



Zonta Club of Charleston

Member of Zonta International

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide



Summary Report The Fourth ZONTA Coffee December 9, 2010

Bringing community resources together in collaboration to advocate for victims and to raise awareness and prevent interpersonal violence in the Tri-County.

For information on previous Zonta Coffees go to
www.ZontaofCharleston.com and click on **Zonta Coffee Reports**

Meeting Notes
December 9, 2010

Topic: Education and Employment

Present information on three important resources in our community that provide for victims and help others avoid domestic violence through education, training and employment.

Presenters:

General Counsel, Melissa Barnes, Charleston Housing Authority

Kimberly Perdue Shelton, Attorney at Law, SC legal Services

Mary Ann Hall, Attorney at Law (needed to be rescheduled)

Welcome

The coffee began with registration and networking. Kathleen Rodgers, Vice President of Zonta Club of Charleston, gave the opening remarks and provided information on our upcoming feature event*. Diana Bogart, Coffee Committee Chair introduced the topic and the speakers.

***Zonta Feature Event**

The Zonta Club of Charleston and Liza's Lifeline are co-hosting "Breaking the Silence Gala and Awards Dinner" January 22, 2011. Please go to www.zontaofcharleston.com to nominate a friend or colleague who is deserving of an award because they have made a difference in a victim's life or in the community.

Speakers

The spotlight speaker was General Counsel, Melissa Barnes of the Charleston Housing Authority. HUD is a quasi-government agency with a \$100 million budget. It supports a number of programs to provide housing for individuals in need.

- Section Eight housing choice vouchers for 1,200 who negotiate a lease
- Low income housing for 1,400
- 200 units available with SHP grants

- Provide housing for special needs such as mental illness and the formerly incarcerated.

The Charleston Housing Authority is in compliance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Individuals must admit they are a victim and then identify the perpetrator to have him or her banned from the housing units. The victims can also be relocated and helped to find support. There is a wait list for housing but certain situations can move people up the list faster. For example Katrina victims, individuals who are employed and victims of domestic violence and stalkers are given preference.

Our second presenter was Kimberly Perdue Shelton an Attorney at Law with the South Carolina Legal Services. Legal Aid Services is a statewide organization. Income guidelines are used to select clients for services such as divorce, custody and orders of protection. Ms. Shelton works with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. If the husband of a couple controls the finances, the victim is classified as zero income. Abusers would like to maintain that their victims should not qualify for legal aid.

Networking:

Networking is an important part of the Zonta Coffees. Everyone was given an opportunity to stand up, introduce him or herself, and tell the group what they do and what they needed. Here is a short list of those who introduced themselves.

- Doug Warner founder of Liza's Lifeline
- Mike Bogart, Exchange Club
- Sue Warren Victims Advocate, Mt. Pleasant:
- Mike DiNicola, PhD and Eugenia Felderer are with the Berkeley County School System
- Scott Beard, Kate Nyquist and Erin Huley with the Solicitor's Office and the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence
- Sarah Finkelstein and the National Council of Jewish Women and
- Bob O'Connell with Coastal Crisis Chaplaincy
- Jessica Credeur with Dee Norton Child Advocacy
- Ruby Godley with People Against Rape (PAR)

- My Sister's House
- Easter La Roche with Victims Advocates
- Interfaith Ministerial Alliance
- Nick Collins with Mt. Pleasant City Council
- Lisa Robinson author of Speak My Sister Speak
- Brenda Edmond with the Navel Weapons Station assisting and educating military families

Many others reported on their services to assist victims and work with families to prevent interpersonal violence.

Schedule of Upcoming Zonta Coffees:

Additional coffees are scheduled for the following dates:

June 16, September 15, December 8 and March 15 2012

All meetings will be held at the North Charleston City Hall building. Topics are chosen in response to comments received from attendees.
