

**The History of the  
Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence:  
30 Years of Advocacy in Georgia**



*History Gathered From*

**Interviews with**

Diane Winters,

Margo Smith,

Gloria Smith

**Documents from**

Georgia State University Archives,

The Personal Collection of Diane Winters,

Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence,

“A Glimpse of a Feminist Organization” by Maggie Beck-Coon

**And the Collective Memories of**

Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence Staff

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*Fall 2010 – Spring 2011*

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## *The History of the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence*

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## *Grassroots Beginnings*

Before 1975, women who are victims of domestic violence needing shelter have extremely limited options. While some stay at the Salvation Army, whose facility is inadequate for the needs of abused women, others seek refuge with friends, family members, or faith organizations within their communities. As no state money is directed towards intervening or preventing domestic violence in Georgia at this time, these programs are supported by donations and volunteers. Law enforcement does not arrest batterers often, and the issue of domestic violence is still considered a problem within the home, not to be addressed in public.

However, in 1975, the first domestic violence shelter in Georgia opens in Atlanta in response to the overwhelming need for housing and resources for women being abused by their partners in Fulton County. In 1978, the second shelter program in Georgia opens in Marietta, filling the same need for housing and services for women in Cobb County. Beyond the two shelter programs in the Metro Atlanta area, there are small groups of women all over Georgia and the southeast working to provide shelter and coordinate services to assist women in their communities. Truly grassroots in nature, these early domestic violence advocates from Georgia set up domestic violence hotlines in their communities and compiled their own lists of resources available in communities across Georgia.

In 1979, a number of domestic violence advocates from the state of Georgia attend a Region IV Technical Assistance Center's Conference on Family Violence held in Memphis Tennessee for two days in early August. At this conference, the domestic violence advocates in attendance meet and discuss their ideas, goals and vision of assisting victims of domestic violence within the state of Georgia. These advocates decide as a group to schedule a statewide meeting to further develop a network of domestic violence services available to victims. When the advocates return to Georgia, they invite everyone who has signed up for any domestic violence events around the state in previous years to attend the statewide meeting. It is unclear how many individuals receive invitations to this first meeting, but representatives from the Council on Battered Women in Atlanta are actively involved with the planning and coordination of this initial meeting.

The invitation to the first statewide meeting includes the noteworthy appointment of Brooke Dixon as the new coordinator of the Services to Battered Women through the

Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR). Ms. Dixon's appointment to this position came from the hard work of domestic violence advocate Susan May, who organized the statewide push for this position through a letter campaign to both Dr. W. Douglass Skelton, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Human Resources and Georgia Governor George Busbee. While undecided at the time, the advocates hope that Brooke Dixon's role will include helping them to understand DHR guidelines in an effort to standardize services to victims of domestic violence throughout the state.

At the first meeting of the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence on November 3, 1979, held almost one month after the conference in Memphis, over 25 advocates from across the state of Georgia are in attendance. Overall, the attendees have a chance to share their experiences, meet other advocates, begin gathering information for a central resource list for the state, and lay the groundwork for future group action for increasing services to victims of family violence in Georgia. The group discusses several areas of advocacy that are needed in Georgia, including capturing the extent of domestic violence incidents that occur within the state. More, the advocates discuss the possibility of the statewide network playing an active part in developing legislative proposals and the possible creation of a legislative task force.

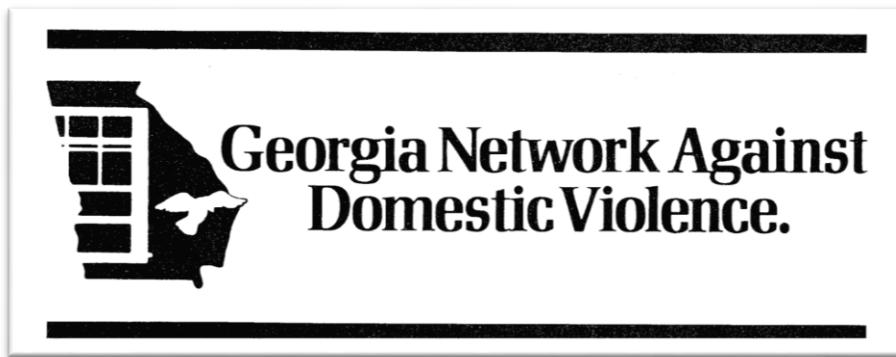
In February 1980, the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence meets for the second time to elect officers and develop the organization's taskforces. The taskforces that are developed at this meeting include a legislative taskforce, a data collection taskforce, an education taskforce, an outreach and strategy taskforce, a statewide hotline taskforce, a domestic violence in military communities taskforce and a taskforce to develop model programs of treatment and counseling. The Georgia Network also assigns their first 4 officers, which include President Jean Marcinko of Marietta, Vice-President Diane Gendron of Athens, Treasurer Grace Galliano of Atlanta, and Secretary Julie Stafford of Savannah. Further, the committee chairs for the Network are assigned and include Julie Stafford, Membership Chair, Jo Palmer of Albany, Advocacy Chair, Susan May, Legislation Chair, Diane Gendron, Program Chair, and a soon to be filled Finance Chair by a representative of Columbus.

At their meeting on May 1, 1980, the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence adopts the organization's goals and objectives, which are:

- 1) to provide information and support to members and to local groups,
- 2) to promote services and prevention to families in domestic violence situations,
- 3) to promote public awareness and education of the problem of domestic violence and possible prevention strategies, and
- 4) to function as a unified body and a resources to the State regarding legislation, reforms needed, funding and prevalence of domestic violence.

In the summer of 1980, a Senate Study Committee on Domestic Violence is created in Georgia to assess the extent of domestic violence in Georgia and strategize on how Georgia should react to the problem. The Senate Committee is comprised of 5 Senators and is chaired by Senator Roy Barnes. The committee supports attaching a fee to the marriage license in Georgia to support services for battered women. It would have been the first legislation for battered women in Georgia and would have funded shelter programs, but the bill did not make it out of the Senate.

In late 1980, the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence arranges for Barbara Shaw of the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence to come to Georgia. While she is in Georgia, Barbara Shaw assists the Georgia Network in creating infrastructure to support a successful domestic violence coalition organization. In particular, she assists the Georgia Network in the creation of their first set of by-laws and logo.



*Above, the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence's original logo, created in 1981.*

The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence has five charter members to begin their organization, including the Columbus Alliance for Battered Women, the Council on Battered Women in Atlanta, the Council on Battered Women in Athens, the S.A.F.E. Shelter

in Savannah, and the YWCA Crisis Center in Cobb County. While the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence has applied for limited funding grants, their sole source of funding comes from a low membership fee. During 1981, it is estimated that 1,500 battered women and their children are sheltered in Georgia's programs.

### *The Movement in Georgia: Up and Running*

The barriers that battered women in Georgia face in the early 1980's are many. Adult Protective Services does not provide services to battered women because they are not "incompetent" and the Supportive Living program does not serve battered women because the program is set up for those who cannot function independently. A majority of women who are battered in Georgia do not have many options or access to many services. In 1982, the General Assembly of Georgia passes HB 203, which calls for the establishment of shelters "for the purpose of temporarily caring for persons who are subject to family violence." However, services were only provided based on the success of local groups to organize resources to fund these services. More, there is a lot of ambiguity surrounding the state regulations and the definition of family violence shelters, which does not separate battered women's shelters from emergency foster care homes for children.

The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence officially incorporates in 1982 and has already been advocating for state funding for shelters in Georgia. In a letter dated September 22, 1982, it is estimated that 566,000 families are living in violent homes in Georgia and shelter programs are reaching less than 3,000 of them. The Network advocates that the state support the already established programs in Georgia and expand services to women throughout the state, including access to shelter and safe housing, counseling, 24 hour crisis counseling, and advocacy and support from social service agencies. The membership dues for the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence at this time range from individual memberships at \$10 to \$25-\$50 for group memberships, with incentives such as a semiannual newsletter and a free book for member programs. In 1983, the Network holds their first annual weekend retreat for member programs.

From 1983-1984, the Georgia Network hires their first lobbyist to advocate for domestic violence issues and shelter funding at the Georgia Capitol. Through these lobbying efforts, the Network wins state legislation that increases police authority to arrest batterers. They also win the inclusion of two Georgia Network representatives on the DHR committee that is developing regulations for family violence shelters in Georgia. Through their involvement, the representatives were able to testify at a statewide DHR meeting on the critical need for services for battered women.

In 1984, there are over 10 domestic violence programs in Georgia and many more in their planning stages, including Statesboro, Columbus, Jonesboro, and Augusta. Domestic violence programs in Georgia serve 9,500 women experiencing abuse a year. By the end of 1984, the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence updates their membership requirements for organizations, associations, and individuals wishing to join the statewide network. Included in these documents are grounds for termination of voting membership in the Georgia Network and a new formula for organizational member dues at .02% of a program's income during the previous fiscal year, with a minimum of \$50 and maximum of \$500.

In 1985, at the third annual membership retreat of the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence, the agency resolves to do anti-racism work and support women of color in the assumption of leadership roles. The challenges facing women of color in shelter programs include few women of color on staff, shelters being viewed as white programs, board members of the Georgia Network primarily coming from white communities, a lack of diversity of board members, primarily white management at shelter programs, and the inability for shelter programs to retain people of color on boards for long periods of time.

At the retreat in 1985, Catlin Fullwood and Suzanne Pharr from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence lead an Anti-Racism Workshop for executive directors and staff members of domestic violence programs in Georgia. Following their workshop, a Women of Color Taskforce is created by the women of color in attendance. The purpose of the Women of Color Taskforce is

- to provide support for one another,
- to identify women of color working in domestic violence programs,
- to serve as an information and skills bank,
- to include the volunteers and board in women of color work,
- to create a newsletter for women of color,
- to advocate for battered women of color,
- to work with the Network to identify racism,
- for women of color to be recognized by the Network.



*The founding mothers of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence,  
Ruth Slaughter, Catlin Fullwood, and Suzanne Pharr.*

There are two broad goals of the agency during this time: to continue to work within the Network on white women's racism and to offer concrete support to women of color in both the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence leadership roles. Within these two goals includes the support of a newsletter for women of color, developing an affirmative action plan for hiring, re-evaluating the membership requirements, including women of color as voting members, and looking into issues that keep women of color from participating in the Network.

### *Achieving State Funding for Domestic Violence Programs*

The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence transitions from an all volunteer agency to a funded agency in late 1985. With the help of Georgia Governor Harris, the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence is able to achieve \$50,000 of general state revenues. This amount, distributed by the state of Georgia through the Department of Human Resources, combined with grants from Funds for Southern Communities, Sapelo Island Research Foundation and the Chicago Resource Center, totals \$87,000 in total operating funds for the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence. The Network hires three staff members and opens an office in September 1985. The newly hired staff members include Margo Smith, Coordinator, Sue Ellen Cross-Lea, Organizer and Research Developer, and Alyce Dodson, Administrative Assistant.



*Newly hired Coordinator for the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence, Margo Smith, brainstorms with her staff and board members on legislative advocacy issues.*

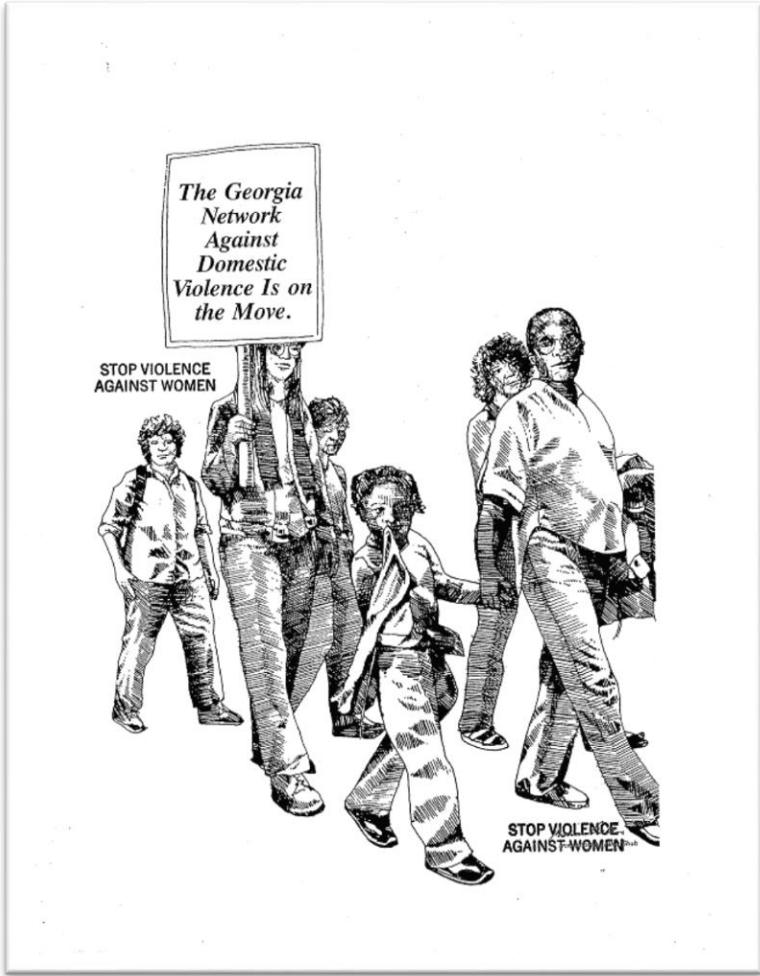
With hired staff and funding, the Network is able to solidify some of the initial plans of the agency, such as gathering statistics to reflect the amount of services shelter programs are providing, train community groups, produce brochures, and create a resource library. More, the Network continues their legislative advocacy efforts and plays an active role in

the passage of HB 1447, sponsored by Representative Cathey Steinberg, which allows unmarried women to be covered by the criminal code of the Domestic Violence Act. Further, the agency advocates for Federal Victims of Crime Assistance funds and Family Violence Prevention Act funds to be directed to shelter programs in Georgia. In early 1986, the Network produces their first newsletter and is able to raise enough money to support the operation of their office for another year. The Network has also decided to pursue state funding for shelters through legislation and has planned a statewide conference to be held in St. Simons Island.

In January 1986 the Women of Color Task Force has their first meeting in Macon, Georgia. The Task Force decides to send out a letter and questionnaire to member programs to find out why Women of Color are not attending Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence meetings. They also solidify their purpose “to actively promote the cessation of domestic violence...nurture, strengthen, and empower battered women of color...to increase the involvement and support of our communities...and work to end the polarizations of the shelter movement.”

In 1986, Savannah, Georgia has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest domestic homicide rate in the United States. Only 18 of Georgia’s 159 counties have any services for battered women. All of these service providers are community funded, as Georgia is one of two states that do not provide state funding to shelter victims of family violence. Shelter programs are supported by United Way funding (50% of budgets) as well as city and county governments, churches, businesses, civic organizations and individual supporters. The combined budget of the 13 shelters serving battered women in 1986 is \$1,256,000.

In August of 1986, Suzanne Pharr returns to Georgia to conduct a day-long workshop on homophobia and how it affects work in shelters.



In an effort to secure state funding for shelter programs in Georgia for FY 1987, the Network begins to campaign for the legislature to allot 1 state dollar to every 2 community dollars invested by community members for shelters. State funding of \$400,000 for shelter programs would provide a 33% match on current community investment levels. The Network recommends that the allocation of funds be administered by the Department of Family and Children Services of the Department of Human Resources. More, they suggest that proposals for state funding be reviewed by a diverse citizen group and that new programs must demonstrate 9 months of community support before being eligible for state funding. In 1986, there are seven new shelters in development in the following areas of Georgia: Blue Ridge, Canton, Fayetteville, Athens, Warner Robbins, Hinesville, and DeKalb County.



*Volunteers help to renovate and remodel the developing shelter in Dekalb County.*

It is important to note that in mid 1986, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence experiences some turmoil regarding a Department of Justice grant that was accepted in 1985. During the grant negotiations between the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Department of Justice, “right-wing extremists attacked both parties with claims that NCADV was an anti-family, pro-lesbian movement.” The Department of Justice imposes a number of restrictions and changes the agreement for the grant. The Department of Justice is now to review all written materials and publications for the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and to oversee hiring of project directors. In response to these restrictions, the NCADV comprises a list of “bottom lines” that will guide their organization’s ability to continue receiving funding from the Department of Justice. Throughout the first year of the grant, several issues arise due to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence’s inclusive language regarding lesbians and other findings regarding why domestic violence continues to happen in our society. A “bottom line” is violated when the Department of Justice refuses to accept a brochure which includes information on racism and lesbian battering.

Between 1986 and 1987, the Georgia Department of Human Resources receives a grant of \$164,000 from the Office of Human Development Services, Health and Human

Services to be used for family violence prevention services. This money is distributed by an Advisory Committee composed of individuals who are knowledgeable about issues of family violence, including two State Representatives, Harry Dixon and Eleanor Richardson. The Georgia Department of Human Resources contracts with the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence to evaluate the nine funded shelter programs through this grant. The evaluation consists of site visits and documentation verification. The funds are used by the shelter programs for hiring staff personnel and completing shelter renovations, allowing many programs to meet building code requirements and to create an accessible shelter for individuals with disabilities..

During the summer and fall of 1986, shelter programs in Georgia hold open houses and receptions for legislators and key stakeholders to lay the ground work of support for the anticipated Governor's request of \$300,000 for shelter programs. During the legislation session in 1987, the Network holds a breakfast reception for legislators, showcasing a slideshow with facts and figures of domestic violence in Georgia. The Network also holds a memorial service at the Capitol during the legislative session to remember "those who died, those who survived and to affirm our right to a violence free life." These efforts result in the inclusion of state funding for shelter programs in Georgia in the state budget in 1987 for \$120,000. The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence also plays an active role in the creation of standards for shelter certifications and documents to assist in the Georgia Network becoming the agency that distributes these state funds to shelter programs. In a letter of agreement between shelters and the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence, it is clear that shelter programs must be a member of the Georgia Network to receive state funds and that the Georgia Network will do yearly site visits.

The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence  
Cordially Invites You To A

## BREAKFAST RECEPTION

Thursday, February 4 8-9 a.m.

Empire Room — Floyd Twin Towers  
(Across from the Capitol)

A brief program outlining the status of battered women shelters and the Family Violence Act will be presented.

Shelter advocates from around the state will be present to discuss local concerns.

Please RSVP by January 29  
(404) 524-3847

*An invitation to legislators and community members for the Georgia Network's first "Lobby Day" in 1987.*

However, to become a member of the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence, all programs must agree to the organization's mission statement, which differs from the state's non-discrimination clause by including a person's sexual preference. The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence's mission statements is as follows:

*GNADV is an organization whose members are independently run, community based groups working to empower women who have been battered. We acknowledge that ending violence in the lives of women requires changing established systems which support that violence. Toward this goal, GNADV works to share skills and resources, to provide support to battered women's programs within the state and to coalesce as a force to expose the roots of violence, to shape public policy, to advocate within societal systems and to join with the national movement for battered women. GNADV seeks to involve all women regardless of age, race, creed, sexual preference, marital status, social or economic status.*



*The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence's first "Lobby Day" to raise awareness of issues affecting women and domestic violence shelters in Georgia and secure state funding.*



*A member of the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence discusses the need for state funding for shelter programs with a State Legislator.*

In their Annual Report for 1986-1987, the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence acknowledges the potential challenges and rewards that may arise with their newly won allotment of state funds for shelter programs. In particular, they address the following issues that may develop within the following year: dealing with bureaucracy of state and federal funding sources, potential conflicts in dividing funds, demands for more work to be done despite the same level of resources, and differences between advocates. However, they also address the potential rewards that will come about due to the state funds, such as the development of more shelter programs throughout the state, the increased opportunity to affect policy changes for battered women in Georgia, and the opportunity to "grow in trust and respect for one another and learning to be united...despite and because of [their] differences." In 1987, there are 20 shelter programs in Georgia, 19 of them are members of the Network.



*Representatives from member programs meet to discuss issues affecting women in Georgia.*

*Bryant Bradley, Chair of the Taskforce on Domestic Violence in Military Communities, on the far right.*

### ***Working to Unite the Movement***

In an effort to grow the trust and respect of advocates in Georgia and to be a united movement, Margo Smith and Sue-Ellen Cross-Lea meet with Barbara Hart from the Leadership Institute for Women in March of 1987. From Barbara Hart's report from the meeting, it is clear that there are some serious issues within the domestic violence programs in Georgia. While at the time there are no conflicts between members in the coalition, there is a certain amount of resistance to words like "empowerment", "women", "feminist", and "lesbians". After the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence sends out a questionnaire to member programs regarding the limitations of their services for lesbian survivors, they discover that one shelter program does not allow lesbians to stay in their shelter but has recently included services for them through community volunteers. Lesbian survivors are allowed to stay at a volunteer's houses for up to 3 days, 3 times a year.

Further, Barbara Hart's report reveals that programs identify the network in the third person, rather than owning it and there is a large distinction between workers and the women they serve. Many program directors are new to the field and have no experience with battered women or within the battered women's movement. Racism, classism and homophobia are issues that are clearly identified by members of the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence. Based on these findings, Barbara Hart and the leaders of the Network decide to hold a three day training conference in June 1987 at a Leadership Development Meeting.

At the Leadership Development Meeting in 1987, survivors within the Georgia Network Against Domestic violence form the Battered and Formerly Battered Women's Task Force. The purpose of the Task Force is for survivors to share their stories and to address the experiences of women who have experienced domestic violence and now dedicate their lives to end it. While the Task Force struggles to mature, the March 1988 Georgia Network Newsletter is devoted to battered and formerly battered women and includes poetry and articles written by survivors of violence.

In 1987, the Women of Color Task Force experiences some growing pains, but continues to be active throughout Georgia. The Task Force co-sponsors a forum entitled, "Domestic Violence in the African-American Community," identifying women of color working in shelters in Georgia and networking with other women of color in Georgia, the

south, and nationally. In early 1988, the Women of Color Task Force joins with Beth Richie of the Leadership Institute for Women to form a Women of Color Caucus and a Southeastern Regional Women of Color Task Force. In the summer of 1988, the Women of Color Task Force introduces an Affirmative Action plan for the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence. The plan requires that the Executive Board consist of 25% Women of Color. The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence has 2 years to comply with this plan.



*The first Southeastern Regional Women of Color Task Force.*

After great effort from the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence, October is declared "Domestic Violence Awareness Month", signed by Governor Harris in October of 1987. During this time, the Network has produced and distributed 10,000 brochures, 1,000 posters and radio PSAs focusing on "Help Us Provide A Safe Home" to 150 stations as part of a press kit.



*Governor Joe Frank Harris and Margo Smith hold the official document declaring October 1987 as Domestic Violence Awareness month in Georgia.*

**In Happier Times,  
He Only Bruised Her Ego.**

For over 2,000 women, things will only get worse. Because there aren't enough shelters for all the women seeking help. Leaving them with no place to go. Please help us provide a home. Call the GNADV at 404-542-3847, and help stop the hurt.

**Georgia Network Against  
Domestic Violence.**

*The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence's "Help Us Provide A Home" Campaign.*

In the Spring of 1988, the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence was able to secure an increase of funding from \$120,000 to \$320,000 for shelter program for 1988 – 1989. The Network continues to struggle with whether or not to divide the money equally among member programs and by what percentage money should be allotted to programs in Georgia. They propose that the state money be split in the following way: 70% for established shelters, 25% for developing shelters, and 5% for administration costs. The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence wants the Georgia Department of Human Resources to transfer the certification authority over to them, as well. However, the Network continues to experience several issues, including achieving internal diversity, dealing with the convergence of “main-stream” and “grass-roots” philosophies, and surviving the overwhelming societal obstacles that confront advocates within the movement.

In 1988, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence hosts a conference from July 27-31 at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington. Advocates from all over the United States, including Georgia, travel to Washington to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The conference is the fourth national conference and membership meeting that the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence holds.



*Tillie Black Bear and other Native American women perform an opening ceremony for the NCADV Conference in 1988.*

### *Divided We Fall*

At a Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence Leadership Meeting in August of 1988, Janice Mays, Executive Director of the shelter program in Albany, Georgia addresses the other members of the organization regarding the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence's non-discrimination policy. She shares that her Executive Board feels that the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence should not require their member programs to sign a stronger non-discrimination policy than that required by the state of Georgia. Her board has told her that if the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence does not change their non-discrimination policy to match the state of Georgia's, her board might withdraw their organization from the Network. In the discussion that follows her comments, representatives from the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence share that the Georgia Department of Human Resources was fully aware of the Network's by-laws when they authorized them as the agency to distribute the funds to shelter programs. Board members from the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence offer to visit Albany's shelter to educate the board members on the policies and mission of the Network as well provide them with a copy of the state contract with DHR.



*Members at a Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence Leadership Meeting.*

In the spring of 1989, the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence comes under the attack of Georgia Representative Tom Crosby. Members of the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence discover that at a legislative meeting at the Capitol, Representative Crosby has publically called the members of the Network "a bunch of lesbians", has accused GNADV staff members of voting themselves a Christmas bonus which came from state money, and accused the Network of assessing dues on state funds. More, Representative Steve Thompson has introduced a bill explicitly stating that only certain aspects of a person's identity could be included in a non-discrimination policy in order to obtain state funds. It later becomes clear that the shelter programs in Albany and Brunswick are responsible for encouraging Representative Crosby in his efforts to defund the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence.

At a Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence Leadership Meeting in April of 1989, the members discuss the purpose of the non-discrimination clause in both hiring and service provisions of member programs as well as the benefits and consequences of changing the non-discrimination clause. It is the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence's understanding from the legislature that if they do not change the non-discrimination clause to match the state of Georgia's non-discrimination clause, they will no longer be able to distribute state funds to shelter programs and they may lose the state money for their Network office. At this time, 17 members vote to leave the by-laws as stated, 4 vote to change the policy, and 2 members abstain from voting.

During the course of the meeting in April 1989, a letter is created and presented by the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence for all member programs to sign in support of GNADV. The letter will be mailed to state legislative leaders and the Governor. As the letter is passed around the meeting, Janice Mays of Albany takes the floor and reveals that she has been speaking with Representative Crosby and that she has his word that no shelters are going to lose their state funding. She then reads a resolution announcing that she and a handful of other programs are leaving the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence and will be starting their own coalition of shelter programs. The other programs who have signed the resolution are Brunswick and Cartersville (members), and Waycross and Warner Robins (non-members).

After Janice Mays and the supporting programs of a new coalition leave the meeting, the remaining members of the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence discuss the options that they have regarding the distribution of state funds as well as their discrimination policy. The Network members decide to talk to the Department of Human Resources about the following options: 1) GNADV will continue being the certifying agency for state funds but will no longer require shelter programs to be members of the coalition to receive funding or 2) state money for shelters will be administered by the Department of Human Resources with input and recommendations from GNADV. As for the non-discrimination policy, GNADV members are torn between standing up for what they believe is right and standing up for the continued funding of the agency. Within the next week, the Women of Color Task Force releases a statement fully endorsing the current non-discrimination clause, standing in solidarity with all women facing oppression and in full support of GNADV's mission to serve *all* women.

Reluctantly, the Network does change their non-discrimination policy and removes sexual preference from its wording. Regardless, at the end of the legislative session in 1989, the state funding for the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence is cut, eliminating \$66,000 of their operating and programmatic funds. In May of 1989, the Executive Board of GNADV reluctantly decides to reduce the size of the agency due to lack of funds, leaving only Margo Smith to run the organization. In June of 1989, one of GNADV's member programs receives a copy of a letter addressed to Representative Crosby from an individual who represents "the committee to eliminate corruption in our shelters." The letter expresses the need to remove all lesbians from leadership roles in shelter programs and to cut off money to programs who offer services to lesbians who are battered. Through facilitated discussions between member programs, the organization continues to explore the options available to them regarding their non-discrimination policy.

At this point in time, the Network also reconsiders the vision of the agency and the role that it will continue to play as the other domestic violence coalition develops. Because there is now another coalition of shelter programs forming, Margo Smith suggests that the Network become a coalition of individuals who are concerned with advocacy, legislation and social change. However, in December of 1989, Margo Smith, the first Executive Director of the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence, resigns from her position.

### *A Split in the Movement: Two Coalitions, 1990-2001*

Because the second coalition formed by the Albany shelter has the full backing of Representative Crosby, who has influence over the state funding for shelters, the Network continues to receive letters from shelter programs that they are resigning from the organization. The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence votes on a new name and a new mission statement in order to redevelop their image of the organization. The Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence becomes the Georgia Advocates for Battered Women and Children (GABWC). Their mission changes to:

*Georgia Advocates for Battered Women and Children is an organization whose members are committed to the elimination of violence against women and children. We acknowledge that ending this violence requires taking risks while working to change established systems which support the oppression of women. We believe there is a connection between violence against women and sexism, racism, classism, ageism, anti-Semitism, ableism, heterosexism and homophobia. We support equality in relationships and will work to encourage women and children to assume power over their own lives. Toward this goal, GABWC will provide education, expertise and support to groups, organizations and programs by sharing our skills and resources. We will advocate for change within societal and judicial systems and join with the National movement to end violence against women. GABWC seeks to involve under-represented women committed to working in coalition with other women to achieve our goal.*

The other coalition forms the Georgia Council on Abused Women (GCAW) in June of 1990. GCAW incorporates as a 501(c)3 in 1992 and operates out of Warner Robbins, Georgia. Neither agency receives state funding until 1993, when it appears funding becomes available through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The agencies split the funding, with the Georgia Council on Abused Women receiving 55%. There continues to be disagreements and discord between the two coalitions in the early 1990's.

In 1994, when it is time for both coalitions to apply for funding through the Department of Human Resources (DHR) who is distributing a grant for family violence intervention and prevention activities to State domestic violence coalitions, the coalitions

are in competition for the funds. However, there is a new requirement in place to receive the funds; the grant application must include “a signed statement from the State agency responsible for the administration of the Family Violence Prevention and Services formula grant funds that certifies that the applicant coalition is the statewide domestic violence coalition for the State.” Because Georgia has not certified either coalition in Georgia, both coalitions submit applications for the grant. DHR decides that the two coalitions must work together to produce a collaborative application for review for the funds. After the coalitions submit a collaborative application, DHR will notify them of their position on certification.

In April of 1994, the GABWC and GCAW arrange to meet in Macon to discuss issues of communication, duplicity of efforts, and concerns of sabotage between agencies. The agencies also discuss how to handle the distribution of the DHHS funds between the coalitions in Georgia and the work that the coalitions must do to develop a mutually constructive relationship. From this meeting, the two coalitions agree that they will apply for the federal DHHS grant together and develop plans for splitting the \$48,000. The agencies will alternate who receives the money every year and the agency who receives the money from DHR will transfer a certain percentage of the money to the other coalition. It appears that the two agencies agree to alternate acting as the fiscal agent of the DHHS funds until year 2000, splitting the funding with the Georgia Council on Abused Women receiving 55% of the funds while the Georgia Advocates on Battered Women and Children receiving 45%. However, after a lack of communication between the two agencies due to a change in leadership at the Georgia Council on Abused Women, both agencies apply for federal funds through DHR in May of 1994. DHR again requests a collaborative proposal between the two coalitions, which they eventually produce and are awarded full funding with the Georgia Council on Abused Women serving as the fiscal agent of the grant.

In 1995, the Georgia Council on Abused Women changes their name to the Georgia Coalition on Family Violence. They again become the fiscal agent for the DHHS funds, receiving 55% of the allotted funding for the Georgia statewide coalitions. The agreement to split the funding continues until 1997, when there is an increase in the DHHS funding available for the coalitions through DHR and the Georgia Coalition on Family Violence applies to be the sole recipient of the funds. DHR and the Georgia Coalition on Family Violence interpret the new parameters of the funding to mean that the money can no

longer be divided and must be given to the coalition with the most statewide representation.

Extremely upset by this development, the Georgia Advocates for Battered Women and Children fight for their cut of the DHHS funds. While they are seen as the "minority" coalition with only 5 member programs, GABWC demand that they receive the funds that they deserve for their work with those domestic violence programs in Georgia. However, the Georgia Advocates for Battered Women and Children struggle to be seen as vital to the domestic violence movement in Georgia. Throughout the 1990's, they are unable to maintain a level of steady funding and staff. While GABWC has two paid staff positions in 1995, an Executive Director and an Assistant Director, the agency lets all staff members go in 1996 due to budget reasons. However, the records show that GABWC acquires two Executive Directors, one in 1997 and another one in 1998.

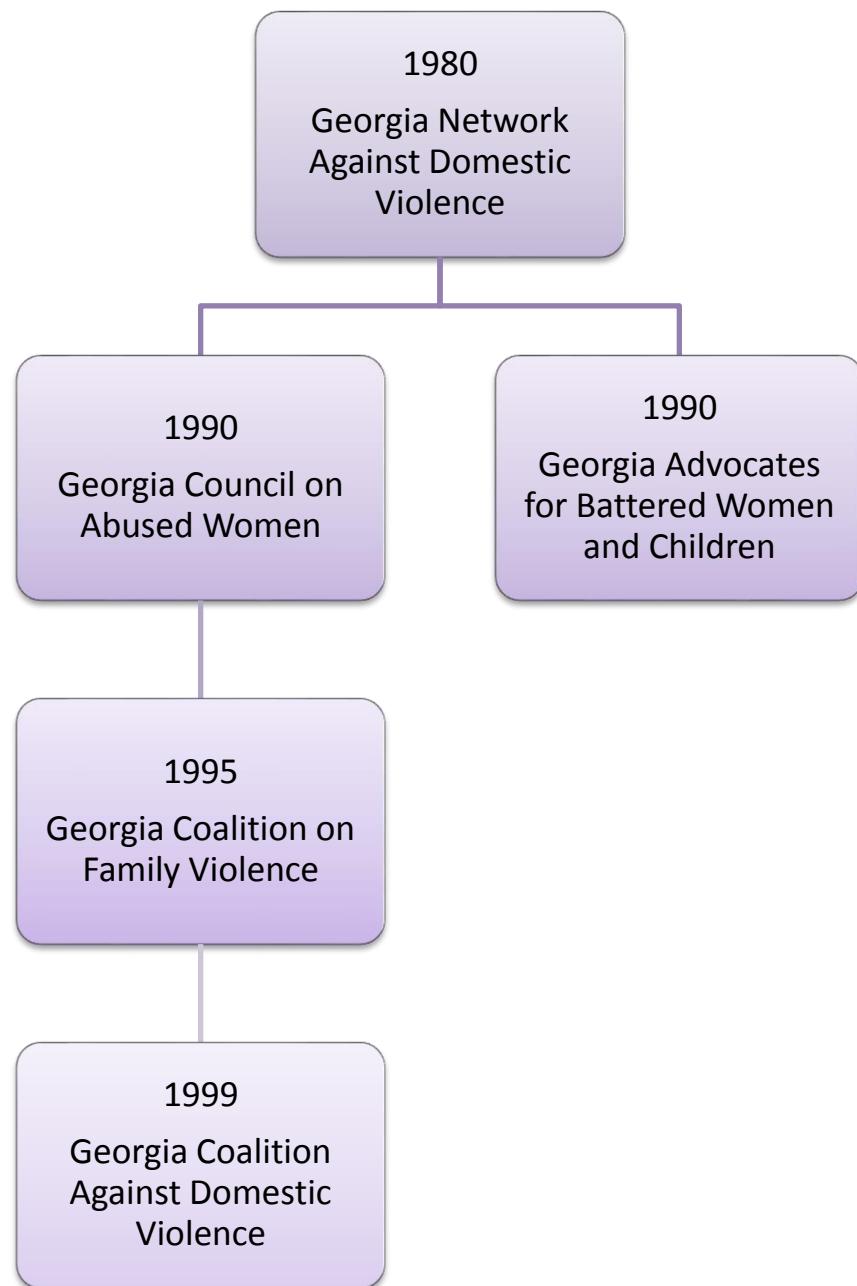
While it also appears that the Georgia Coalition on Family Violence experiences several changes in Executive Directors throughout the 1990's as well, they are able to maintain funding and accomplish a great deal within the state during this time. The Georgia Coalition on Family Violence implements a 1-800 statewide hotline number for domestic violence calls in 1997 and hosts host a Director's Development Seminar in St. Simons Island in 1998. The topics offered in the training seminars includes instructions for reimbursement for DHR contractors, consensus building and planning, power sharing, employment issues and landlord/tenant issues, and self-care and meditative healing.

In May of 1999, the Georgia Coalition on Family Violence, per the recommendation of the Training Committee of the DHR Family Violence Advisory Committee, hosts a training session in Savannah, Georgia. The training is entitled *From Passion to Profession: Advocating for Battered Women* and is created to establish a better system of communication and collaboration among statewide agencies working to eliminate violence against women. The DHR Family Violence Advisory Committee hopes that this training will result in more efficient and systematic services and information for shelters, advocates, and battered women. At the training, a Women of Color Institute is created by and for women of color affected by the work as an advocate, battered, or formerly battered woman. There is also a vigil, speak-out, and silent march in the city of Savannah. The participants are asked

to bring a t-shirt to assist in the establishment of a clothesline project for survivors and victims of domestic violence in Georgia.

Through the end of the 1990's, both of the coalitions have yet to clearly differentiate their roles, particularly in different settings such as DHR meetings, Capitol hearings, and community meetings. Because of this division within the movement, both coalitions are less effective than they can be and continue to struggle with one other over funding and representation, as well as with society as a whole to make domestic violence an issue that is taken seriously. In 1999, the Georgia Coalition on Family Violence changes their name to the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Alyssa Porter serves as the new Executive Director.

*Name Changes of the Domestic Violence Coalitions in Georgia through the Years*



### *Returning to our Roots: GCADV in the 21st Century*

From 2000 to 2001, the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (GCADV) has a number of successful initiatives in the state of Georgia. With around 6 staff personnel and an Executive Director, Alyssa Porter, the organization has successfully expanded their services through the continued administration of a statewide toll-free hotline, a targeted billboard campaign in rural communities of Georgia for domestic violence services, hosting training conferences for executive directors, frontline advocates, and service providers, and supporting the funding of domestic violence TANF assessors in domestic violence agencies. The agency also has a group health insurance plan through Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Georgia for member agencies. More, GCADV has achieved a grant for the implementation of TDD/TYY to over 40 domestic violence agencies in Georgia to use on their hotlines. The agency holds bimonthly meetings in South Atlanta for member programs. At this time, GCADV is also trying to restart the Women of Color Task Forces and hosts meetings regarding the development of Women of Color Task Forces around the state of Georgia. After some disagreements between the Executive Director and the Board of Directors, Alyssa Porter resigns as the Executive Director in late 2001.

As for the Georgia Advocates for Battered Women and Children, the organization again became an all volunteer agency in early 2000 and eventually closes their doors sometime in 2001. However, before GABWC closes, their three remaining board members speculated on changing the mission statement and becoming a funding and scholarship agency for survivors of domestic violence. Because of the steps that the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence has been taking towards addressing forms of violence against *all* women, the board members of GABWC finally feel that there is no longer a need for two coalitions. They close the doors of GABWC confident that the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence is again embracing the guiding principles of the original domestic violence advocates that formed the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence in 1980.

Indeed, the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence is embracing the guiding principles of the original founding advocates in 1980 with only a few minor set-backs. After Alyssa Porter left the organization, Nancy Grigsby arrives from Ohio as the new Executive Director of the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence in 2002. When she starts her position, it is clear that something has disrupted the daily operations of the organization as

there is only one staff member, the phone and computers barely work, and the filing cabinets are empty. Nancy Grigsby and the Assistant Director, Alex Delaney, work hard over the next five years rebuilding the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence. They begin to implement trainings for domestic violence advocates, including a Cultural Bridges workshop, led by Sandy Ewell and Joan Olsson in March of 2003. This training addresses “the challenge and the gift” of cultural diversity and focuses on issues of oppression and privilege by incorporating poetry and music into the dialogue.

In an interview in 2007, Nancy Grigsby notes that the divisions from the Coalition’s history are still alive and active within the domestic violence programs in Georgia. During Nancy Grigsby and Alex Delaney’s time at the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the staff has increased the agency’s budget from \$400,000 to \$2,000,000, hired a full-time lobbyist, continued the statewide hotline throughout Georgia, and hosted trainings for advocates, shelter personnel, law enforcement and other community members through 2007.

Since Nancy Grigsby and Alex Delaney’s departure from the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence in 2007, there have been several new Executive Directors that have joined the long legacy of domestic violence advocacy in Georgia. Regine Cordon served as the Executive Director between August 2007 and December 2007 before Beck Dunn joined the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence as Executive Director from December 2007 – July 2009.

Under the direction of Beck Dunn, the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence continues to make great strides in both legislative advocacy as well as repairing some of the discord between shelter programs and the Coalition that had developed over the years. They offered new, innovative trainings regarding the intersections of HIV/AIDS and Intimate Partner Violence, as well as launching the Frontline Advocate Training, a three-day comprehensive training program for advocates new to the domestic violence movement in Georgia that is still offered today. In 2008, the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence worked for the passage of S.B. 483, which clarifies the ability for child support to be awarded as part of a Temporary Protective Order. More, in 2009, the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence successfully fought against the elimination of the

Georgia Commission on Family Violence and lobbied for a \$200,000 funding increase for Georgia's certified domestic violence shelters.

Since August of 2009, Nicole Lesser has served as the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence's Executive Director. Nicole Lesser's leadership and guidance has pushed the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence in a new direction, updating the agency's mission statement and refocusing the work of GCADV to incorporate the voices of survivors. GCADV continues to serve domestic violence programs and survivors in Georgia through identifying gaps in services and working hard to create community partners to work towards the elimination of violence in Georgia.

While the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence grew out of the Georgia Council on Abused Women, the splinter group that left the Georgia Network Against Domestic Violence due to their inclusion of sexual orientation in their non-discrimination clause, GCADV once again embraces and actively advocates for the elimination of violence from our society against *all* people. GCADV is committed to healing from the homophobia and racism that has penetrated the domestic violence movement in Georgia and has actively begun addressing these issues through a new Undoing Racism initiative that was started in fall of 2010. Through this work, GCADV staff members will learn about the experiences of women of color and racism in our society, explore their own personal experiences regarding racism, and will grow and develop a system of support to continue anti-racism work in both their professional and personal lives. Through this initiative, GCADV hopes to support the redevelopment of Women of Color Taskforces and Caucuses in Georgia in the future.

*The History of GCADV Leadership*

Year	Name	Position	Agency
<b>1980</b>	Jane Marcinco	President	GNADV
<b>1983</b>	Terri Sterling	President	GNADV
<b>1984</b>	Julie Stafford	President	GNADV
<b>1985</b>	Margo Smith	Executive Director	GNADV
<b>1990</b>	Jane Mahone	Interim Director	GABWC
<b>1993</b>	Suzanne Pogue	Executive Director	GABWC
<b>1994</b>	Nancy Nelson	Executive Director	GCAW
<b>1995</b>	Vicki McLennon	Executive Director	GABWC
	Vee Breedlove	Executive Director	GCFV
<b>1997</b>	Valorie Sherer	Board President	GCFV
	Njere Alghanee	Executive Director	GABWC
	Cathy Hires	Board President	GABWC
<b>1998</b>	Diane Winters	Executive Director	GABWC
<b>1999</b>	Alyssa Porter	Executive Director	GCADV
<b>2002</b>	Nancy Grigsby	Executive Director	GCADV
<b>2007</b>	Regine Cordon	Executive Director	GCADV
<b>2008</b>	Beck Dunn	Executive Director	GCADV
<b>2009</b>	Nicole Lesser	Executive Director	GCADV