



SANTA BARBARA RAPE CRISIS CENTER
CENTRO CONTRA LA VIOLACION SEXUAL
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR PUBLISHED BY THE SANTA BARBARA INDEPENDENT ON NOVEMBER 18, 2004

Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center (SBRCC) would like to express our appreciation for the Independent's important coverage of the brutal rapes and murders of women in Juárez, México. We stand in solidarity with the women of Juárez and the activists who struggle to stop the killings and bring the perpetrators to justice. Violence against women all over the world must be condemned. We hope that international attention to the tragedies in Juárez will aid the search for those responsible and help meet demands to keep women safe.

We must remember that violence against women is not confined to places like Juárez, Sudan, and Iraq, nor is it limited to violence perpetrated by unknown assailants. During the last year, SBRCC served over 600 community members whose lives were touched by sexual violence. 85% of the survivors who sought our services were assaulted by someone they knew and trusted, and most sexual assaults take place in the home of the survivor. In addition to supporting communities abroad who work for justice and safety for women, we urge you to take a stand against sexual violence in our homes and neighborhoods. Each act of sexual violation is a crime against humanity and must not be tolerated in Santa Barbara. Each of us can do something to build a community that believes, supports, and empowers survivors and holds perpetrators accountable for their actions. To get involved, visit www.sbrapecrisiscenter.org or call 963-6832.

Submitted by Alena Donovan, Community Education Coordinator

IN MEMORY OF RITA ORNELAS

With great sadness and a deep sense of loss, we want to inform you that Rita Ornelas passed away on November 18, 2004 at her home in Carpinteria after a valiant struggle with breast cancer. Rita was a remarkable woman, as well as a very dear co-worker, colleague, and friend. Rita became a trained advocate with SBRCC in 1986 and served as our Self-Defense Instructor from 1998 through 2004.

Rita was born on December 2, 1952 and grew up in Santa Barbara. She began working with UCSB in 1974 as the Women's Representative for the on-campus residence halls for Housing & Residential Services. She then started working at the Women's Center in 1994 as the Office Manager and then served as the Assistant Rape Prevention Education Coordinator for eight years. Rita was an instructor with Physical Activities teaching a course titled, "Personal Defense" since 1989.

Many people remember Rita through her studio in Carpinteria in which she taught self defense classes to women and girls with a type of models-mugging course. Rita also traveled around the country assisting public and private schools in sexual assault education and self esteem projects. Rita is survived by her two children, Veronica and Reuben, as well as Vince, her husband of 32 years.

Rita's strength, passion and commitment will be missed terribly by all of us. It is hard to lose a fellow warrior in the movement to end sexual violence. However, we will honor Rita's memory as we continue our efforts to support and empower all survivors of sexual violence.

WHY TAKE AN EXTRA 12 HOURS OF TRAINING?

Statistics show that people would rather be dead than speak in public. Yet, education is key to social change.

Training was finished and I began to notice a lot of the world through a different pair of eyes. I saw pain that screamed from the eyes of emaciated supermodels, appearing to me on glossy pages in grocery stores. I noticed the pinch of anger I felt when listening to the world and its blind misogynistic words. I noticed how jaded I had become to other people's ignorance regarding sexual assault and how hard it was for me to sit quietly in a room somewhere when Eminem's Kim was blasting the stereo. I was a walking ball of liberal ideas and I couldn't help the frustration I felt when surrounded by people who didn't mirror the same ideas and feelings about the things I cared about.

There's no use trying to unlearn the truth, even if the truth doesn't always wear a pretty face. Our job once we have the knowledge acquired through training is to spread the word as far as we can reach. No advocates I know were born with the knowledge they have now. The beliefs we cradle were all taught through education and heightened awareness, and our job is turn around to the world and do the same.

We all educate in little ways – we inform the people around us about what we've learned as advocates. We point out when things are offensive or downright wrong. I applaud everyone on spreading the word because that's how things will someday change.

But remember that there is a whole world out there that isn't lucky enough to have you as a friend to educate them on these issues. The truth is that most people don't know anything about sexual assault except what they've seen on TV or heard from idols like Eminem. By going out into your community and educating groups of people, you hold the power to change the lives of stranger. You wield the ability to dispel myths and change the way that the community – and the world – thinks about sexual assault.

By being just one person, you can reach out to thousands of people. Please, take Speaker's Bureau training and go out to educate the people who aren't lucky enough to know what you know! The more people we have reaching out to the community, the bigger and more educated our world will become.

Faith Gardner
Former Speaker's Bureau Member

Speaker's Bureau Training for English-speaking advocates will begin in January 2005. After completing the 12-hour course, you will be ready to present Rape Prevention Education workshops to middle and high schools, college classes, and various community groups. If you are interested in joining the Speaker's Bureau, contact Alena at alena@sbrcc.net or 963-6832, ext.29 as soon as possible.

VOLUNTEER OF THE QUARTER: DANIELLE SWANSON

We are pleased to honor Danielle Swanson as volunteer of the quarter. Danielle serves on the hotline, provides long-term counseling, and works with the Speakers' Bureau. During her tenure, Danielle has gone above and beyond in her responsibilities. She has covered a full load of long-term counseling clients, has facilitated teen and adult survivor support groups and reliably covered her hotline shift. She has volunteered for SBRCC for about 1 year and previous to that volunteered with Villa Magella's TLC Program. Danielle feels passionate about working in crisis situations.

When asked how SBRCC has impacted her personal and professional life, Danielle said that her work at SBRCC has changed the way in which she sees the world. The perspective the rape crisis center offers has empowered her and as a result, she has been able to empower the clients with whom she works. She is glad to have had a jump-start in counseling through SBRCC.

Danielle's first feminist or social justice memory goes back to when she took the SBRCC training. Prior to taking the training, she "walked around blindly," without being fully aware of the trauma that people experience. She describes her experience in the training as an awakening.

One of Danielle's proudest/exciting moments has been the birthing of her son. She is a single mom and is proud of the achievements she has made including going to school to get her masters degree to provide counseling.

When describing SBRCC to other members of the community, she indicates that the center is a beautiful place—a wonderful place for women and men survivors of sexual assault to heal. She is amazed at the work that is done at SBRCC and the people who do it! She is also glad to be a part of an organization where the word feminist is not a bad word.

Without a doubt Danielle is a true inspiration and she derives her inspiration from her work with clients. She enjoys the journey she travels with clients as they do their work to heal. She indicates that the outcomes are not always perfect, but clients are able to find hope.

Danielle's vision for SBRCC in the next five years is to have a larger program available for teens. She would like to see SBRCC conduct more psycho-educational groups for junior high and high school students. She would also like to see SBRCC moved to a facility that better meets all of our needs—thanks for that Danielle, we're all rooting for that. If Danielle could make one societal/cultural change, she would want people to accept each other. She would not strive to have a colorblind society, but a color awareness society—one in which we would all love and appreciate our differences.

Danielle wants people to know that she has received her masters and that if she can do it even with the responsibilities of being a single mom, then anyone can do it. She fully believes that working on issues of sexual violence draws out the strength in people. She is thankful for her support system—her family. Outside of her volunteer work at SBRCC, Danielle feels a passion for working with children. She wants to bring hope to people's lives through counseling. When she has faced an obstacle with a client, she has managed to work through it with them and that triumph has made it all worth it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOIN US FOR THE NEXT ADVOCATE MEETING: DECEMBER 14TH FROM 6PM – 8PM

In addition to discussing SBRCC's new Call Report Forms, No Harm contracts and updated Community Referral list, we will participate in team-building activities in order to get to know each other better. We will also spend time processing hotline calls and crisis counseling sessions. Please bring any questions that you may have. Hope you can join us on December 14th!

2005 ADVOCATE MEETING DATES

Advocate Meetings for English-speaking volunteers are scheduled on the second Tuesday evening of every month. Specific dates for 2005 meetings are as follows:

- January 11
- February 8
- March 8
- April 12
- May 10
- June 14
- July 12
- August 9
- September 13
- October 11
- November 8
- December 13

DECEMBER HOLIDAY CLOSURES

SBRCC's office will be closed on Thursday, the 23rd of December; Friday, the 24th of December; and Friday, the 31st of December. Of course, the 24-hour hotline will still be operational throughout the winter holiday.

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF FUN AND APPRECIATION ON JANUARY 27, 2005!

SBRCC is so thankful for all the time, effort and energy that our volunteers give to our programs. With your support and commitment, you are making a difference in the lives of many. As a small token of our appreciation, we hope that you will join us for a "Game and Movie Night," scheduled for Thursday, January 27th starting at 6pm. This will be a casual event, a time for advocates to mingle and get to know each other, while playing games, watching a movie or two, and eating lots of yummy snacks. We'll let you know more details as they develop, but for now, please mark this date on your new 2005 calendar. If you can make it, please RSVP to Yesenia at 963-6832, x. 26.

SPECIAL MAKE-UP/REFRESHER MEETING FOR ADVOCATES: MONDAY DECEMBER 6TH

If you have been unable to make recent Advocate meetings and/or you are unable to attend the next Advocate meeting on December 14th, please consider attending a Special Make-up meeting on **Monday, December 6th from 6pm – 8pm**. Update your knowledge base and refresh your skills for crisis counseling on the phone and in-person. This meeting will be an opportunity to learn about important paperwork and program procedure changes, as well as a time to process skills and talk with other advocates. Please come with any questions you may have. Please contact Yesenia if you have any questions.

BE THE CHANGE—BE A PART OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH!

Rape makes us angry. And sad. And sometimes, rape makes us want to give up. We can transform this pain into fuel for our passion to end sexual violence and build a world where we spend our lives thriving and loving instead of responding to and surviving atrocities. Ending rape is more than answering hotline calls; it's a movement for liberation and justice that needs your voice in order to shift the attitudes and beliefs at the root of rape culture. Become a catalyst for change by taking part in SBRCC's 2005 Sexual Assault Awareness Month campaign!

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), a time to focus our efforts on raising community awareness about sexual violence and inciting action to end it. Your participation, creativity, and vision are vital to the success of this year's campaign. On **Tuesday, January 18, 2005 from 6:00-8:00pm** we'll hold a SAAM volunteer meeting at SBRCC. Let Alena know you want to be involved by calling 963-6832 ext. 29 or emailing her at alena@sbrcc.net. Be the change you want to see in the world!

UPCOMING SELF-DEFENSE WORKSHOP

The next Self-Defense Workshop is scheduled for **Saturday, December 11th from 10am – 2pm**. Classes are \$30 per person. Please help to spread the word! Call SBRCC for more information. A self-defense class can be a great present for someone you love. Gift certificates are available.

SBRCC NEEDS MORE ADVOCATES – HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

- The next **English Crisis Intervention Training** is scheduled for **April 18, 2005 – June 6, 2005**. Classes will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6 p.m. – 10 p.m. and one Saturday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. If you know individuals who may be interested, please have them call Heather at 963-6832 or send an email to heather@sbrcc.net
- The next **Spanish Crisis Intervention Training** is scheduled for **January 24, 2005 – March 16, 2005**. Classes will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6 p.m. – 10 p.m. and one Saturday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. If you know individuals who may be interested, please have them call Maria at 963-6832 or send an email to maria@sbrcc.net

WE ESPECIALLY NEED VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE SPANISH/ENGLISH BILINGUAL!

DO YOUR SHOPPING ONLINE AND SUPPORT SBRCC

If you are shopping for holiday gifts or are just planning ahead for upcoming birthdays, graduations or other occasions, you can now support SBRCC by shopping online! FundIt.org offers a free service that allows you to make a contribution to SBRCC every time you purchase items online at no extra cost to you. Just follow these simple steps:

1. Go to <http://www.fundit.org/santa-barbara-rape-crisis-center/>
2. Shop at all your favorite stores online, and SBRCC will get a percentage of everything you buy.

Please think of SBRCC as you finish your shopping for the holidays, or just for everyday purchases that you may need to make. Some of the stores that have partnered with FundIt.org to help support nonprofits in Santa Barbara are Amazon.com, Macy's, Apple, Sharper Image, K-B Toy, Office Depot, Petco., and Target. You can use this service all year long to order office supplies, send flowers, download music, order magazines, and even to purchase textbooks.

Please check out FundIt.org today and spread the word to your friends and co-workers. Thanks for your support! If you have any questions, feel free to talk with Myfanwy.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:



- Cynthia E. on December 11th
- Elizabeth R. on December 11th
- Melissa C. on December 17th