekly classes for women in the Parenting in Partnership program at the Center. This program is geared toward teaching mothers the skills and tools necessary to communicate with the fathers in the raising of their children despite personal relationships. Toni's class focuses on the dynamics of domestic violence and the effects on children. We so appreciate the trust that the Center has afforded us in expanded our participation with their agency.

### **Legal Services of Eastern Missouri –LSEM**

We are now in our fourth year of a collaboration with LSEM. LSEM received a grant from U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, to address the holistic legal needs of victims and to expand collaboration with partner victim agencies. We were so very pleased that LSEM asked us to be a partner agency. We have worked informally with LSEM for over thirty-one years referring women in need of domestic, immigration, housing or other legal services. This collaboration helps provide our women and children priority intake services at LSEM and LSEM then provides expanded and enhanced services to our residents. As always we are grateful to work with LSEM.

## **Community Support**

### **Board of Directors**

- **Showers for the Shelter**

Last year our board had two "showers" for the shelter, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. These two "showers" provided the shelter with thousands of dollars' worth of supplies and gift cards. We are most grateful to Beth Pelch and Sheila Michalski for hosting these showers by opening their homes and provided all the guests with beverages, hors d'oeuvres and desserts. Beth and Sheila's generous hospitality helped make the shelter more comfortable for our residents.

### **Volunteers**

Thirty-three volunteers contributed 1,337 hours of service. This doesn't include the countless hours that are contributed by our dedicated board of directors. Our volunteers provided childcare, tutoring, mentoring, picked up and sorted donations, cleaned and organized parts of the shelter, facilitated arts and crafts groups, brought therapy dogs to the shelter to work with the children, provided music therapy, health classes helped with resumes, packed snack boxes, organized fundraising events and many other jobs.



## Volunteers continued

- ♦ **Garden Party and David**, a new florist and home décor shop located in Clayton, had several events to support St. Martha's Hall. Owner Meg Huber is a former board of directors' member and continues to support our mission. Last March in celebration of St. Patrick's Day, Meg and business partner David, had an open house at the shop and a percentage of all sales went to the shelter. Additionally, Meg and David will occasionally tape the name, St. Martha's Hall to the bottom of an idea and when that item is sold the shelter gets the profit. We have the luck of the Irish to have such good friends as Meg and David.

## In-Kind Donations

Many generous and loyal groups have been providing special in-kind gifts to our shelter for a number of years and did so once again this past year. This list includes organizations that have donated to us for at least two years.

### **A special note of sincere gratitude to:**

*Altrusa*

*American Association of University Women*

*Assistance League of St. Louis- Project Rose*

*Bonhomme Presbyterian Church*

*Bath and Body Works, MidRivers*

*Bouffant Daddy*

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*St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Parish*

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*Traditional Congregation*

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*Wydown Middle School*

## **St. Martha's Hall Receives Public Service Award**

Each Year the Public Interest Law Group at Saint Louis University School of Law honors St. Louis area attorneys, law firms, and non-profit organizations that have shown a commitment to servicing the needs of those within the St. Louis community. On April 16, 2016 we were honored to receive the 2016 Excellence in Public Service Award.

We thank Saint Louis University School of Law for this honor and recognize the outstanding work that the SLU Law School does on behalf of those most in need, the oppressed and the marginalized. We are profoundly grateful to have such a remarkable law school that seeks justice for all in our community.



## Letter from Out Going Board President

December 1, 2016

I am proud to be writing my final letter to you. I am currently serving in my ninth and final year before I am term limited off the Board of Directors of Saint Martha's Hall. Kathy Rehmer assumed the presidency on July 1, 2016, and she is very qualified and passionate about Saint Martha's Hall. Please join me in welcoming Kathy to her new position.

Over the past 8 plus years I have often wondered about the interaction between our staff and the women and children we serve on a daily basis. I have heard our residents talk about the compassion, caring and love they receive from the staff, interns and volunteers. I have heard stories about our staff holding the residents hands, hugging them, listening to their stories, letting them know that their lives can turn around and simply being there for them.

There is a line in Les Mis, the Broadway musical, which goes like this: "To love another person is to see the face of God." What a powerful image.

When one of our residents is spending time with our staff member, receiving counseling, holding hands, receiving a hug or being consoled, I know that resident who is looking into our staff member's eyes is seeing the face of God.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve our residents and staff.

Bob Springer, Board Member



Drawings from The 8th Grade Class at St. Gabriel School.



## FINANCIALS

JULY 2015 - JUNE 2016

REVENUES	% OF REVENUE	
Private Contributions	\$409,999	34.30%
Investment Income	\$(1,855)	-0.16%
Government Grants/Contracts	\$572,018	47.97%
United Way	\$159,295	13.36%
Other Grants	\$46,190	3.87%
Special Events	\$4,973	0.42%
Other	\$2,813	0.24%

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,192,433</b>	<b>100%</b>
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EXPENSES	% OF EXPENSES	
Fundraising	\$43,634	3.67%
Administration	\$129,977	10.93%
Programs	\$1,015,689	85.40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,189,299</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Net Unrestricted Surplus</b>	<b>\$3,134</b>	
<b>Total Year End Net Assets = \$1,367,923.90</b>		

*Saint Martha's Hall is a registered 501(c) 3 non-profit agency.  
All donations to Saint Martha's Hall are tax-deductible.*

The Missouri Department of Social Services offers a special Domestic Violence Shelter Tax Credit equal to 50 percent of the amount of a donation. St. Martha's Hall has a **limited** number of these tax credits each year, and may be able to offer this tax credit for any cash donation of \$250 or more, over and above the value of goods and services received. **Please call 314-533-1313** if you are considering giving for tax credits to ensure that we have them available. All donations to St. Martha's Hall are still 100% tax deductible. The amount of the credit cannot exceed your state tax liability for the taxable year, but if it does, it can be carried over for four successive years.

This report honors donors who have made contributions during the July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016 fiscal year and organizations who have supported us with in-kind donations for at least the last two years. These women, men and organizations represent a deep commitment to ending violence against women and children.

We have tried to make this list accurate but we do make mistakes. If your name has been omitted, misspelled or incorrectly listed please notify Katy Keller at 314-533-1313 or [katyk@saintmarthas.org](mailto:katyk@saintmarthas.org).

## SERVICES PROVIDED

**In 2015-2016, St. Martha's Hall staff provided the following services:**

- ❖ Support and information to 1,896 callers through the 24-hour crisis and support hotline.
- ❖ Emergency shelter for 102 women and 110 children who were forced to flee their homes to escape abuse.
- ❖ Peace, safety and hope for 6,951 days and nights.
- ❖ Support and healing through 46 support groups and 48 parenting groups for women and 80 support groups for children.
- ❖ Resources to build for the future through 1,744 referrals to other services for our residents.
- ❖ Continued support and resources through follow-up services to 50 women.
- ❖ Assistance for 58 women establishing a goal plan for their lives freed from abuse.
- ❖ Support, information and accompaniment for 12 women going through the judicial system.
- ❖ Community education to increase public awareness and understanding of domestic violence to 96 community groups.

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, which is part of larger federal legislation, provided funding to develop nationally standardized surveys to help document the work of domestic violence organizations. The two key survey questions that are used at St. Martha's Hall ask: As a result of staying in our shelter do you know more ways to plan for your safety and do you know more about community resources. 92% of the women responding said they know more ways to plan for their safety and 92% said they knew more about community resources.



## WITH GRATITUDE TO OUR SUPPORTERS



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In Tribute to Sarah Cuddihee  
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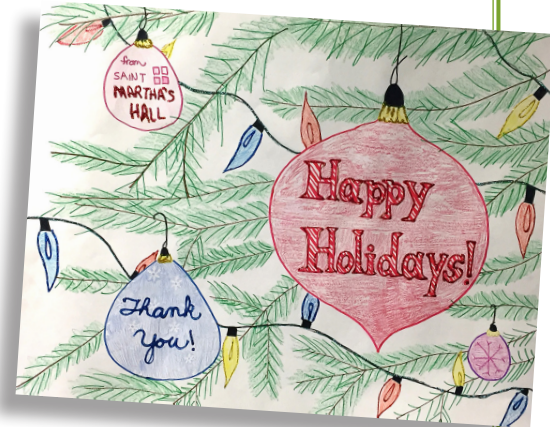


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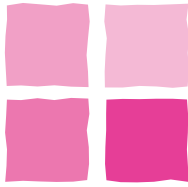


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