

## National Walk-in for Justice

For fifteen years, WATCH has had a daily presence in Hennepin County courts, monitoring what happens and reporting on our findings in an effort to improve the justice system's response to violence against women and children. While the system is far from perfect, we take for granted the public's right to observe it, and we participate in many committees and processes designed to give continued feedback to the courts.

In many jurisdictions, this is not the case. Take for example, the following comments:

*When a judge doesn't want observers in his court, he holds the hearing in a room so small no one but the judge and attorneys fit in it.*

*All members of the gallery have to be seated. One judge had maintenance take out the benches in his courtroom so no one could observe the proceedings.*

*For a couple years, we were not having a problem with access to hearings. Now they have changed the procedures and we have to file a 'motion to intervene.' Every motion we have filed so far has been denied. We are often asked to attend proceedings by advocates and victims. The only option we have is for a volunteer to go to the courthouse, sign in, and sit outside the courtroom while the hearing is in progress.*

The first scenario was described to

WATCH by an advocate from China, where we might expect a lack of transparency in government operations. Unfortunately, the other situations have been reported to WATCH by advocacy groups in the United States, whose efforts to analyze their courts are met with resistance and hostility.

WATCH provides training and technical assistance to groups across the country interested in court monitoring, and this year we are planning a nationwide event to bring attention to the need for systematic monitoring of the courts in every jurisdiction.

The **National Walk-in for Justice** will be held at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 2, 2008, in cities and towns across the country. Coordinated by WATCH, the event will bring together organizations and individuals interested in open, responsive courts. There is strong interest in Minnesota for this event, and we are working with groups in more than 20 states to spread the word in their jurisdictions.

WATCH has been chosen to present three training sessions at the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence annual conference this summer, demonstrating the great need for information on court monitoring among advocacy groups nationwide. WATCH will provide assistance to anyone interested in participating in the Walk-in, and we are developing

promotional materials and press information to increase public awareness and involvement in this effort.

More details about the event in Hennepin County will be coming in the July newsletter, but mark your calendar now and plan to join us for this first ever national event.

## What's new

### Staff updates

In February, Heather Wolfgram left WATCH to pursue her interests in program evaluation and research. In her position as court monitoring coordinator, Heather worked closely with volunteers and interns, developed and implemented special projects, and worked on strategic planning and program evaluation. Thanks for all your work over the past two years and best wishes, Heather.

Sarah Coulter was hired to take over as the new court monitoring coordinator. Sarah is a recent graduate

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# Calling it what it is: a crime, not sex

By Marna Anderson

The outcome of the Dominic Jones trial, a felony sex crime conviction, reveals that the justice system has come a long way in its interpretation of what constitutes sexual assault as opposed to consensual sex—at least in Hennepin County.

Though the media seems to have minimized the guilty verdict because it is the lesser of the two counts against Jones, he was convicted of a felony crime requiring him to register as a sex offender for a minimum of 10 years in addition to other penalties. He was convicted because the crime was effectively and aggressively investigated and prosecuted.

It is not uncommon for cases like the Jones case to go un-prosecuted. (Google “De Anza College baseball players” and “gang rape of Halliburton employee” for two examples.) While WATCH courtroom monitors observed prosecutors presenting video-taped evidence of Jones’ blatantly criminal behavior inside the courtroom, outside the courtroom, many people revealed *the-victim-got-what-she-had-coming* attitude still prevalent in our society. In fact, some researchers say a crime is often not even perceived as having occurred when an athlete or group of athletes is involved.

One such person declared that the victim in the case *should have known* what would happen if she went into an apartment with “four football players.” He told his own daughter that she better not ever call him from an athlete’s apartment saying she had been raped. He wouldn’t buy it. In his opinion, the victim put herself in a vulnerable situation and deserved what happened to her.

Fortunately, the law does not agree with him and neither did the jury.

But statistics bear out that sexual assault by male student-athletes is high. A three-year study by researchers at Northwestern University revealed that, while male student-athletes make up just three percent of the student population, they represent 19 percent of reported sexual assaults on university campuses. And the following statistics show that they often assault with impunity.

The national conviction rate for reported and prosecuted rape and sexual assault cases is approximately 80 percent. When the defendants are college or professional athletes, however, conviction rates drop to around 35 percent. (It is likely true that other defendants with significant social, economic, or political power benefit from lower conviction

rates as well.) While this inequity should make us angry, it comes as no surprise given the privileged status granted to “sports heroes,” including access to costly legal representation, and perhaps more troubling, access to favorable status in our star-struck culture.

Statistics also point to an increase in gang rape by male student-athletes. Studies examining this troubling trend suggest that the strong male bond among teammates can engender a sense of entitlement, power, and privilege. The entire community associated with the group will come to its defense. A psychologist from Bucknell University who studied 26 sexual assault incidents on campuses around the country that involved groups of men, wrote that gang rape “usually occurs in a group of young men with a team spirit and usually living together. I think they end up relating to each other so intensely even their sexual experiences become shared.” And women are just bit players in this club: the bonding is over their bodies, not with them.

The facts revealed in the Jones trial illustrate the extent of the privilege and protection assumed by the football players in the apartment the night of the assault. They participated in assaulting the victim as a group, or as one newspaper reported, “taking turns having sex with her.” One witness testified that while Jones was assaulting the victim, he asked, “Do you want a hit?” as if she were a joint being passed around for their own high and amusement.

In a desensitized culture that promotes women as throw-away sex toys and encourages young people of both genders to drink hard and party down, Jones probably assumed he was just entitled to some “fun” and that a comatose young woman was fair game. And his brotherhood of football players must have felt the same, videotaping it on a cell phone as if it was a night at the prom.

During the closing arguments, one of the prosecutors asked this rhetorical question: “Since when is sex automatically assumed or expected?” The question should also be asked, *for whom* is sex automatically assumed or expected?

If Dominic Jones and his teammates—and still too many members of the athletic-adoring public—don’t know the answer, then it’s up to the justice system to tell them. And that’s exactly what the Hennepin County Attorney’s Office and the jury did.

# Thumbs up/thumbs down

👍 Thanks to the hypocrisy of a certain New York former governor, prostitution has once again been a hot topic in the news. All too predictable in the wake of the Eliot Spitzer scandal was the call to legalize prostitution (see Steve Chapman's March 15<sup>th</sup> column in the *Star Tribune*) under the unproven premise that women actually benefit from such a law. The facts, however, speak for themselves. According to a 2003 Scottish government study, those countries that had legalized and/or regulated prostitution saw dramatic growth in child prostitution, trafficking of women and girls, violence against women, and the involvement of organized crime in the sex industry. Thumbs up to Scotland for documenting the real results of these misguided but much-touted policies.

👍 And, two giant thumbs up to Sweden for leading the world in its efforts to eliminate prostitution. In 1999, the country passed a bill criminalizing the buying of sex and decriminalizing the selling of sex. The first legislation of its kind, the bill also established comprehensive services to assist women in escaping prostitution and building stable lives. As an inspector with the Stockholm police unit dedicated to combating prostitution said, "The goal is to criminalize the demand side of the equation, the johns, rather than putting emotionally and physically imperiled women behind bars." The prostitution rate has dropped dramatically in the last nine years.

Police estimate that Stockholm has 2.5% the rate of prostitution of Oslo in nearby Norway. The number of women and children trafficked into Sweden for sexual exploitation has also been drastically reduced. Conservative estimates show that Sweden has 2.6% the rate of human trafficking as neighboring Finland.

👍 Thumbs up to NOW-NYC and the New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition for an on-target campaign to end human trafficking in the state. Due to their efforts over two years, the state legislature passed strong anti-trafficking legislation in 2006 that includes a comprehensive definition of trafficking, tough penalties for traffickers, comprehensive services for victims, clearer laws on sex tourism operations, and increased penalties for patronizing prostitution. Following the bill's passage, the groups turned their efforts to engaging local publications to sign on to *Trafficking Free NYC!*, a pledge to refrain from accepting advertisements for the commercial sex industry. By the end of 2007, 15 publications had stopped accepting ads for "escort" and "model" services that are often codewords for prostitution. Strong legislation and a successful media campaign are two big steps forward in ending the trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation.

👎 In contrast, thumbs down to *Star Tribune* reporter Rochelle Olson for her abysmal coverage of the Dominic Jones trial. In 14 articles posted between March 26 and April 16, 2008, Olson's coverage read more like public relations for the defendant and his attorney than newspaper reporting. For starters, her choice of language was better suited to a film review than a trial: she referred to the "debut" of the "cell phone sex (sic) video" (the "star for the prosecution") and described the start of the trial as "Wednesday's opening act," followed by "the second day of high drama," and on and on. Though the criminal complaint in this matter documents the victim stating she believed she had been raped, Olson repeatedly mischaracterized these reported rapes as the woman "having sex with three other men." Since when does "reporting" involve license to re-name someone's experience and print it as fact?

👍 Thumbs up to Judge Peter Albrecht for recognizing and rectifying a biased assumption he made in court. During a recent hearing at the Government Center, a WATCH monitor was asked by the judge if she was a relative of the defendant. The monitor and the defendant are both Somali. When the monitor identified herself as a WATCH volunteer, the judge got down from the bench and apologized to her for his error. WATCH is gratified the judge is checking with people in the gallery to ensure they have relevant case information, and thank him for his conscientiousness.

👍 Thumbs up to U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who has launched a global campaign to intensify efforts to end violence against women, specifically calling on men to combat the problem. Addressing the opening session of the Commission on the Status of Women in February 2008, Ban said he will form a global network of male leaders to assist him in mobilizing men (and boys) in government, the arts, sports, business and religion to speak out. "I call on men around the world to lead by example: to make clear that violence against women is an act perpetrated by a coward, and that speaking up against it is a badge of honor," he said.

According to the U.N., the most common form of violence experienced by women globally is physical violence inflicted by an intimate partner. World Bank data show women aged 15-44 are more at risk from rape and domestic violence than from cancer, motor accidents, war, and malaria.

👍 On a local note, thumbs up to men in Duluth, Alexandria, and Burnsville who participated in *Walk a*

*Continued on page 6*

# Order for protection process plagued by myths

*The March 2008 issue of Bench & Bar of Minnesota (a publication of the Minnesota Bar Association) includes the article "Orders for Protection: When the Shield Becomes a Sword." Written by two family law attorneys, it talks about the ways in which an order for protection (OFP) is used/misused as a weapon to gain unfair advantage in divorce proceedings. The authors voice their concern for innocent people "caught in the very broad net of the Domestic Abuse Act."*

*Numerous individuals and organizations contacted the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (MCBW) to express dismay at how OFP proceedings were portrayed in the article. MCBW enlisted experts in the field of violence against women to draft a letter to the editor in response, which was submitted to Bench & Bar for publication in the April issue. The letter does not address every problematic point in the article due to space limitations, but gives Bench & Bar readers a different understanding of the OFP process.*

*WATCH wanted to share the letter with WATCH Post readers to assist in countering the myths that continue to plague women seeking protection in the courts.*

To the Editors:

It is with great concern that we write to respond to the article entitled "Orders for Protection: When a Shield Becomes a Sword", LXV Bench & Bar, March 2008. This article perpetuates a number of myths about orders for protection and the circumstances under which they are granted.

The authors bemoan the fact that a person can be removed from their home "all on the words of another." (p. 28). The words of another are evidence in civil and criminal court proceedings and are not unique to

orders for protection. They also assert that the ex parte protection order presents unique problems and that "nowhere else are we allowed to say someone is guilty until proven innocent." (p.28). The availability of this type of relief is not unique. In both the state and federal courts, temporary restraining orders, without notice to the adverse party are available if there is immediate and irreparable loss or injury. Here the petitioner must show immediate and present danger—no less a standard. Moreover, before an ex parte order is issued, sworn allegations are reviewed by a judge who makes a determination if the requirements of the statute are met. The ex parte orders are not granted without careful judicial review. Respondents are entitled to a hearing in all cases and a continuance, if requested by respondent under the statute, is likely to be granted.

The authors contend, without citing any authority, that "parents accused of such behavior [abuse] frequently lose their court battles over their children." (p. 29) In fact, studies indicate that domestic violence victims do not gain tactically from raising abuse allegations. Research shows that fathers who batter their intimate partners are more likely to contest custody. (American Psychological Association, *Violence and the Family* 1996). Research further shows that mothers who experienced domestic violence were no more likely than a comparison group to be awarded custody and that fathers were rarely denied visitation. (Mary Kernic, et al. *Children in the Crossfire* 11 Violence Against Women 991, 1013, 1014 2005).

Another assertion in the article is that for the truly dangerous an OFP probably does little good. Leaving aside their erroneous assumptions about who is truly dangerous, while studies show a range of rates of

violation of protection orders, research supports the conclusion that obtaining a protection order is associated with reduced subsequent violence. (Carol Jordan, *Intimate Partner Violence and the Justice System*, 19 J. Interpersonal Violence 1412, 1427, 2004).

It is regrettable when myths replace facts. It is no doubt true that any legal process can be misused, however, the legal process for a protective order is similar to many legal processes: judges evaluate evidence, make determinations as to credibility, and then issue findings of fact and orders. Women do not seek protection from the courts lightly. Research shows that when women seek a protection order it is often after serious violence. (*Id.* at 1423). If the authors believe that judges are not adequately evaluating evidence and are not making appropriate determinations, then they can appeal an erroneous order. To suggest that there is widespread misuse of this process without any evidence beyond asserting it, does the court system and victims of domestic violence a great disservice.

Beverly Balos  
Clinical Professor of Law  
University of Minnesota Law School

Liz Richards  
Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

Caroline Palmer  
Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Jean Lastine  
Central Minnesota Legal Services

Denise Gamache  
Battered Women's Justice Project

Lolita Ulloa  
Hennepin County Attorney's Office  
Victim Services Division – Domestic Abuse Service Center



# Volunteer Notes

✓ The victim's family members are here waiting in the courtroom. They were told to be here at 9:30 a.m.; it is now 10:30 a.m., and no one is communicating with them. A defendant in another case has been waiting in the hall since 9:00 a.m. and has no idea that his case has been removed from the schedule for today. I wish someone would let him know.

✓ At the Government Center today, I was very impressed with the judge's courtroom demeanor. Court can be very intimidating, and he was great at making defendants feel at ease during proceedings. He specifically asked his clerk to come and talk to me about a case I had just watched, clarifying a complicated situation. His ruling became very clear to me after this explanation.

✓ Domestic violence court inexplicably started an hour and a half late. When a few of us asked the clerk about the delay, she could only reply, "I have no idea." After court started and one case had been heard, both the defense attorney and prosecutor disappeared. The judge looked irritated and left for the next hour. When everyone finally returned, two more cases were heard, and that was it!

✓ I was monitoring a murder trial at the Government Center. Besides the defendant's mother, I was the only person present for the morning's testimony. Yesterday, I attended the sexual assault trial of a very high profile defendant where the gallery was packed with media and supporters for both the defendant and victim. I was struck by the contrast between the two courtrooms and disappointed in the relative lack of attention to what I consider to be a very serious case.

✓ Finding interpreters at the Government Center today was problematic. An interpreter was never scheduled for a 9:00 a.m. case, and the interpreter scheduled for 10:30 a.m. arrived an hour late.

# Case Summaries

## GREGORY JOHNSON

a/k/a Gregory Hoskins

On November 13, 2007, Minneapolis police responded to a 911 call during which they heard a male yelling, a baby crying, and a woman begging to not be hurt. When police arrived, they heard a male threatening to kill the woman inside, but were unsuccessful in getting through the locked door. The victim eventually opened the door and police found both her and an infant bleeding. When officers searched the apartment, they found an open window, from which Johnson had fled.

The woman told police that Johnson had come into her bedroom where she was sleeping with two of her children, ages 2 and 3. Her eight-month old baby was sleeping in a crib. Johnson dragged her from the bed, threw her on the floor, shoved her against a wall, and began beating her with various household objects, including a leg he had broken from a table. He repeatedly threatened to kill her and the children, at one point picking up the infant from his crib and threatening to throw him against the wall. The woman was able to hold onto the infant, but Johnson continued to assault her. The woman was treated at Hennepin County Medical Center for extensive injuries, including multiple broken bones and head and throat injuries. The infant had abrasions on his neck and suffered a cut on his forehead requiring stitches.

Johnson was charged with five felonies for assaulting the woman and her infant son: one count of second degree attempted murder, one count of first degree assault, one count of second degree assault, and two counts of third degree assault. On March 10, 2008, Johnson pled guilty to first degree assault and the other four charges were dismissed. On April 1, 2008, Judge John Sommerville sentenced him to 120 months in prison with credit for 141 days

served, and the following conditions: provide a DNA sample and paying restitution as determined by court services. The prosecuting attorney was Elizabeth Cutter and the defense attorney was Diane Dodd.

## LEONARD GALLION

In the summer 2005 issue of this newsletter, WATCH published a chronology of the criminal record of Leonard Clifton Gallion. That May, Judge Kevin Burke revoked Gallion's probation for two felony-level second degree assaults he committed in August 2000 and sentenced him to prison for 72 months (with credit for 674 days served). Those charges stemmed from one among 14 incidents over eight years that WATCH recorded of assaults (misdemeanor- and felony-level), terroristic threats, and disorderly conduct. Gallion had threatened or assaulted strangers, acquaintances, and family members, reserving the most brutal beatings for his intimate partners.

In mid-April, WATCH was notified that Gallion had been arrested for a domestic assault involving strangulation of yet another victim. This assault is not being charged, as the victim is too afraid to testify, but Gallion was found to be in violation of the terms of his supervised release and was returned to prison for an additional five months. WATCH's chronology was included in the documentation submitted to the supervised release officer after the recent crime became known. We are gratified that the officer had a complete picture of the defendant's violent history when considering his recommendations and that the judge followed through by holding Gallion accountable.

# WATCH



National Walk-in for Justice  
Coming to a court near you  
October 2, 2008

## What's New *Continued from page 1*

of St. Olaf College with a degree in family studies and a concentration in American racial and multicultural studies. Sarah previously worked at Guild, Incorporated, where she saw how violence impacts the lives of women living with mental illness.

Sarah is adept at working with people and is quickly connecting with WATCH volunteers and interns. She also brings a keen eye for detail and strong organizational skills from working in her father's law office, which serve her well navigating MNCIS and compiling monitoring data. Welcome, Sarah, we are glad to have you on staff.

While working full time as the executive director of WATCH, Marna Anderson has also been working towards her master's degree in organizational leadership at the College of St. Catherine and will receive her degree in May. Around WATCH, it's well known that Marna is extraordinary. It is rare to find a leader who can bring passion to the mission *and* precision to the budget. Under Marna's leadership, WATCH has grown its national profile, diversified its staff, board, and volunteer pool, expanded its internship program, increased its individual and foundation support, and remained vigilant in pursuit of its mission to eliminate violence against women and children.

She was recently honored by the College of St. Catherine, as the recipient of this year's graduate student Research and Creative Work award from the Center for Women. The award recognizes her thesis on leadership challenges and successes in Minnesota's battered women's movement. Through interviews with leaders of women's advocacy groups from around the state, Marna discussed the projected impact of the pending retirement of many organization founders, the evolving focus from social change to social services, and new ways programs are engaging

broad communities in their work. She was honored at a reception on April 17th. Congratulations Marna, you continue to do us proud.

### Board updates

Congratulations to Anita Patel, who will become the director of the YWCA's Racial Justice and Public Policy Department on June 1st. Since starting in the department in 2005, Anita established the Racial Justice Dialogue Series and Early Childhood Education Awareness Month, among other initiatives. She was WATCH's contact at the YWCA's leadership registry, which led to her joining the WATCH board in June 2006. Anita chairs WATCH's governance committee and provides leadership in moving our organizational diversity efforts forward. She was elected co-chair of the board in January.

WATCH by-laws limit a board member to two consecutive three-year terms, a sensible practice on paper. But when those six years have flown by, as they do, and it's time to say good-bye to a valued colleague and friend, it makes no sense at all. We are sorry to see Romaine Scharlemann reach that six-year point.

Romaine is a well-known name in the community from her years of heading Planned Parenthood's development department, and now the Minnesota Women's Foundation planned giving efforts; it was one of those mile-marker moments in WATCH's history when she agreed to come on board.

Romaine served on the development committee for her entire tenure, putting her expertise and good cheer to the never-ending task of fundraising. We will miss Romaine on the board, but she has graciously agreed to serve as an ad hoc member of the development committee. And, she has left us the gift that goes on giving by introducing us to her sister Denny, who has been a WATCH court-monitor extraordinaire since 2006!

## Thumbs up/thumbs down

*Continued from page 3*

*Mile in Her Shoes* last month. Sponsored by the International Men's March to Stop Rape, Sexual Assault, and Gender Violence, the campaign asks men to literally walk one mile in women's high-heeled shoes. The goals: help men better understand and appreciate women's experiences; help improve gender relationships and decrease the potential for violence; demonstrate that men are willing and able to be courageous partners with women in making the world a safer place; inform the community that services are available for recovery; and raise funds to support those services.

## LOW-COST OFFICE SPACE NEEDED

Recent ownership changes in the Northstar building may result in WATCH needing to move our office. We are looking for approximately 2,500 square feet of space in downtown Minneapolis (preferably skyway connected). If you know anyone who may have space to rent to us, please contact Marna at [manderson@watchmn.org](mailto:manderson@watchmn.org).

## BECOME INVOLVED WITH WATCH

If you are interested in what goes on in court and want to make a difference on behalf of women who experience violence, become a volunteer court monitor with WATCH! We provide the training, and you donate four hours each month to monitor the courts. The summer training is on Saturday, May 31st, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Contact Anita at 612-341-2747, ext. 2 or [anita@watchmn.org](mailto:anita@watchmn.org) for more information. We would love to have you join us.

# Contract for Change urges personal commitment

*The Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community (IDVAAC) held a national conference in 2007 attended by more than 600 people. To conclude the conference, participants gathered to hear a call to action to recommit themselves to ending domestic violence among African Americans. We are sharing the following column from the Institute's fall newsletter with our readers in recognition of the need for all of us to join together to meet this grave challenge.*



## **Contract for Change: Make the covenant and join our movement to end domestic violence**

By Dr. Oliver J. Williams, Executive Director, Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community

It was a powerful moment at the end of our conference last spring when we stood together with lighted (electronic) candles and made a commitment to mobilize people around the country to end domestic violence among African Americans.

During the March 2007 IDVAAC conference in Long Beach, Calif., we invited attendees to sign a contract for change. This signified a sincere personal commitment to support efforts to mobilize our community to end domestic violence among African Americans, to take action to achieve this goal, to be an agent for change, to raise public awareness, and to work to inspire action.

The Contract for Change Covenant Agreement is a one-page document that includes the following eight statements.

Our efforts and approaches:

- Must be culturally relevant and consider social context

- Must transform lives of both those who experience abuse and those who commit violence
- Must stimulate the public to act
- Must break down silos of social action to address intersecting issues
- Encourage all stakeholders partner with one another for continuum of support
- Adopt entrepreneurial spirit and develop creative strategies
- Be invested in transforming the landscape of domestic violence. And above all,
- We must love and support one another in this work.

To see the document in its entirety, please visit our web site at [www.dvinstitute.org](http://www.dvinstitute.org).

Keynote speaker Dr. Gail Wyatt, professor of psychiatry at University of California in L.A., asked participants to think about what they can do individually and collectively to move forward the contract to end domestic violence in the African-American community. If you missed our conference, you can still join our efforts, just print off a copy of the covenant, sign it and send it to our office. We want to count you as a member of our agents-of-change team.

We recognize that for decades domestic violence has been seen as a private matter. Now is the time to take it public, to share with members of our community and those responsible for providing services to our community that we are serious about taking on this issue, and we're serious about making changes. We are willing to overcome racism, sexism and other forms of oppression to achieve our goals. We are willing to work publicly and privately to achieve

our goals of eradicating domestic violence in the African-American community. And we will take personal and public responsibility for doing so. We sincerely hope that our variety of outreach and communications will help you catch the fever and join with us in our contract for change.

## **Advocates honored**

Each year, the Minnesota Women's Press presents its *Changemakers* award in honor of women and organizations that have made a difference in the lives of women and girls. Three of the 2007 awardees were chosen for their work to end violence against women and children, and WATCH joins the Women's Press in recognizing their hard work and thanking them for their continued commitment to creating a safer world.

Congratulations to:

- Lonna Stevens, Sheila Wellstone Institute, for providing leadership development to American Indian women working to address sexual and domestic violence
- Vednita Carter, Breaking Free, for helping women escape prostitution
- TADA! (Teens Against Dating Abuse), a program of Pearl Crisis Center, for expanding their two-year-old prevention program to include younger students.

## **RECEIVE THE COURT WATCH CONNECTION**

*Court WATCH Connection* is a technical assistance e-bulletin with tips and information on starting or enhancing your own court monitoring program. If you'd like to be added to the e-mail list, contact Dawn at [ddougherty@watchmn.org](mailto:ddougherty@watchmn.org).

## WATCH

608 2nd Ave. S., # 465  
Minneapolis, MN 55402  
612-341-2747  
E-mail: [watch@watchmn.org](mailto:watch@watchmn.org)  
Web: [www.watchmn.org](http://www.watchmn.org)

### FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

**Executive Director:** Marna Anderson

#### Staff:

Sarah Coulter, Court Monitoring  
Coordinator  
Dawn Dougherty, National Project Director  
Anita Gopalaswamy, Volunteer  
Coordinator  
Donna McNamara, Development &  
Communications Director  
Nashad Muse, Administrative Assistant

**Founder:** Susan Lenfestey

**Board Chair:** Sara Mushlitz

**Board of Directors:** Beverly Balos,  
Ron Beining, Lisa Denzer, Liliana  
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## VOLUNTEER PROFILE

*Jaclyn Cruz spent over 60 hours volunteering with WATCH during the fall 2007 term and did an exceptional job. Originally from Niceville, Florida, Jaclyn recently graduated from Metropolitan State University's criminal justice program. We asked Jaclyn a few questions about her experience at WATCH.*

### Why did you choose to volunteer with WATCH?

I originally heard about WATCH from a previous volunteer who had nothing but raving things to say about the organization. One of the last courses I took required us to volunteer, so I knew immediately WATCH was the one I wanted to work with.

### What are some of the things you learned while volunteering with WATCH?

I truly like the idea of being a silent observer; it gives you a whole new perspective on things. It was always

interesting for me to see the advocates working with victims. Until WATCH, I didn't know such a thing existed, and I would have to say that the Hennepin County advocates are truly impressive.

### What surprised you most about the court system?

Things are never, ever on time. I thought things would be more structured and that staff would be more informative to the "gallery," but this proved not to be the case.

### What surprised you least?

The recidivism rate among so many offenders. Many offenders whose cases we monitored had rap sheets dating back to before I was even born.

### Do you remember a time when it felt like your presence in court made a difference? If so, how?

I think each person's presence matters and that eventually all the feedback that we bring back could make a difference. An example would be if our observations over time led to court

staff becoming more communicative with the gallery when things are running behind.

## MAY 29, 2008 WEBINAR COURT MONITORING 101

Join WATCH on Thursday, May 29th at 11:30 a.m. CST for *Court Monitoring 101*. This webinar is the perfect training for groups that are investigating the feasibility of establishing a court monitoring program. Topics include identifying staffing needs, evaluating court monitoring resources, assessing community support, defining cases and courts to be watched, and initial funding strategies.

**WHAT'S A WEBINAR?** A seminar transmitted over the web. All you need is a phone and access to the internet. For information or to register, contact Dawn at [ddougherty@watchmn.org](mailto:ddougherty@watchmn.org) or 612-341-2747, ext. 3.