

Annual Report+ 2021




Virginia Sexual and Domestic
Violence Action Alliance

From the Director





Dear Members and Friends,

I recently listened to a talk about “awareness.” The speaker captured everyone’s attention by mentioning how the earth is spinning at roughly 1,000 miles per hour while traveling about 67,000 miles per hour around the sun while moving along with a solar system that is traveling at close to 448,000 miles per hour within the Milky Way. It can be hard to wrap our brains around those numbers. To be aware of that degree of change and movement in our lives is, on the one hand, overwhelming, and on the other hand, freeing.



2021 was a year that was also characterized by awareness nearly incomprehensible in its constantly moving polarities. In the work to end sexual and intimate partner violence, it was a year of continued uncertainty and grief due to the pandemic, and a year of hope as vaccines made some of us a whole lot safer. It was a year of continued financial disruptions that kept many agencies struggling to pay the bills, and a year of clarity about the elements of sustainability required to keep this work going for the long haul. It was a year when we spent far too many hours in front of screens, and a year when we spent more time than ever outside, finding respite and restoration in nature. It was a year when we deeply felt the fatigue that comes with long-term exposure to trauma, and a year when we looked to the roots of our movement and rediscovered the power of our resilience.





The coalition marked our 40th Anniversary in 2021...a speck of time when thinking about the Milky Way...and a substantial accomplishment when one considers research indicates that somewhere between 30% and 50% of nonprofits “fail” within their first ten years. Our Sexual and Domestic Violence agency members, our Lifetime Members, our Legacy Members, and each of you who are individual members or partners in our work has ensured that forty years in, we are strong and resilient and ready to take big, bold steps to propel our work into the future.

It is an honor to be moving with you! Enjoy this report on our 2021 activities and let us know if you would like more information about any of our projects or finances.

In peace,



2020-2021 GOVERNING BODY

Nikki Duncan-Talley
Facilitator

Laura Beth Weaver
Finance Officer

Brad Perry
Communications and
Development Officer

Virginia Powell
Leadership
Development and
Governance Officer

Marybeth Adkins
Samantha Clarke
Rosalind Cook
Cortney Fisher
Josephine Gonzalez
Ted Heck
Lenora Jones Elliott
Alejandro Prince
Tremayne Robertson
Claire Hylton Sheppard
Fatima Smith
Gretchen Soto
Ellen Yackel

Roots

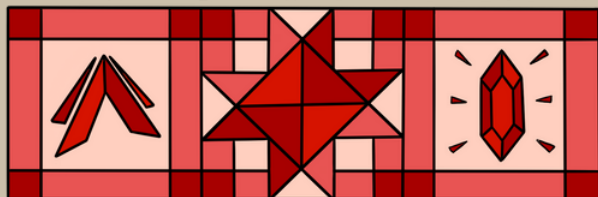
history and grounding

Many Stories, One Movement: 40 Years of the Action Alliance

To celebrate our 40th anniversary, we put together a multi-pronged project centered on stories—collecting them, sharing them, and keeping them. Components of our 40th project included an interactive digital timeline, an audio podcast, a poster featuring forty milestones in the movement, and an oral history booklet featuring the voices of forty movement makers.

We launched the results of this project to the public at our annual Act.Honor.Hope event in December, inviting others to contribute their stories and memories to our digital timeline. We recognize that this collected history is not exhaustive, and that there are as many movement stories as there are participants in that movement.

MANY STORIES



ONE MOVEMENT

For that reason, we hope that this history-keeping will be ongoing and that these projects mark not a completion, but a beginning. We invite you to be a part of the story by submitting your story to our digital timeline. The submission form, along with the podcast, oral history, and other elements of our 40th Anniversary project are accessible at bit.ly/aa40th.



From the Oral History:

"We were flying by the seat of our pants. We were all doing it as volunteers, as really grassroots advocates. And we were all on fire."

-Deb Downing on early movement days

"There's a lot of people that I have learned from, that have mentored me. I still look to them for their wisdom."

-Cathy Coleman on mentors

"The relationships that we make in this work, the people we stay at the table with even when we disagree, the people who we can call when times are tough—those are the relationships that make it possible for us to do this work."

-Kristi VanAudenhove on friendship



Leaves

growth and change

Youth Leadership and Engagement

The 2021 Honeycomb Retreat, our free arts and creative expression-based retreat for youth, was held entirely virtually over the course of three weekends, and brought together young advocates, activists, & movement builders ages 18-24 throughout the state of Virginia. Honeycomb Fellows participated in two Keynote sessions, political education workshops, and art-making sessions.



The YOUTH ARE curriculum was created by our first Youth Action Council cohort. Created for and by youth, this curriculum aims to support young people in seeing themselves as community leaders and change makers, and encourages adult facilitators, preventionists, and advocates to value the strengths, knowledge, and creativity young people bring to movement to end violence.

Changing Policy, Changing Our World

Our second *virtual* Legislative Advocacy Day was a success, and we proudly advocated for many big wins: restoration of funds to the state's sexual and domestic violence prevention fund, new firearms restrictions for those convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence crimes, abolition of the death penalty, policies to allow victims of trafficking to vacate and expunge criminal records, and more.



The Underserved Populations Learning Collaborative, a statewide project supporting SDVAs in becoming strong allies to underserved populations and promoting access to culturally-responsive, comprehensive services, wrapped up its second cohort, having built a strong statewide network of survivor-centered advocacy agencies.

We designed and executed Training For a Just World, a two-day immersion experience for advocates, preventionists, activists, and organizers working to end violence and build peaceful, just communities.



Heartwood

strength and solidity

Survivor Advocacy Continues During Ongoing Pandemic

2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic changed so much about the what it means to show up for survivors—from increased demand for services to new and emerging community needs to be met—and 2021 saw those challenges heightening even further. In 2021, calls to our suite of hotlines (The Virginia Statewide Hotline, PREA Hotline, and LGBTQ Helpline) increased 34% from the previous year; texts and chats by 27%.



34%

Total calls to our hotlines increased 34% between 2020 and 2021.



27%

Text and chat contacts to our hotlines increased by 27% between 2020 and 2021.

Overall, 2021 showed us not only that some challenges are here to stay for a while, but also that advocates are able to roll with these changes in order to provide life-saving services to survivors.

Not sure what I would do or would have done if these services didn't exist. Not sure where I would be physically, emotionally or financially.

-Survivor

PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) Summit

With the goals of increasing knowledge about PREA (the Prison Rape Elimination Act) and exploring what working with correctional facilities can look like for survivor advocates, our Crisis Response Team hosted a Virtual PREA Summit. The Summit included expert presentations and a panel of leaders in advocacy for incarcerated people. Participants learned about how PREA is implemented in Virginia, working with incarcerated survivors, both in juvenile and adult facilities, and expanding our work to disrupt the trauma-to-prison pipeline.

Branches

connection and support

Opportunities to Learn and Connect

As in 2020, we continued to provide virtual connection opportunities for our member agencies and partners. New Member Orientations, State and Local Partners Meetings, and regular Membership Meetings allowed our membership to keep up with happenings across the state and coalition. In addition to these, we held Youth Connection Zooms, allowing Virginia youth to engage and build with one another.

We also provided virtual training opportunities to our membership and beyond in 2021. In addition to a entire new suite of free advocacy trainings (the Building Your Toolbox: Virtual Training Series), we offered stand-alone trainings on topics as diverse as Trauma-Informed Lawyering, Intention-Based Graphic Design, and Cyberstalking and Harassment.

Resources For Supporting Survivors and Advocates

Resources like New Virginia Law 2021, which provided a snapshot of the legislative accomplishments and changes that occurred in the General Assembly, enabled our membership to stay informed and at the front lines of our movement.

In February, we helped the community show extra love to SDVAs by creating Valentines For Advocates, a collection of design elements for sending physical or virtual notes of support.

LOVE TO ALL
ADVOCATES



LOVE TO ALL
SURVIVORS

Our Forest+

SUPPORTERS

As a coalition, we rely on the generosity of supporters who share our vision for a violence-free Virginia and invest their time and money in our work. We appreciate each and every donation we receive. Our work in 2021 was made possible by our state and federal funding partners, as well as...



90

organizational members, including 74 sexual and domestic violence agencies and 16 affiliate agencies working to address violence and social inequity.



140

individual members, including 88 Lifetime Members whose contributions have made it possible to respond quickly to emerging needs.



200+

individuals and community partners whose donations grow our ability to support survivors and do prevention, policy, and social change work.

Your membership and contributions are vital to the work of the Action Alliance and the long-term financial health of the coalition.

Thank you for your support!

Revenues for 2021: \$3,868,563

Expenses for 2021: \$3,658,095

The Action Alliance is primarily funded by state and federal contracts, which totaled \$2,382,118.

In 2021, the Action Alliance was able to receive a Payroll Protection Program loan, which was forgiven. This allowed us to maintain staffing and helped stabilize our finances during the pandemic.

Copies of our audited financial statements and 990 tax return are available upon request.



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www.vsdvalliance.org



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