



Women's Healing & Empowerment Network
(WHEN)

Work Experience Project

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Estimated Duration of Project: 12 months

Capital Strategic Project Grant Application for \$xxxx

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Need Statement

Nationally, 36.3% of women in the U.S. report having experienced some form of domestic violence in their lifetime.¹ In Washington state, this population is 46.2% of Washington women.² Domestic violence refers to abusive behavior patterns intended to maintain power over an individual or group of people, perpetrated by intimate partners, former spouses, parents, children, household members, relatives, colleagues, or peers.³ The term “abusive behavior” includes physical, sexual, emotional, economic, and psychological violence.⁴ In the state of Washington, 56,815 domestic violence offenses were reported in 2018, nearly an 8.2% increase from 2016.⁵ On any given day in Washington, of the survivors who seek support, counseling, and educational services, only an estimated 892 receive these services. An additional 732 survivors are turned away due to a lack of program resources.⁶

The impact of domestic abuse, especially in the absence of appropriate intervention services, is significant. The survivors—primarily women—consequently struggle with isolation and physical and psychological health impairments (including frequent headaches, chronic pain, difficulty sleeping, activity limitations, depression, increased risk of STDs/STIs, and unplanned pregnancies).⁷ Nearly 76% of abused women in Washington state report having experienced at least one negative health impact.⁸ The detriments of domestic violence do not stop at the individual level: they influence the functioning of society as a whole. Nationally, the lifetime economic costs associated with various domestic violence related services is \$3.6 trillion. The estimated lifetime economic cost for a woman who has experienced domestic violence is \$103,767 per survivor.⁹

Over the past decade, domestic violence offenses in Spokane County have been consistently higher than the state average, and the county reports the fifth highest rate of domestic violence offenses out of all counties in Washington.¹⁰ One contributing factor to the domestic violence issue in Spokane County is a lack of awareness regarding the problem’s severity. Greater community involvement and investment in support of domestic violence relief services is needed to inform the general public. Interactions between the community and anti-domestic violence organizations are currently limited in scope, thus inhibiting recognition of the problem and

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs-statereportbook.pdf>

² https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf

³ Women Helping Women 2019 Report; <https://whenetwork.com/forms-of-abuse>;
<https://www.waspc.org/assets/CJIS/2018%20ciw.pdf>

⁴ www.partners4prevention.org/sites/default/files/preferred_terminology_final.pdf; <https://www.justice.gov/ovw>;
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs-statereportbook.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.waspc.org/assets/CJIS/2018%20ciw.pdf>;
<https://www.waspc.org/assets/CJIS/2016%20crime%20in%20washington.small.pdf>

⁶ <https://wscadv.org/news/domestic-violence-counts-census-2016-report/>

⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf>;
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures#notes>

⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/fastfact.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/rda/riskprofiles/research-4.47-state.pdf>

gathering little public support. In 2017, domestic violence offenses occurred at a rate of 13.7 incidents per 1,000 residents of Spokane County—significantly higher than the Washington state rate of 7.6 incidents per 1,000 residents.¹¹ Such high rates place tremendous strain on local domestic violence organizations, who lack sufficient resources to meet the needs of survivors seeking support. Especially in the low-income community of Airway Heights (the location of WHEN), without adequate resources, many of these survivors face isolation and augmented economic hardship. Specifically, women with backgrounds of domestic abuse often feel they have nowhere to turn but back to their abuser (frequently resulting in repeated violence).¹² These women typically lack the employment skills, work experience, and financial knowledge that is necessary to live independently. In response, the Women’s Healing & Empowerment Network (WHEN) has identified women participating in our domestic violence support programs as a priority group to receive extensive occupational, economic, and financial training services.

Such work experience training is recognized by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) as a viable strategy for reducing a woman’s risk for abuse. The National Intimate Partner & Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) 2010 Report, compiled by the CDC, states that “creating opportunities for women and their children to increase their income, employment opportunities, and access other economic supports will decrease risk for violence.”¹³ Work experience plays an integral role in establishing a woman’s independence and self-sufficiency, as it equips her with the necessary capabilities to succeed in a position of employment. Work experience also fosters a positive environment with few risks in which women can receive feedback and hone their skills. The knowledge and experience they acquire helps them to make future positive, healthy life choices for themselves.

The WHEN Work Experience Program is designed to equip women impacted by domestic violence with the range of occupational, economic, and financial skills they need to pursue healthy, independent, and self-sufficient lifestyles. These skills, coupled with the positive, risk-free environment of the WHEN Work Experience Program will enable the women to learn, grow, and continue to heal. Upon the re-opening of WHEN’s thrift store, our program will teach transactional, retail-oriented, and customer-facing job skills including operating a cash register, negotiating customer requests, taking inventory, and budgeting. Beyond the immediate impacts, the WHEN Work Experience Program will rebuild and renew connections between these women and the community, promoting unity and collaboration—key aspects in the expansion and success of domestic violence support programs.

¹¹ <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/rda/riskprofiles/research-4.47-spokane.pdf>

¹² <https://whenetwork.com/forms-of-abuse>

¹³ https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf

Project Timeline

Activity	Month											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Begin renovation work on thrift store building												
Prepare ads for thrift store staff (to hire) & volunteers (to recruit)												
Recruit/hire staff & volunteers												
Consolidate & sort all previously acquired donations												
Move equipment & donations into thrift store facility												
Assemble participants for Work Experience Project												
Conduct pre-program Confidence in Self-Sufficiency surveys												
Open the thrift store to the public												
Implement Work Experience Project												
Track & record all store business operations												

Conclusion

Domestic violence is an ever-present threat to the safety of our community. WHEN strives to break the cycle of abuse and address this growing need for domestic violence services. With your support, we are seeking to build the capacity of our organization through the thrift store and Work Experience Project, while providing affordable goods to the Airway Heights community. With the resulting financial stability and program expansion, WHEN will possess the necessary tools to continue nurturing and inspiring women to gain valuable employment skills as they pursue independence and self-sufficiency.

WHEN appreciates your consideration for funding this transformative project. We look forward to hearing from you and building a relationship between our organizations. If you have any questions, please contact Mable Dunbar, Ph.D., Director of WHEN, at notrealaddress@email.com.
