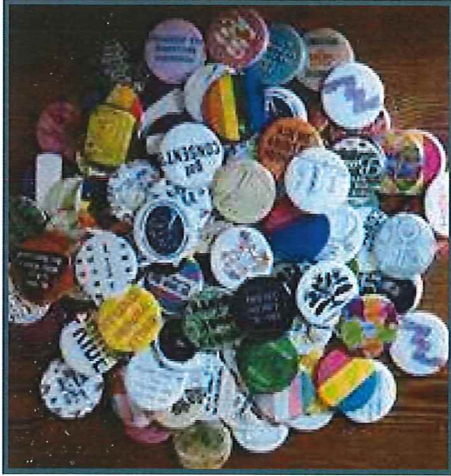
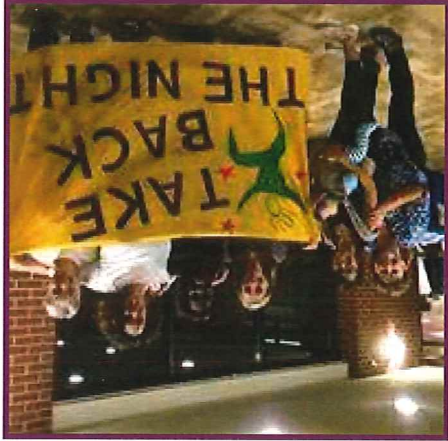


Women's Equality, Feminism, and Community Engagement



The Women's Centre celebrates the work of women and, in response to requests from women who use the centre as well as the general public, develops and delivers workshops and presentations that focus on aspects of women's lives. We cooperate with others in planning and sponsoring community education programs and events. We participate in workshops, focus groups and events at the invitation of other agencies and organizations.

International Women's Week, March 5-10, 2018
To celebrate International Women's Week, the Women's Centre brought together community organizations and StFX to plan a series of events and activities. This year's theme was *Claiming Our Space, Claiming Our Rights* – feminists, activists, scholars and communities claiming space as a means of finding voice and speaking resistance. Events and workshops were powerful and well-attended. Members from different parts of our communities spoke to women's rights, gender-based violence, and racism. A number of businesses supported the week by offering venues and free coffee. Attendance during the week exceeded 400.



Women's Equality, Feminism, and Community Engagement



International Women's Week events included:

- ♦ **Free Coffee for Women.** 20 restaurants and cafes in the community offered women a free cup of coffee.

- ♦ **International Women's Day Showcase.** Women from StFX and greater Antigonish communities shared stories, spoken word, dance numbers and musical performances that spoke to their experience of being a woman. It was a powerful evening full of laughter, tears, joy, rage, and community. 50 participants

♀ **Celebrate Women of the World.**

Women coming from and connected with different parts of the world came together to celebrate through art. They created a collage/banner, buttons and more as they shared in conversation and refreshments. 25 participants.

- ♀ **Women's Breakfast** speakers included, Bronwen Cooke and Ahlam Al-qadiri, Arabic-English Women's Teas, Mary Desmond, Women in African NS communities, Elizabeth Glinz, Women's Spaces in People's Place Library, and Laurie Boucher, Women in Municipal Government. Held at the Main Street Café. All 70 tickets were sold.

- ♀ **Feminist Cabaret** as always was a lively evening that did not disappoint. Held at Piper's Pub, Jenna Laudadio and Lillona Quarum hosted the event with 15 local acts taking part over the course of the evening. Approximately 180 participants.
- This is space where women and feminists can really come together and celebrate who we are and feel supported in being together and feel that we are creating space and opening space, and holding one another, in celebration. – Lillona Quarum as quoted in The Casket about the Cabaret.*

- ♀ **Keynote: Rachel Vincent, Noble Women's Initiatives,** brought a gender equality and women's rights media and spoke to the importance of women's voices in peace and conflict. 35 participants.

- ♀ **Faces of Harassment documentary** by filmmaker Paula Sacchetta, Brazil (2016), features women speaking about their experiences of sexual harassment. 18 participants.

- ♀ **Pizza and Poster Making for IWD March.** 30 participants.

♀ **Cultivating Consent Culture Panel.**

Katie MacDonald, Development Studies, StFX, contextualized consent culture and rape culture. Suzi Synishin, Dr. J H Gillis Regional High School, made connections to the workplace harassment experiences her female students face. Sam Gan, StFX football team and Bringing in the Bystander facilitator, spoke about the impact of hypermasculinity within the residences and athletics. In small group discussions people talked about sexual violence in their community and actions that communities could take to address sexualized violence and create a consent culture. 40 participants.

♀ **International Women's Day, March 8**

♦ **International Women's Day March.** Women and allies gathered at the Coady to hear speakers and begin the annual IWD March. Following a Welcome and Land acknowledgment, community social justice activists and spoken word artists named issues impacting women around the world and called for justice, peace and respect for women's human rights. A full voiced group of women and allies including Sean Fraser, MP, marched in a snow storm calling for Women's Space and Women's Rights to be fully honoured. 100 participants.



Working for Change: Engaging with Government

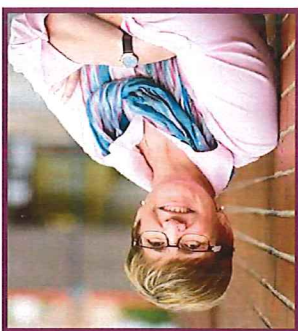
The Women's Centre engages with all levels of government on policy issues and government direction with respect to issues impacting women in our province and, especially, in our rural communities.

Provincial Election – Meet the Candidates
In advance of the May 30, 2017 provincial election, we partnered with the Antigonish Poverty Reduction Coalition to organize and host a meeting with the three main party candidates: Randy Delorey, Liberal Party, Móraig Macgillivray, NDP, and Ray Mattie, Progressive Conservative Party. Candidates were asked to respond to questions about income security, food insecurity, affordable housing, funding for sexual assault services, and support for youth programming. All three candidates were generous with their time and respectful with their responses.

Let's Talk: Violence against Women and Advancing Women's Equality in Rural Nova Scotia

Central Nova MP, Sean Fraser, invited the Women's Centre to organize a panel presentation on violence against women, where he could speak to gender-based violence and, on behalf of the Minister of Justice, announce funding for the AWRCSA Increasing Awareness of the Criminal Justice System through Bystander Intervention Training project. Panelists included Sean Fraser, Central Nova MP, Lucille Harper, Executive Director, AWRCSA, Dr. Nancy Forestell, StFX Women and Gender Studies Department, Molly Peters, Paqtnkek First Nation Band Councilor, and Annie Chau, community leader and women's rights advocate. April 2017.

"Remaining silent is part of the reason Gender Based Violence continues in our society. We all have to have a role in breaking the silence. We must make sure that the victims are believed and can get the response that is needed to begin to end the shame and the stigma the victims often experience" - Laurie Boucher, Mayor of Antigonish, "No More" campaign.



"Change begins with education, and coupled with awareness, they are key components to an effective prevention strategy"
-Hon. Randy Delorey, MLA for Antigonish, "No More" campaign.

NDP Feminist Roundtable with Lenore Zahn
Lenore Zahn, NDP Critic for the Status of Women, invited women from frontline organizations to talk about our work and priorities of women's organizations. It was an opportunity to talk about the current government's sexual violence strategy and the need to establish and sustain community-based sexualized violence services and programs across Nova Scotia. December 2017.

SWC Debrief on It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-based Violence
Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister of Status of Women Canada, chaired a discussion with 14 advocates and women's community-based organizations on Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-based Violence. The three pillars of the strategy are Prevention, Support for Survivors and their Families, and Promoting Responsive Legal and Justice Systems. The discussion was a good opportunity to talk with the Minister about the issues and the work being done in the Maritimes to address gender-based violence. St. John, New Brunswick. August 2017.

Working for Change: Engaging with Government



The Executive Director of the AWRCSA, Lucille Harper, was invited as one of 12 civil society members to join the Canadian Delegation attending the UNC62, March 12-16, 2018, New York. The theme was *Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls*. Led by the Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister for Status of Women Canada, the delegation included 70 representatives from government, NGOs, Indigenous communities, and youth organizations. Meetings with members of the Canadian delegation and with Status of Women Canada staff provided opportunities to note issues impacting women and girls in rural Nova Scotia.

At thematic UN roundtables and panels Canada engaged in high-level interactive dialogues, building alliances with other member states to further gender equality. There were over 700 official sessions and side events with many more parallel sessions organized by civil society organizations. Canada hosted a number of theme-specific side events: violence against Indigenous women and girls in the context of rural remoteness and urban disconnectedness; gender budgeting; girl and youth-led advocacy and solutions to break the cycle of violence; best practices to empower rural women and girls, focusing on climate change resilience, economic empowerment, violence against women and girls, and standing up for women's rights; and, on engaging men and boys to address and prevent violence against women and girls.

It was an opportunity to sit in on some of the formal discussions and review of the UNC62 Agreed Upon Articles, to attend meetings with the Canadian Delegation, gender-based sessions hosted or co-hosted by Canada, sessions with

government officials from various countries and sessions led by NGOs, and to learn about work being done in other parts of the world to advance gender equality and address the multiplicity of issues impacting rural woman and girls. Across the world, in every country, there are women working with passion, determination, intelligence, creativity, and deep caring for a world where women's human rights are respected, violence is non-existent and peace, justice, and social and economic equality prevail. Over the week, Lucille attended 19 sessions. While each session was powerful, of particular note were:

- ◆ *Violence Knows No Borders, Canada co-hosted*
- ◆ *Barriers to Justice for Indigenous Women, Canada co-hosted with Mexico and USA*
- ◆ *Women, Migration and Refugee Crises*
- ◆ *Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking: Taking Action for Women and Girls*
- ◆ *"#METOO" Say Survivors: Human Rights, Gender and Trafficking in Human Beings On behalf of Themselves: Syria Women Activists Organizing for Justice, parallel event*
- ◆ *Impact of Israeli Occupation on the Lives of Palestinian Women in Jerusalem*
- ◆ *Rural Women and Girls: Key Actors for Sustainable Development and Peace.*

Every 10 minutes an adolescent girl in the world dies of violence.
— Inez Maria Gonzalez

Women are victims of war and as well are victims of peace.
—Fawzia Koofti, Women, Migration and Refugee Crises



Working Together for Change: Raising Awareness, Taking Action on Violence Against Women and Girls, and Gender-based Violence

All acts of violence against women are human rights violations as are acts of violence based in transphobia and homophobia. Exposing, addressing and preventing violence against women and girls and gender-based violence is a priority of the Women's Centre. Everyday we see the impact violence has on the health and well-being of women and girls who access our services and programs. Our approach to addressing violence is grounded in a feminist, trauma-informed, anti-oppression analysis. This past year we organized workshops and training sessions, provided presentations, participated in consultations and worked with our community and with organizations provincially and across the country.

HRM Restorative Conversations

The HRM Restorative Conversations Committee invited women's centres, transition houses, men's intervention programs, and others concerned with domestic violence to a consultation to provide input into their work on Restorative Principles and Practices and their vision for a Halifax Domestic Violence Court. There was substantial feedback and concern expressed that changes need to take place across the criminal justice system before restorative principles can be effective and not harmful.

September 2017.

Take Back the Night

In collaboration with StFX students and faculty and community members, we organized a Take Back The Night rally and march. Speakers talked about the prevalence of sexualized violence on campus and in the high school, the impact of residential schools, and child sexual abuse. Survivors of sexual assault and their allies spoke about their own experiences and the need for better response and prevention measures. Approximately 200 people participated from the community, Paqtnkek, and the university.

September 2017.

- ♀ ***Every Door is the Right Door - Strait Area Community Response to Sexual Violence Network***
- The Strait Area Community Response to Sexual Violence Network, with funding from the Sexual Violence Strategy, hosted a series of workshops and information sessions to increase people's awareness about sexualized violence, helpful ways of responding to disclosures, where to find help, and prevention approaches. A WRCSSA staff facilitated several workshops.
- ***Every Door is the Right Door – a service navigation workshop*** was an opportunity for service providers to identify services available to survivors of sexualized violence in Antigonish town and county; identify the gaps/barriers; identify service delivery options for special populations; and prioritize professional development training needs for service providers. September 2017.
 - HRV staff presented ***Understanding and Responding to Sexualized Violence as Experienced by Youth Aged 12-18***, a workshop that defined and described the context and culture within which our youth are navigating their lives. February 2018.
 - The ***Contextualizing Sexual Violence Against Indigenous Women and Learning from Community workshop***, Paqtnkek Health Centre, was facilitated by Annie Chau, AWE Project, and Juliana Julian, Paqtnkek Health Director. The workshop included invaluable learnings about the historical legacy of colonialism, the residential school system, and the 1960s scoop of many Indigenous children into foster care and adoption. March 2018.
 - We facilitated workshops for the ***Every Door is the Right Door Regional Conference*** wrap up day.

Working Together for Change: Raising Awareness, Taking Action on Violence Against Women and Girls, and Gender-based Violence



16 Days of Activism on Gender Violence and National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, to December 10, International Human Rights Day marks the international 16 Days of Activism on Gender Violence

Contextualizing #Metoo:

Reckoning with Sexualized Violence in the Past and Present

As part of a 16 Days of Activism, we participated on a panel at StFX that contextualized sexualized violence past and present, the institutionalization of sexualized violence, the importance of believing survivors as an act of solidarity and resistance, and the need to hold perpetrators as well as institutions to account. The panel was more than timely as the during the week prior two students reported sexual assaults to the RCMP. As an act of solidarity, members of the women's soccer team organized a We Stand Together to End Sexualized Violence campaign. This was an opening to many more conversations and actions at StFX. There was standing room only with 100 participants; some people were turned away due to lack of space.

November 2017.

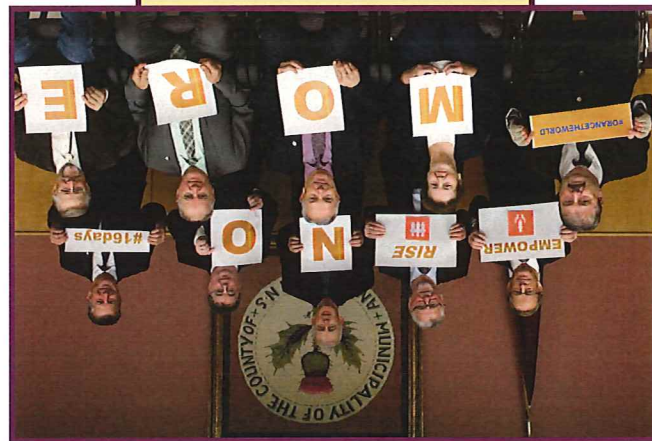
"As Mi'kmaw we need to put an end and say "no more" to violence against our aboriginal women and girls. They are the Creators who bring life and support our Nation's health and well-being."

- Chief PJ Prosper, Paqtkek Mi'kmaw Nation, participating in the "No More" campaign.

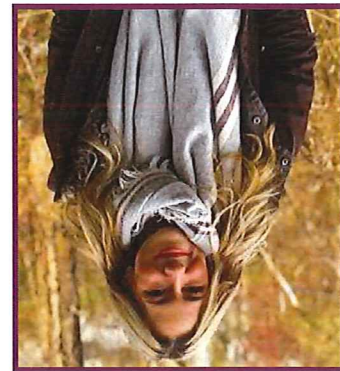


"Young women today have all experienced some form of misogyny and derogatory remarks made toward them...they mean to undermine our intelligence, our power, and our pride... sexualized violence is enabled and perpetuated by not addressing these remarks when they first occur." -Annie Stirois, former StFX Student Union President, "No More" campaign.

"No More" Sexual Violence Campaign
In follow-up to the #Metoo initiative in which more than 12 million women disclosed they had been subjected to acts of sexualized violence, we invited community leaders to help turn "me too" into "No More" by stating a personal commitment to take action to end violence against women and girls in our communities. The responses were heartening and thoughtful. Each of the 16 days, we featured a community leader's statement on our Facebook page.



Antigonish County Council, "No More" campaign.



Working Together for Change: Raising Awareness, Taking Action on Violence Against Women and Girls, and Gender-based Violence



Vancouver Rape Relief and Harmony House, Ottawa, brought together 42 feminist activists working in community-based organizations, universities, and Indigenous spaces for a 3 day meeting. The majority of the women work in feminist front-line anti-violence organizations – primarily sexual assault centres and shelters. Over the 3 days conversations included:

- Cherry Smiley and Fay Blaney spoke about the *Feminist Response to the Crisis of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women*.

- Sunny Mariner, Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre, introduced the *Philadelphia Model and feminist oversight of policing* where front line sexual assault centres can review police files. The model is being piloted in 3 sites in Ontario.

- We discussed *Judicial Training and Bill C-337* with women supporting the training of all judges assigned to sit on sexual assault cases.

- Leighann Burns, Harmony House, talked about *Family Law Response to Violence against Women* and the important role of front-line advocates in women's safety. We discussed changes that need to be made in the Family Law courts and the need to have only 1 judge assigned to the case.

- We talked about the need to rebuild a national women's movement. Vancouver Rape Relief agreed to take a lead on this huge undertaking.

- Diana Majury, Department of Law and Legal Studies, Anna Przedeńkowek, PhD Candidates, School of Social Work, both from Carleton University and Leighann Burns, Harmony House, Ottawa, conducted a research-related focus group on the subject of community-academic partnerships for their work, *Rise Again: Insight into the Experiences of Feminist Activists with Community-Academic Partnerships in Violence against Women*.

October 23 - 25, 2017. Ottawa.

National Feminist Anti-Violence Meeting

Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation

We bringing more awareness about the prevalence of human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of women and youth to our community - how to support to women and youth who have been or are being trafficked and workshops, participated in committee work, connected with support organizations, and provided media interviews.

Nova Scotia Trafficking Elimination Partnership (NSTEP), YWCA Halifax

is a 5 year project which brings together key stakeholders – community organizations serving women and youth, survivors of sex-trafficking, government, and front line responders to address needs related to the prevention of sex-trafficking, appropriate intervention, and aftercare. A goal is to establish prevention programs for at-risk communities, crisis and long-term housing, counselling and mental health services, advocacy, and policy development.

Community Consultation on an Exiting Guide for Sexual Exploitation/Trafficking

Covenant Courthouse Society, Vancouver, held a Nova Scotia Community Consultation on an Exiting Guide for Sexual Exploitation/Trafficking. We reviewed and suggested changes to the draft exiting tool.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights

The Parliamentary Standing Committee held a roundtable with Members of Parliament, service providers, and survivor families to discuss Human Trafficking in Canada. They will make recommendations that address the support needs and safety of people who have been trafficked. Halifax, March 2018.

Working Together for Change: Raising Awareness, Taking Action on Violence Against Women and Girls, and Gender-based Violence



Increasing Awareness of the Criminal Justice System through Bystander Intervention Training

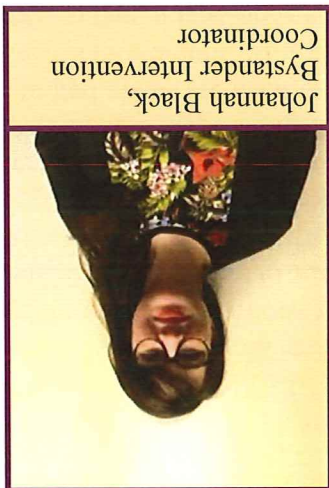
Through our Bystander Intervention Project we are increasing awareness about and strengthening resistance to sexualized violence by developing a Nova Scotia specific pro-social bystander intervention program and by creating a series of five short films that outline what happens when someone chooses to report a sexual assault to the police. Building upon the University of New Hampshire *Bringing in the Bystander* training, our program will use Canadian statistics and case studies, discussions of Canadian Law, and address the social dynamics that underlie rape culture in Canada. The program is being developed with the participation of university and college administration, faculty and students, and community groups and organizations, including the African Nova Scotian and the Mi'kmaq communities.

Over the year we met extensively with our Advisory Committee and student groups to identify key components for a bystander intervention program, completed a literature and best-practice review of sexual violence education on post-secondary campuses in Canada and the United States, and built a solid foundation for creating a successful training program. In the coming year we will pilot the training module by module to groups of students or staff and revise the curriculum based on feedback. The first two modules will be ready to roll out by the fall of 2018.

Bystander Intervention Program Training Modules

Each module addresses different aspects of sexual violence on campus and offers intervention skills and techniques. Students "move-up" in the trainings as their knowledge becomes more advanced and in-depth.

1. Basic Bystander Training.
2. Alcohol and Sex.
3. Advanced Bystander Training.
4. Building Communities of Accountability.
5. Creating Social Change.



Johannah Black,
Bystander Intervention
Coordinator

While the Nova Scotia specific program is being developed, in partnership with StFX University we provided Bringing in the Bystander (BITB) facilitator training to over 53 students and staff, and over 125 student leaders. In total 549 students received BITB training from St.FX peer trainers this year. As well, we delivered BITB training to over 100 student leaders from St. Mary's University.

I liked the examples of how to intervene in real life situations. It made me feel more prepared. – St. FX student who took BITB training



Working Together for Change: Raising Awareness, Taking Action on Violence Against Women and Girls, and Gender-based Violence

Centering Student Voices: Sexual Violence Prevention and Bystander Intervention Conference

To better understand campus sexualized violence prevention and response initiatives, we brought together over 80 post-secondary students from across the province to discuss ways students are organizing to end sexual violence. In a panel discussion, 11 student-leaders discussed their efforts on campus in combating sexual violence and rape culture. Jordan Roberts provided Active Listening Training 101 for all of the attendees. The students were highly engaged, thoughtful and their ideas have enriched the curriculum. January 2018.

The respectful environment was amazing and people recognizing the importance of consent and the problem of the lack of education and resources available. This conference should be done more often. – Student conference attendee

Proceeding through the Criminal Justice System Films

We worked with filmmaker Peter Murphy to develop 6 films that demystify the criminal justice system process for victims/survivors of sexual violence. We filmed interviews with Constable Deepak Prasad from the Antigonish Detachment of the RCMP; Crown Attorneys Courtney MacNeil and Carla Ball; Heather MacDonald-Chisholm and Dana Bowden, Nova Scotia Victims Services. They each spoke to different aspects of the criminal justice system and the ways that victims participate in this system.

Launch of the Changing the Culture of Acceptance: Recommendations to address sexual violence on university campuses report

We attended and presented at the launch of the *Changing the Culture of Acceptance: Recommendations to address sexual violence on university campuses* report submitted by the Province's Sexual Violence Prevention Committee and accepted in full by the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education and the University Partnership Committee. Our Bystander Intervention Project Coordinator spoke to the report's recommendation that the new Bystander Training program be adopted by post-secondary institutions in the province. December 2017.



Jordan Roberts at the Bystander Intervention Conference, St. Mary's University.

"I would like to thank everyone who helped make this event possible. I learned so much! It was wonderful sharing ideas and knowledge with like-minded people." – Student conference attendee

Working Together for Change: Raising Awareness, Taking Action on Violence Against Women and Girls, and Gender-based Violence



Advancing Women's Equality in Rural Nova Scotia: Partnering to Transform the Context and End Sexualized Violence

The AWE Project is a three-year, survivor-centred, policy-oriented initiative working to improve sexualized violence responses and prevention efforts in a rural context in order to transform the context in which sexualized violence is perpetrated and advance women's equality.

AWE is a collaboration with three partnering communities: the Strait Regional School Board (re-structured in 2018, and re-named Strait Region Centre for Education), St. Francis Xavier University, and Paqtnkek Mi'kmaq Nation. Staff and advisory committees from these communities steer the work while the "Cross-Sectoral Committee" links all partners, advises, evaluates, and plans joint actions. The project committees engage a diversity of community members, rooting the work in the specific strengths and needs of each community. It is linked nationally to work supported by the Status of Women Canada and the Canadian Women's Foundation.

This year AWE worked with the community advisory committees to map out the project; completed a literature review that grounds the work of the project in current knowledge and best practices; conducted and shared participatory action research and needs assessments results.

Women Leaders
AWE is part of a national network of projects funded by Status of Women Canada. Each project identified three women leaders responsible for connecting the local project work with the work of the *Gender Equality Network Canada*. The AWE leaders are Molly Peters, Paqtnkek Mi'kmaq Nation, Dr. Nancy Forestell, StFX University, and Annie Chau, AWE Project Coordinator. They will meet with leaders from other projects from across Canada 5 times over the duration of the project.



Annie Chau, AWE Project Coordinator, with her son Spencer, and Katherine Reed, AWE Project Assistant

Research, Analysis, Learning

- We extensively *researched sexual violence literature* pertaining to all three partner communities. The sections on Indigenous communities and post-secondary and public school environments were presented to the relevant advisory committees for their consideration.
- We *reviewed the sexual violence policy initiatives* of different Nova Scotia universities.
- We *researched policy analysis tools* to support policy analysis in the three partner communities and interviewed policy experts in each community: Sharon MacCuspie (SRSB), Andrew Beckett (StFX), and Chief PJ Prosper (Paqtnkek). This helped frame the needs assessment and policy analysis work and to build relationships partner communities.
- *Talking With and Hearing From One Another - A Dialogue Towards Action on Sexual Violence*. With the StFX Women and Gender Student's Society, we co-facilitated a discussion with StFX students and student leaders, staff, youth workers, and community members which focused on the struggle to change campus culture and what factors make this difficult.



Working Together for Change: Raising Awareness, Taking Action on Violence Against Women and Girls, and Gender-based Violence

AWE Project Announcements

- **Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister for Status of Women Canada**, formally announced the five SWC projects funded in the Maritime provinces. She shared her thoughts about advancing the status of women and the meaning and potential of the Atlantic region projects. Project representatives described their projects and reflected upon what draws them to women's equality work. August 2017.
- **Sean Fraser, MP for Central Nova**, formally announced AWE project funding. Representatives from the three partnering organizations spoke to their involvement with it.

Universities are a microcosm of the larger community, so all the forms of sexual violence that exist in the larger community also exist at StFX as they do at all the universities.

— Margaret MacKinnon, Director of Health, Counselling and Accessible Learning

We've had a history of working with the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre for a number of years...and it's been a very beneficial partnership for our students and our school communities.

— Paul Landry, Manager of Operations for Strait Regional School Board.

We cannot afford to not address these issues anymore because we'll continue to lose our loved ones...It's a very close-to-home issue for our communities, and I can't even begin to express how amazing it is to sit in this room with people actually having this conversation.

— Molly Peters, Paqtkek Mi'kmaq Nation

Community Needs Assessments

Were undertaken with each partner and reflected community advisory committee discussions.

Strait Regional Centre for Education

For the public schools needs assessment the SRCE Advisory Committee reviewed data from many sources, including published research. Participants in selected student leadership events organized by HRV and Sexual Education staff offered input. A scan of SchoolsPlus and Youth Health Centre program staff, as well as guidance counsellors contributed current information about issues that students have been bringing to them. We presented the results of these scans at two youth conferences and facilitated an exercise in making meaning from the findings. This elicited the youth's material in their own voices and validated the findings of the scan.

Paqtkek

Two meetings held in Paqtkek identified the issues requiring attention: one with 10 highschool-aged youth, and one with 12 community members. In a narrative inquiry process participants were presented with stories describing different forms of sexualized violence, invited to make meaning of them, and draw insights that to prevent and respond better to future real-life situations.

StFX Project Committee

AWE received approval from the StFX Research Ethics Board for a Sexual Violence Climate Survey and focus groups. Margie McKinnon, our StFX partner, is the principal investigator with AWE staff as co-investigators. Approximately 1,000 StFX students or 25% of the student body participated in the Campus Climate Survey.

Working Together for Change: Raising Awareness, Taking Action on Violence Against Women and Girls, and Gender-based Violence



The Needs Assessments confirmed:

- Sexualized violence is prevalent in our community. It is rooted in sexism, colonialism, and heteronormative, patriarchal ideas about human sexuality. More and better education is needed to improve relationships and sexual health.
- Better methods are needed to connect sexual violence survivors to the supports and services.
- Culture change is required in order to better prevent and respond to sexualized violence.



AWE Project Announcement with
Annie Chau, Project Coordinator,
Sean Fraser, MP Central Nova,
Juliana Julian, Paqtmkek Health Centre,
Margie McKinnon, StFX,
Paul Landry, Strait Regional School Board

"The vast majority of people I talk with understand that sexual violence is a problem, [but they] view it to be someone else's problem."
- Sean Fraser, MP Central Nova

Building Capacity

AWE staff attended the following webinars and online courses to deepen their knowledge and build their skills.

- Webinar: *Sex Discrimination and the Indian Act*, sponsored by the Canadian Women's Foundation and Feminist Alliance for International Action.
- Webinar: *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*. Masculinity in Indigenous communities was disrupted by colonization. Some of these men are now working on consciousness raising and activism to overcome the painful legacy of the Indian Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop. The hope is that violence against Indigenous women and children will be lessened. Much of it is caused by Indigenous men.
- Webinar: *Trauma Informed Practice with Indigenous Peoples across the Life Span*. Presenter, Natalie Clark taught grounding techniques and activities she uses to revitalize survivors' Indigenous identity.
- On-line course, *Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence: A Nova Scotia Resource*, NS Sexual Violence Strategy – a basic and thorough orientation for helping survivors.
- Online course, *GBA+ offered by Status of Women Canada*: a systematic process for gender based analysis and planning in the workplace and community to advance equality for people with all gender identities.
- Webinar: *Preventing and Addressing Youth Sexting*, featured a new model developed by St. Jerome police force, Quebec, for dealing decisively with sexting and cyberbullying, while informing and promoting positive communication among parents, students, police, and schools.



Working Together for Change: Raising Awareness, Taking Action on Violence Against Women and Girls, and Gender-based Violence

Mi'kmaw Community Engagement Toolkit on Sexual Violence
The Mi'kmaw Community Engagement Toolkit on Sexual Violence was developed with the Paqtnkek community as part of the AWRCSASA *Responding to and Preventing Sexual Violence – Paqtnkek* project, 2014-2016. Annie Chau, project coordinator, and Juliana Julian, Health Director for Paqtnkek, have been presenting toolkit workshops.

Mi'kmaw Community Toolkit Presentations

- **Eastern Hub Gathering for Righting Relations: Adult Education for Social Change/ Apaji-wla'matuiinan**
We presented to *Righting Relations*, a five-year capacity building project involving women who lead change through adult education. The foundation is facilitating reciprocal learning and connecting adult educators involved in similar efforts within our region and the rest of Canada. 40 Atlantic region Indigenous leaders and allies participated. May 2017. Richibucto, New Brunswick.
- **El Ground, New Brunswick**
We presented to representatives from the five First Nations communities in NB. About 20 people were in attendance.
- **Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Community Presentations**
Three toolkit launch events were organized in Nova Scotia for Mi'kmaw communities, and to provide education and networking opportunities. These took place with the First Nations communities in Millbrook, Membertou, and Annapolis Valley. Participant evaluations included suggestions that the toolkit be used with youth and that communities be brought together once they have used it so they can learn and share.
- **Toolkit Presentations to Community Organizations and Conferences**
The Toolkit and the work on sexualized violence against Indigenous women and their communities, was presented at a number of conferences and workshops.
 - the *Strait Area Community Response to Sexual Violence* educational workshop,
 - *Contextualizing Sexual Violence against Indigenous Women and Learning from Community*. March 2018. Paqtnkek Health Centre. 45 participants.
 - *Every Door is the Right Door: Regional Conference*. People responded positively to the toolkit and expressed a desire to adapt and use it. March 2018. Port Hawkesbury. 45 people.
 - *Canadian Domestic Violence Conference*. Annie and Juliana presented *An Indigenous Community's Work on Gender-Based Violence in the Context of Healing* at the conference. March 2018. Halifax. 45 participants.

Working Together for Change: Poverty Reduction Work



Antigonish Poverty Reduction Coalition

The Antigonish Poverty Reduction Coalition (APRC) is a group of individuals and organizations working together to reduce poverty in Antigonish Town and County. Over the year, we undertook the following initiatives.

- **Provincial Election.** We co-sponsored with the Women's Centre a *Meet the Candidates* event that focused on poverty and sexualized violence. The APRC asked questions on income security/ESIA, affordable housing and food insecurity. June 2017.

- **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.** We hosted an information table at the Antigonish launch of the Antigonish - Guysborough - Strait Richmond Community Health Plan. October 2017.
- We worked with **Town of Antigonish** to address concerns with electrical bill arrears notifications. The consumer guide to power showed there was a 57.5% increase in light bills over the past 10 – 12 years while shelter prices and income assistance have remained the same.

- We agreed to collaborate with the **Annapolis Valley Poverty Coalition (AVPC)** to hold a People's School on Poverty in the fall of 2018.
- We undertook a **strategic planning session** facilitated by Debbie Castle, Coady International Institute. It was an opportunity to reflect upon the work accomplished in the past 5 years and to prioritize direction and actions for the upcoming year and beyond.

Antigonish Food Security Coalition

The Antigonish Food Security Coalition (AFSC) brings together individuals and organizations in the community who are concerned about food security to share information and to collaborate on activities that raise awareness about and help address food security. Initiatives this year included:

- The **Food Box Program**, a cost-shared program which saw 7 lower-income families receive a box of fruits, vegetables, and eggs from local producers at half the regular cost.
- The **Gleaning Project** redirected excess produce to the Food Bank and hot lunch program.
- A **"Seedy Saturday"** table at the Farmer's Market.
- The **Community Garden Box** program provided people with community garden boxes.
- We participated in the Government of Canada's National Food Policy Consultation by hosting *What's Your Recipe for a Better Food System?*, an event designed to help shape *A Food Policy for Canada* that will cover the entire food system, from production to consumption to compost.



Working Together for Change: Supporting the Well-being of Women and Community

The Women's Centre takes a social determinants of health approach in looking at issues that impact the health and well-being of women, families, and our communities. We work with our communities, province and at the national level to create a healthier and more just world.

Women's Centre Connect
Through Women's Centres Connect, we work collaboratively as nine women centres across the province to advance the concerns of women who use our services and programs.

Nova Scotia Association of Community Health Centres
As home to *Lindsay's Health Centre for Women*, the AWRCSASA identifies as a community health centre and is a member of the Nova Scotia Association of Community Health Centres (NSACHC). The NSACHC is a provincial voice for community health centres. CHCs provide interprofessional primary care, integrate services/programs in primary care, health promotion and community wellbeing, are community-centered, actively address the social determinants of health; demonstrate commitment to health equity and social justice.

The Women's Centre participated in **Community Initiatives and Events** related to our work.

Antigonish International Film Festival where we sponsored a film related to women's struggles.

Re-Commitment to Peace and Friendship, a community partnership project of the Heritage Association of Antigonish and Arts Health Antigonish, called upon "us all as Treaty People to reflect on the land acknowledgment, specifically the Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1725." The AWRCSASA was a signatory to a parchment that renews our collective commitment to Peace and Friendship between the Mi'kmaq and the ever-expanding multicultural community of Antigonish. November 2017.

Antigonish Affordable Housing Society

We celebrated the announcement by the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister Responsible for CMHC, of SEED Program funding for AAHS moving one step closer to the next phase of Riverside Estates affordable housing development. We participated in a short AAHS video interview about the need we see for affordable housing and the positive impact it has on people living on low-incomes.

We contributed to community and regional consultations:

- ♦ The **Antigonish Town and County Recreation Departments** joint brainstorming discussion on barriers to participating in recreational activities and funding programs to reduce barriers.
- ♦ **Peer Support Nova Scotia, Mental Health Innovations** consultation on Mental Health Peer support hear from organizations across the province what would be helpful in a peer support program.
- ♦ The Strait Region Society for Children, Youth and Families brought together service providers and child advocates to talk about creating a **stand alone child and youth advocacy office** in Nova Scotia.
- ♦ **Open Up Project – The Casket** invited businesses, organizations and individuals from the community to an evening networking and discussion session about ways of developing local media and keeping it relevant to communities.

Building Capacity of Staff



The Women's Centre supports staff in attending workshops, conferences, training sessions and webinars that increase their knowledge about issues facing the women and youth they work with and that build their capacity to respond effectively. Some of the sessions in which staff participated include the following.

- *Conversations on Sexual Violence on University Campuses: New Challenges, Novel Solutions.* Dr. Diane Crocker, St. Mary's University, brought together researchers from across Canada to present and facilitate conversations with researchers, policy-makers and community activists. At an evening panel, Constance Backhouse, Ottawa U, Kelley Castle, U of Toronto, Farrah Khan, Ryerson U, Diana Swain, CBC, and Jason Garcia, MacEwan U, spoke to the effectiveness of response and prevention initiatives, the disbelief of women and children who disclose sexual violence, and need for more feminist advocates. June 2017.

- *Campus Sexual Violence, Consent and Safety.* In a follow-up session, Diane Crocker, Saint Mary's University, provided an overview of her research approach, Understanding University Rape Culture through Narrative and Complexity. February 2018.
- *The Human Trafficking Workshop* sponsored by the Pictou County MORPH (Mapping Our Road to Power and Healing). November 2017.

- *Gender Diversity and Identity Workshop* with AJ Ripley, Beam Diversity. The session focused on techniques for positive, effective and meaningful communication with queer, trans, non-binary and other gender diverse people and addressed ways in which our organizations can be better allies. December 2017.
- *Sexual Harassment and Precarious Workplaces* webinar, Learning Network and Knowledge Hub. Kaitlyn Matulewicz, Organizer, Retail Action Network, at the invitation of the. Kaitlyn spoke to the ways in which an insecure and precarious work environment relates to unwanted sexual experiences in the workplace. Sexual harassment is an abuse of both economic and sexual power and is defined as such by the Supreme Court of Canada in that it attacks the dignity and self-respect of the victim both as an employee and a human-being.

- *Basic Income: Collective Action on Social Policy* Webinar The webinar provided an overview of the rationale and benefits of establishing a universal basic income, gave examples of Basic Income initiatives and discussed issues in program design. Some programs in Canada that use a basic income approach are the Guaranteed Income Supplement and the Old Age Security for seniors as well as the Canadian Child Benefit.
- *Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) Training* webinar The webinar provided an overview of the CASL, commercial electronic messages (CEM); the charities exemption clause; and recommendations to implement.



Funding Support

The work we do at the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services would not be possible without the support of our community and without the support of the foundations, departments of government and private donors that fund our work.

We would like to thank all who provide support for our services and programs.

Increasing Awareness of the Criminal Justice System through Bystander Intervention Training is funded by:

- Department of Justice Canada

Summer Student position is funded by:

- Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education, Student Employment Programs

Community Support

It is with the generous, ongoing support provided by our community that we are able to do all that we do.

♥ Thank you ♥

to our many individual donors and

Sisters of St. Martha
Antigonish Kinsmen Club
Unifor Social Justice Fund



Direct Services are funded by:

- Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- Nova Scotia Health Authority
- Community donations

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program is funded by

- Nova Scotia Health Authority

Specialized Sexualized Violence Trauma Therapy Program is funded by:

- Nova Scotia Health Authority

Justice Matters for Women is funded by:

- Law Foundation of Nova Scotia

Antigonish Guysborough Immigrant Support Program is funded by:

- Nova Scotia Office of Immigration

Healthy Relationships for Youth Program is funded by:

- Nova Scotia Department of Justice
- Lighthouses' Program
- Leacross Foundation
- Town of Antigonish and Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Girls Groups are funded by:

- the Guysborough Community Health Board and the Strait Richmond Community Health Board

Advancing Women's Equality in Rural Nova Scotia: Transforming the Context to End Sexualized Violence is funded by:

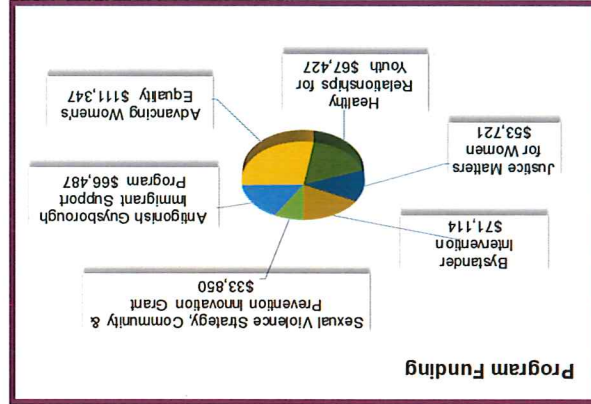
- Status of Women Canada

Financial Overview



In the Finance Office we tracked and prepared reports for the Women's Centre core programming as well as six projects. Jackie Jacques, our bookkeeper, successfully completed a first year accounting course with the Nova Scotia Community College.

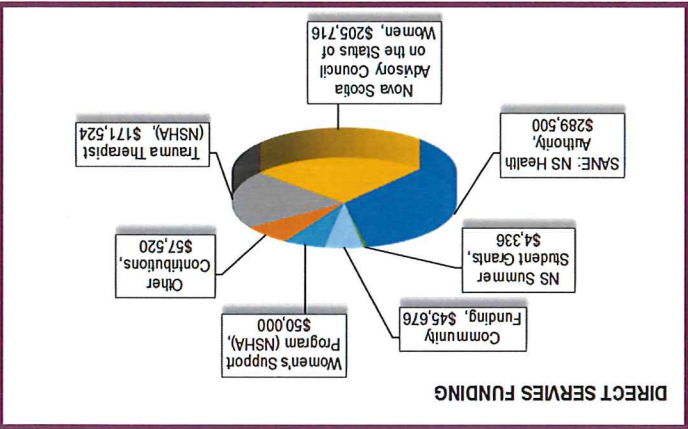
Core funding from the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women remains consistent with last year at \$205,716; it covers our Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program from the Nova Scotia Health Authority as well as long standing funding of \$50,000 for our Women's Support Services. The Centre is pleased to have \$171,524 in stabilized NSHA funding for our Sexualized Violence Trauma Therapist Program. We received provincial funds for a summer student position. We are indebted to the community at large for its ongoing financial support for the work we do. In this year's annual direct mail campaign, we received a large individual donation, all of which, provides much needed funding for the core programming of our Centre. (See Figure #1)



The Bystander Intervention Program, funded by Justice Canada, completed year 2 of a 3 year program. The Nova Scotia Office of Immigration supports our Antigonish Guyssborough Immigrant Support Program and the valuable work being carried out with immigrants residing in our area. We were successful in securing three year funding from Status of Women Canada for our Advancing Women's Equality project. We completed our work in Waycobah and Pagnankek funded through the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services under its Community Support Network and Prevention Innovation Grants. Our Program Funders provided over \$400,000 this year to the work of the Centre. Financial reports for these Programs were completed and submitted during the year, as required, to the various funders.

Kris Hanlon, Finance Administrator
Jackie Jacques, Bookkeeper

A more detailed accounting of AWRCSASA finances is available in our annual financial report.



Healthy Relationships for Youth was funded by Leacross Foundation, a Nova Scotia Department of Justice, Lighthouse Grant, and smaller grants from both the Town and Municipality of Antigonish.



The Women Behind the Work 2016-2017

Executive Director
Lucille Harper

Financial Administrator

Christine Hanlon
Bookkeeper/Admin Assistant
Jackie Jacques

Assistant to Executive Director
Speireag Hendra

Direct Services
♀ Women's Services Coordinator:
Vangie Babin

♀ Women's Support Workers:

Mica Francis
Leslie Lynch/Gisele Carpenter

Specialized Trauma Therapists

♀ Nancy Gray
♀ Laurie Suitor/Pam Rubin
♀ Elizabeth Fitzgerald

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program

♀ Program Manager:
Heather Blackburn
♀ Response Site and Staff Coordinator:
Felicia Felix-MacDonald
♀ Sexual Violence Prevention Educator:
Faye Fraser

SANE Nurses:

Jennifer Anderson
Cerina Austen
Kari Lee Chisholm-MacDonald
Felicia Felix-MacDonald
Angela Fougere
Marilyn Grant
Alison Horne
Ashley Jackson
Jill Leon
Cassandra MacDonald
Dawn MacIntosh
Suzanne Munro-MacLean
Kyla Neary-Griffiths
Rachel Pellerine

Lindsay's Health Centre for Women

♀ Physician:
Daphne Maclean
♀ Nurse Practitioner:
Kathryn Boyd
♀ Staff from Mental Health & Addictions Services:
Jean Crosby, Jessica Heidebrecht,
Cianna MacKeigan
♀ AWRCSASA Women's Support Workers
Marcia Connolly
♀ Rural Outreach Worker:
Erin Wynn/Arwen Sweet

Healthy Relationships for Youth Program

♀ Arwen Sweet
♀ SRSB Program Coordinator:
Erin Wynn/Arwen Sweet
Antigonish Guysborough Immigrant Support Program
♀ Immigrant Support Program Coordinator:
Wyanne Sandler/Jubanti Toppo

Advancing Women's Equality Project

♀ Project Coordinator: Annie Chau
♀ Program Assistant: Katherine Reed
Bystander Intervention Project
♀ Project Coordinator: Johannah May Black

Summer Students

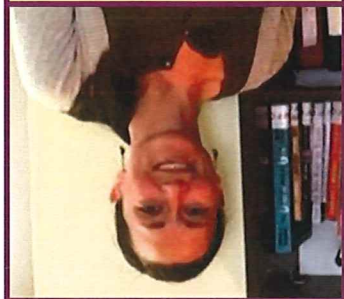
♀ Emily Chisholm
♀ Allison Armstrong
♀ Salma Rehimi

Income Tax Program

♀ Peggy Chisholm

**All Our Board Members
and Our Much
Appreciated Volunteers**

Speireag Hendra,
Assistant to
Executive Director



Visionary Women



Our Board of Directors

2017-2018

Susan Ross, Co-Chair

Meghan MacGillivray-Case, Co-Chair

Karen Gillis Armstrong

Jean Crosby

Makara Delorey

Nancy Forestell

Doris Gillis

Christina Holmes

Christine Johnson

Meaghan MacIntyre

Andrea Teasdale

Don't wait for a light to appear at the end of the tunnel. Stride down there - and light the thing yourself. – Sara Henderson

Volunteers with the Women's Centre

The work of our volunteers help make it possible to accomplish all that we do. We thank the dedicated group of women and service learning students who helped with office support, fundraising, facilitating programs, organizing events, and supporting projects.

We thank our students and community members who helped with office tasks on a weekly basis:

- ♀ Rachel Albert
- ♀ Cassandra MacDonald
- ♀ Jennifer Anderson
- ♀ Alison Armstrong
- ♀ Salome Barker
- ♀ Nicole Gillis
- ♀ Julia Ratidzai Matumbe
- ♀ Raquel Rodenzo
- ♀ Hina Shehzadi
- ♀ Christine Johnson
- ♀ Emily Keenan
- ♀ Tori Lutes
- ♀ Emma MacDonald
- ♀ Kayleigh Trenholm

Women of Note

Martha McGinn

We were saddened this year by the passing of Martha McGinn. Martha worked with the Women's Centre from 1993-1995 bringing her intelligence, caring heart, and passion for addressing issues that affected the well-being of women and girls. She was a spark of light in our world, an advocate for social justice for all. We are a better world for having Martha in it.

Daphne MacLean

Dr. Daphne MacLean, physician for Lindsay's Health Centre for Women, retired in December 2017. With all our hearts, we thank Daphne for her dedication to Lindsay's these past 12 years and for all she has done for the many women and girls who come to Lindsay's for care. Daphne joined the Lindsay's team in September 2005 taking over for Dr. Maureen Allen. We will miss her "let's get it done" approach, her inquiring mind, and the thoughtfulness she extends to all around her.

SANE Nurses – Angela Fougere, Suzanne Munro MacLean, Shauna Grant-Smith

We are grateful for and inspired by Angela Fougere, Suzanne Munro MacLean, and Shauna Grant-Smith who have given 10 years of service to the SANE program. As SANEs they have responded to calls in the middle of the night and driven through all kinds of weather to provide sensitive, trauma-informed, survivor-centred care to people of all genders who have been subjected to sexual violence and been brave enough to come forward.



Contact Us
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& Sexual Assault Services Association
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