

Dear Friends,

October is one of our favorite times of the year. The air is crisper, the leaves are vibrant, and it is a time for reflection. There is a certain energy as we analyze year-end data and take stock in all that we have accomplished this past year at WISE. It is a glance backward, grounding us for the future.

This last fiscal year, our four programs supported and reached more people than ever before. Our Prevention Program is back to pre-pandemic levels and growing. Our new programs are established and thriving. We are doing much of the same as usual, and we have learned to show up in new and different ways. After 2 ½ years of responding to the many changes that the pandemic created, we have learned a lot about ourselves. One of WISE's many strengths is the ability to pivot and quickly respond to whatever the day brings. By incorporating new technologies like Zoom and online chat, WISE advocacy is accessible to survivors as they prepare for court hearings, and they can reach out to us from work. Survivors with limited access to transportation can participate in writing and art groups online. These new technologies are not a replacement for in-person advocacy and support, rather they are new ways to connect with survivors incorporated into our toolbox.

We are pleased to share some of the Highlights from the past year and also the exciting new WISE programs on the horizon. All of this is possible because of your kind and generous support.

Warmly,


Peggy



Save the dates

WISE Writing Group

October 26 - December 7

Wednesdays 5:30-7:00 pm

rebekah@wiseuv.org to sign up

Foundations of Gender-Based Violence

scheduled for January and March 2023

stacey@wiseuv.org for more details

Covered Bridges Half Marathon

June 4, 2023

early registration opens November 14th

development@wiseuv.org for more information

Board Members

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Kate Harrison, Vice Chair

Margaret Rightmire, Treasurer

Gail Gentes, Secretary

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Jenny Levy • Jenny Williams

Karen Colberg • Mike Shipulski

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Peggy O'Neil, Executive Director

Susan Dewees, Board Emeritus

Sandhya Rajaraman, Tuck Revers Board Fellow

Will Indvik, Tuck Revers Board Fellow

We are thrilled to welcome Sherice McCarthy-Hill, Sandhya Rajaraman, and Will Indvik to the WISE Board.

Sherice brings a wide range of talents to the WISE Board as the Director of Payroll for Dartmouth and founder of "As I Am," a nonprofit supporting at risk girls in the greater Cleveland area. Sherice lives in Norwich.

Sandhya and Will, both Tuck '23, are this year's Tuck Revers Board Fellows.



WISE Program Center and Jane's Place

WISE safe spaces

As we near the finish line of renovating the new short-term apartment units, we are reflecting on this profound achievement. Today, WISE owns 3 buildings. Three physical spaces that signify our realized dream to be firmly rooted within the community. Three physical spaces that provide solid, foundational support to survivors whose lives are uprooted and are anything but secure.

- The WISE Program Center provides a safe place where survivors can meet with advocates and community members can come, be in community, and learn about how to end gender-based violence.
- The WISE Safe Home provides a short-term nurturing space where survivors can be safe while they gather what they need for the life they want next.
- Our latest acquisition, Jane's Place, offers 4 short-term independent living units, almost finished and ready to welcome survivors and their children.

What's next with WISE safe spaces? The final phase of renovations of the Program Center to add more programmatic space including housing our expanded WISE Legal Services.

“The first time I went to court, a person was there from WISE. She said she was there to support me. It meant so much to have someone in the room when I was standing up to this.” - survivor

Announcing our newest program: WISE Legal Services

Navigating complicated legal situations remain one of the biggest challenges survivors of gender-based violence and their children face. Finding legal counsel and representation is often difficult. Time and availability of legal counsel is limited, and many survivors who do not qualify financially still lack the income needed to support legal representation. Through the years, we have become experts at navigating the courts and legal systems and providing invaluable support for survivors.

But all too often, survivors require legal representation in order to achieve positive outcomes for their children and families. We have created an impressive latticework of legal resources and relationships including Domestic Violence Emergency Program (DOVE) attorneys, legal aid, local attorneys, Modest Means Program, etc. These resources are critical and limited. Even though we maintain close relationships with the important community resources, the need for legal representation far exceeds capacity.

We are very excited to share that we are ready to launch the WISE Legal Services Program. Building this new program is an exciting milestone for WISE. We have long identified this critical need and we are honored to expand our capacity to more fully support survivors and their children. The WISE Legal Services Program encompasses the well-established immigration legal services program, known as Welcoming All Nationalities Network (WANN), and broadens its focus to include civil legal services. WISE Legal Services Program is unique and focused on gender-based violence and immigration legal cases. We are looking forward to our partnership with New Hampshire Legal Assistance (NHLA) on a recently awarded three year federal OVW Legal Assistance to Victims grant to support expansion of our legal services. We will continue to work in partnership with community legal resources, providing our expertise around domestic violence as well as accessing legal support through legal aid and DOVE attorneys as needed. WISE efforts will not be duplicative, rather highly specialized and collaborative with community legal resources. The process of recruiting staff has already begun and we are well on our way to providing legal services for survivors of domestic violence.



Staff spotlight: Charlene in her own words...

"When I saw WISE's ad in the paper for a Data Associate almost five years ago I hesitated. Although I had been looking for this type of work - wanting to contribute to my community and be of service - I wasn't sure I could handle working in such an emotionally charged environment. But apply I did. I was warmly greeted and immediately put at ease by my interviewer, accepted the position, and have never looked back."



Charlene joined WISE in April 2019 as the WISE Data Associate

"Although I don't work one-on-one with survivors, I can hear survivors being warmly invited in to our Program Center. And while I do not know their stories, I can hear their voices change from anxious desperation when they enter to calmness and sometimes, even laughter, when they leave. And I feel encouraged knowing that they have connected with us and can leave knowing they are not alone."

"Sometimes the work can feel heavy and it can seem like it would be easy to get discouraged. But all of my coworkers are supportive, kind, and have the most positive attitudes that I have encountered in my entire 45-year working career. We genuinely care about each other - AND our work. I am happy and proud to have found my home at WISE."



WISE Board and staff at Jane's Place in unit 4

Jane's Place

We are pleased to share that the renovations of WISE's new short-term apartment units are almost complete and we are looking forward to welcoming our first guests.

It has been amazing to see the transformation over the months after purchasing the building in the fall of 2020, updating the

infrastructure and accomplishing the vision. The building was acquired and renovated with clarity of purpose; a lot of hard work made possible by the incredibly generous support of our WISE community.

We are honoring several special relationships with WISE by naming the new building, Jane's Place. 'Jane Doe' conveys anonymity and inclusivity for people who identify as female. Jane Doe is any of us. Jane is also the name associated with two families who have been generous to WISE over the years and are the project's two most significant supporters.

MITC listening and changing outcomes

In the fall of 2019, we opened the WISE Multidisciplinary Interview and Training Center (MITC) in White River Junction, to provide survivor-centered forensic interviews, offer outreach and training to help build law enforcement's capacity to provide trauma-informed responses to victims, and build and maintain a cohort of experts to testify in court. This new and innovative program had to pivot soon after launching due to the pandemic. True to WISE strengths, we quickly adapted to the shifting restrictions.

As a result of these restrictions, the team began offering remote interviews via Zoom. Interviewing remotely had unexpected benefits - it provided extra comfort and flexibility for survivors which are goals for all MITC interviews. Participants could be interviewed where they felt most secure and comfortable. They did not have to get to and from the interview facility, could be interviewed in their own space and could have their comfort animals next to them. Today, we can offer survivors a choice: they can be interviewed in person or virtually.

To date, the MITC team has interviewed 57 people, many of them multiple times. Through the process, survivors feel heard and can share the backstories that are necessary for others to fully understand what was done to them. They can talk about their experiences and provide context around the crimes they experienced. It is a powerful process that benefits survivors, and benefits the criminal legal system because it results in more complete and accurate information, which results in better resolutions and more accountability.





Dartmouth students learning to create safer spaces

Now in our seventh year as a consistent presence and partner on campus, WISE's engagement with the Dartmouth community continues to grow. With the return to campus life, students from Greek Houses, athletic teams, and clubs are reaching out directly to WISE to learn how to create safer environments. These gatherings provide great opportunities to introduce WISE, discuss gender-based violence as a cultural issue, and brainstorm ways to build new cultures and attitudes that lessen violence in student spaces. WISE was invited to speak with students at Greek houses, athletic teams, clubs, and other informal student groups. WISE partnered with the Student Presidential Committee on Sexual Assault, Sexual Assault Peer Allies, Dartmouth EMS, and the Greek Leadership Council to provide training to campus leaders. Over the year, we reached 1,179 people on campus through 33 events.



WISE at Dartmouth's Memorial Field

WISER materials

Always looking to reach to new audiences with WISE information, we love creating new materials and making existing materials more accessible.

As part of a Social Impact Project (SIP) at Dartmouth College, Spanish-3 classes translated our Surviving Domestic Violence and Surviving Sexual Violence booklets. Dr. Kianny Antigua worked with students in both her spring and summer classes to translate the WISE booklets.

We created a new booklet for adults who have young people in their lives. The Prevention: a WISE approach to supporting young people booklet covers a wide variety of topics such as how to be a trusted adult and how to talk to young people about healthy and unhealthy behavior in age-appropriate ways.

All new and existing WISE materials are available at wiseuv.org/read.

Through our partnership with the Dartmouth Peak Performance (DP2), an initiative designed to holistically support athletic students, we provided regular Instagram content about the dynamics of gender-based violence, how to support survivors, and how to create a more peaceful Upper Valley.

The overall message? Students are empowered to create their own cultures. They don't need rules and policies implemented in order to create safe environments. They have more influence than they think and can create new cultures and attitudes that will lessen violence within their own communities.



Dr. Kianny's Summer 2022 Spanish Class

And into the next 50 years...

WISE honored 50 years supporting survivors in the Upper Valley, a meaningful milestone and an opportunity to reflect on our history.

Because the pandemic limited our ability to gather together, we partnered with Northern Stage to create a podcast retrospective. The 6-part series features stories of the people who helped evolve WISE into the organization it is today and who continue to create positive change into the present and future.

The series culminated with a live broadcast conversation through our partnership with Junction Arts & Media (formerly known as CATV). Both the podcast and the live conversation are accessible at wiseuv.org/media.

How can I support a friend?

- Listen without judgement
- Believe them
- Reassure them that it's not their fault
- Allow them to make their own decisions
- Give time and space to process
- Connect with WISE

DP2 post for Sexual Violence Awareness Month

End of year planning

As you focus on your end of year financial planning and tax strategies, please consider including WISE in your plans. There are many ways to support WISE's mission while enjoying financial benefits for 2022 and in the future.

By donating some or all of your retirement plan's Required Minimum Distributions to WISE, you receive tax benefits while sustaining WISE's mission.

Appreciated stocks and assets also present a great opportunity to support WISE. When you choose to donate stocks, both you and WISE benefit — we receive the full value of the stock, and you avoid paying capital gains tax.



Email development@wiseuv.org to learn more.

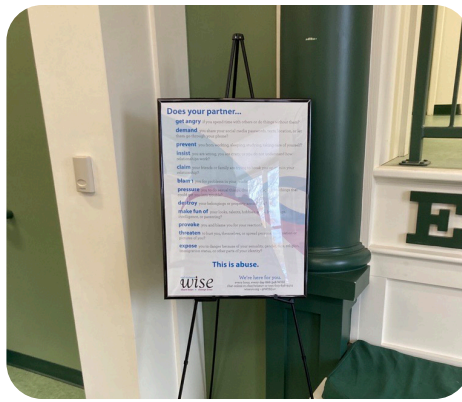
An overview of FY22

We had an amazing year despite the frequent changes at hospitals and courts due to the different waves of Covid. Our incredible staff and volunteers work together, remaining flexible so that WISE is fully accessible to the community.

WISE supported 1434 survivors, 70.3% of whom had never contacted WISE before. This was a 5.3% increase over FY21. Whenever survivors need support, we are always available every hour, every day. We support survivors for varied amounts of time: sometimes interactions are brief, sometimes support lasts for many years, and sometimes interactions are intermittent as survivors reach out at various points in their lives. We develop long-term relationships with survivors, helping them navigate different systems and explore available options under very stressful circumstances.

FY22 was the first full year that WISE supported survivors in the communities of northern Grafton County added to our service area. By building relationships with community partners and in the schools, our presence in Haverhill and Piermont area is growing. We experienced an 18.6% increase in Grafton County survivors reaching out to WISE which can be attributed to increased outreach activities within these new communities.

WISE returned to classrooms in person, including adding The Ottauquechee School and The Prosper Valley School to the already robust roster. WISE Educators were back in classrooms throughout the Upper Valley, fully recovered from the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. WISE educators facilitated 710 sessions and reached 3977 Upper Valley students in 10 school districts. This reflects a 68.5% increase over FY21.



WISE Does your partner poster in Woodsville High School Lobby

FY22 (July 2021 - June 2022) by the numbers

Advocacy Program

1,434 total people supported
120 average people supported per month
1008 first time callers
84 average first time callers per month

Youth Violence Prevention Program

711 lessons
3,981 students
30 schools
10 school districts

Professional Training

health professionals, law enforcement, educators
22 presentations
710 participants

WISE Volunteers

43 active crisis line volunteers supported survivors and donated **9,946** hours
20 ambassadors represented WISE within the community **25** times



"A fulfilling part of my job is working directly to support survivors and families, and seeing the myriad of ways in which they overcome huge obstacles in so many courageous ways."

-Brianne Gallagher,
Family Violence
Prevention Specialist

"People are struggling and juggling so much. I just want to be a part of their support system." *Brianne, WISE Program Advocate and Family Violence Prevention Specialist (FVPS)*

Partner focus: DCYF and WISE in the Upper Valley

WISE has an advocate on staff whose specialty and expertise is child protection services. Brianne, the WISE Family Violence Prevention Specialist (FVPS), provides trauma-informed advocacy and works together with the Division for Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) in New Hampshire to improve interventions with families experiencing a co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse and neglect. The goal is to maximize survivors and their children's safety and well-being. Through this unique and established program, Brianne is able to more fully support survivors as they interact with these different systems.

Having an advocate who is co-located at DCYF is a tremendous source of support. The FVPS is a confidential resource who can be by the parent's side, walking through it all step-by-step, someone who can explain the process and explain what the survivor can expect. The FVPS can work with survivors to think about what safety would look like to them and their children while addressing the many obstacles that they encounter day by day. It is long-term support, a relationship that is always there

The FVPS has a dual role of also working with DCYF caseworkers, providing the gender-based violence lens and interpreting the visible and more subtle dynamics of power and control. Brianne attends monthly meetings with both the Claremont and Littleton DCYF offices. She can help individual case workers understand what is happening in the moment and she supports survivors long after their case is closed.