

Celebrating 40 Years of Service



Last fall, Women's Support Services commemorated 40 years of programming and services with a community celebration.

Music, crafts, and treats were the order of the day as friends and supporters gathered at The Grove in Lakeville, CT to enjoy the sunny afternoon. Maria Horn, former WSS Board Chair and current CT State Representative, presented Executive Director Betsey Mauro with an Official Citation from the State of Connecticut General Assembly, recognizing the hard work and dedication of the agency over four decades of operation.

While the event celebrated the partnerships, volunteers, and community support that has been the bedrock of our work, it also served as a prelude to a year of incredible growth and activity for the agency. *Turn the page to learn more...*





IN MEMORIAM

Women's Support Services recognized the 25 victims of domestic violence across the state of Connecticut at our annual community vigil, held in North Canaan last autumn. Over 50 community members, including representatives from the Salisbury School attended the commemoration.

ANNOUNCING 'LA CASITA'

Women's Support Services significantly expanded our options for emergency shelter and interim housing this year. 'La Casita', a stand-alone home, was made available by a long-time supporter for clients to rest, recuperate, and plan for their future. More than 50 generous supporters have helped furnish and supply the home. Now a cozy, safe place, 'La Casita' housed 16 clients, including 6 children, this past year.

WSS received an enormous amount of support for clients in transition. Barbara Berkovich donated beautiful handmade bags filled with toiletries and beauty supplies for our clients. Simple, thoughtful gifts such as these can mean a world of difference to a client who has fled their home, often with few personal belongings.

Staffing was another area of growth for the agency. Increased federal funding enabled WSS to hire an additional Advocate, shifting the portfolio of an existing Advocate to focus solely on working with clients in need of emergency shelter and housing. Expanding programs need a strong infrastructure to support them and WSS recruited a Director of Operations for the first time, bringing our team to a total of 12 staff members.



IT'S MOVING TIME!

In March Women's Support Services officially moved from their home of two decades in Sharon to a new, larger office in Lakeville. A wonderful crew of helpers from Lime Rock Park donated their time to help WSS move into their new space. Thank you!!

WELCOME TO OUR NEW HOME

WSS's new home at 13a Porter Street in Lakeville provides the agency a world of opportunity. With room for our growing staff, the first phase of renovation is complete and includes office space, a children's room, and a client counseling room.

Phase II will include meeting space, a kitchen, and a much-anticipated Community Room. This room will enable clients and their families to regain a sense of normalcy - cooking a meal, doing laundry and homework - all in a safe setting where they can access services at the same time. This second phase of construction will expand our options for office space and also enable WSS to hold meetings, training workshops, and support groups on the premises.



And the biggest news of all...

WE'VE CHANGED OUR NAME!

For over forty years Women's Support Services has provided crisis management and support services to victims of domestic violence and their families. As our services expanded to incorporate prevention education throughout the schools in our area, we came to acknowledge the importance of a more inclusive name. We committed to an intensive process of identifying a name that encompasses the variety of services we provide and reflects our commitment to creating a welcoming and open atmosphere for anyone who needs our support. We are thrilled to share our new name with you:

PROJECT SAGE

*Support • Advocate • Guide • Educate
to end relationship violence*

PROJECT SAGE

PO BOX 717
13A PORTER STREET
LAKEVILLE, CT 06039

Formerly known as Women's Support Services

POSTAL PATRON

**Project SAGE provides a 24-hour Crisis Hotline 860-364-1900.
ALL SERVICES ARE FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL.**

WSS STAFF

Dr. D. Elizabeth Mauro, *Executive Director*
Linda Ciano, *Director of Community Engagement*
Thom Dunlavey, *Office Administrator & Development Assistant*
Sarah Ford, *Prevention Educator*
Virginia Gold, *Director of Client Services*
Amanda Gregg, *Hotline Counselor*
Anna Kallman, *Hotline Counselor*
Yamile Leal, *Adult Advocate*
Jahnesha Lewis, *Family and Child Advocate*
Shelly Ross Robbins, *Director of Development*
Kaitlyn Robitaille, *Director of Special Gifts and Events*
Kelly Rybczyk, *Director of Operations*
Jesi Sarno, *Housing Advocate*
Alison Schweizer, *Hotline Counselor*
Lisa Waldron, *Family Violence Victim Advocate*

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