On behalf of the staff, we are pleased to share this 2015-2016 report from the Women’s Leadership and Resource Center and the Campus Advocacy Network at the University of Illinois at Chicago. We intend this report to provide specific examples and highlights, our year at a glance, demonstrating the ways in which our programs, services and outreach have had an impact for students, faculty and staff at UIC along with our community partners. It’s been a full year as you’ll see, and the staff of both WLRC and CAN have worked together to accomplish shared goals and develop responsive and innovative programs while providing critical services throughout the year.

In addition to the work of the Center, we also had a big move this year to a bright and more accessible location on Taylor Street. We spent the last few months settling into our vibrant new home featuring private offices and a program room for multiple uses. We hope to see you at the Taylor Street location in the new year.

Best, Megan Carney, Interim Director, WLRC/CAN
Through institutional interventions, support, advocacy and education, our mission is to create a welcoming and equitable environment in which women and women-identified people are able to pursue their educational and career aspirations, free from institutional barriers, oppression and violence. We strive to create a safe space for dialogue and the exploration of gender and other social identities which also serve as a lens to analyze larger social issues. Our programs highlight women’s lived experiences and recognize their contributions as contemporary, cultural and historical leaders.

2015-16 WLRC Tuition Award
Every year the Women’s Leadership and Resource Center recognizes undergraduate students that have made significant contributions to the movement against domestic violence and sexual assault throughout the UIC campus and/or Chicago community or who have triumphed over personal experiences within these areas. We offer a tuition award whose goal is to support women in their educational pursuits who have a great deal of financial need that is not being met by financial aid or loans.

This year three anonymous recipients each received $3,640 towards their studies.
MEGHNA BHAT  Violence Against Women in Bollywood Cinema
A discussion of Meghna Bhat's research into how non-immigrant Indians in the United States perceive, define and interpret portrayals of violence against women in Bollywood cinema and explored their implications on the South Asian community.

DEANA G. LEWIS  I See You: Hyperinvisibility of Black Women & Girls in Dialogues on Criminalization and Justice
Bringing to light the invisibility of trans and non-trans Black women and other Women of Color in depictions of police, state, and interpersonal violence, this facilitated discussion explored tangible ways to fight for justice and liberation for these women and girls. This program was also part of Women's Heritage Month 2016.

SEQUOYA HAYES  Exploring Feminism: Organizing, Activating, Making Change
This lecture outlined the skill sets and critical feminist perspective that all feminist activists and organizers must possess in order to augment development of strategies for their advocacy and awareness-raising efforts.

VERONICA ARREOLA  When the Waves of Feminism Crash Into Blogs
The emergence of the blog in the late-1990s came about during the height of third-wave feminism allowing for a wider reach of ideas that were often locked into the zine distribution system or on college campuses. This session discussed the history of feminist blogs, who writes them, and the rise of corporate-funded feminist news sites.

LAUREN DEAN  Keeping Women in Their Place: Urban Design and Female Mobility in Mumbai
Although their specific needs are rarely included in formal planning discourse, women in Mumbai have re-purposed public spaces to adapt to their specific needs. In this lecture we discussed how Mumbai's gender segregated public transit network acts as a semi-private space for female commuters and has become an extension of the domestic sphere as well as a space of labor.

ARJUN MITRA  Changing the Face of Feminism in India
Through storytelling, Arjun Mitra explored the contradictory faces of women's empowerment in India and discussed how to challenge a framework which has its foundation in age-old traditions and cultural norms.

KRISTEN VOGT VEGGEBERG  21st Century Feminism in Science Museums
In this lecture Kristen Vogt Veggeberg presented a historical analysis of science and gender in traditional American museums and the evolution of inclusion that has been spurred by feminism.
Women’s Heritage Month

The goal of **Women’s Heritage Month** is to promote activities, programs and events that engage and inform our community about the diverse roles and unique contributions of women throughout history and in contemporary society. Every year WLRC hosts a number of programs that delve into and celebrate the lives and impact of women from a diversity of communities and cultures. At the same time we maintain a unified campus wide Women’s Heritage Month calendar and promote the programs and events hosted by departments and organizations throughout the UIC community.

This year we devoted our Women’s Heritage Month programming to highlighting the impact of the prison industrial complex on woman-identified people and brought to the forefront some local community leaders who are doing important social justice work related to incarceration. Some of the month’s highlights included:

CAN staff and members of the UIC community worked towards and participated in the city-wide **No Perfect Victim Conference** which highlighted the experiences of grassroots organizations and defense committees in supporting those who do not fall into the “perfect victim” framework.

In this participatory discussion **What Does Solidarity Look Like for Incarcerated Survivors?** we explored the myriad ways in which survivors are criminalized, delved into what it looks like for those on the outside who work in solidarity with incarcerated survivors, and discussed the challenges presented upon their release. Attendees learned strategies for supporting those who identify as women who’ve been criminalized for survival.
Mission
Donate by Design is a non-profit student organization that designs, teaches and creates handmade items to be sold. Their mission is to provide a creative outlet for the many talented crafters at UIC, have fun, and give back to the community by helping victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and hate crimes. They work closely with Campus Advocacy Network.

Accomplishments
Donate By Design flourished this year, expanding to over 45 active members. Together they worked on fostering a sense of community and utilized a “learning-by-doing” model to support members as they developed their crafting and leadership skills. They had successful collaborations with the CCSW Minority Women’s Concerns subcommittee, CCSW Staff Advocacy subcommittee, and the UIC Office of Career Services. Funds raised through their efforts went to supporting survivors of interpersonal violence on our campus.

Healing Arts
Mission
Healing Arts is an organization of dedicated students who aim to supplement local Chicago Public School’s arts programs. All of the workshops they teach are developed by their own students including topics such as theater, dancing, arts and crafts, singing, etc.

Accomplishments
Healing Arts held bi-weekly workshop sessions with their largest and constantly growing volunteer body. They strengthened their ongoing relationship with Chicago Youth Programs (CYP) and hosted numerous workshops at their facilities as well as at the UIC campus.
The Campus Advocacy Network (CAN) is an on-campus service center dedicated to providing confidential, anonymous, free services to UIC students, staff and faculty who have experienced sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking and hate crimes.

At CAN we believe that all people deserve safety from harm, but believe that this safety may be achieved in multiple ways. We respect that gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, class, religious beliefs, and ability can be factors that shape experiences with violence.

CAN’s mission is to proactively change the UIC community culture by promoting social justice through education, outreach and advocacy. We advocate for positive social and emotional relationships through prevention and education targeted at individuals, groups, and systems and to provide comprehensive advocacy, services, and resources to survivors of interpersonal violence.

10,000,000 children are exposed to domestic violence a year.
Innovative Partnerships

GREEK LIFE
During this academic year, CAN strengthened its partnership with UIC’s Greek Life Programs and continued to offer weekly bystander intervention workshops for all incoming Greek Life members. These workshops are tailored to speak to cultural norms and practices of UIC Greeks, focusing on intervention strategies that they can relate to and deploy. Several hundred members of Greek Life participated in these trainings and various Greek organizations continue to request additional workshops and trainings with CAN. CAN also sits on the Greek Life Advisory Board.

ROTC
“As a program of leaders, ROTC is committed to partnering with the Campus Advocacy Network to prevent sexual assault and interpersonal violence on campus. There is no place for sexual assault or harassment on campus or in our Nation’s Army”.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL LUKE MEYERS

CAN continued its innovative partnership with ROTC this year which aims to provide culturally specific bystander intervention trainings to over 200 student cadets. In addition, coupled with our Peers to Allies Leadership Retreat, our Train the Trainer program takes select cadets through a 20 hour training course that equips participants with content and training knowledge to facilitate their own bystander intervention workshops. This has allowed ROTC to expand its reach to the UIC community and beyond by engaging cadets city-wide in these training. This training is unique to ROTC and serves as a supplement to the National Army SHARP training. The ongoing and progressive partnership between CAN and ROTC is serving as a very successful training pipeline for future ROTC leaders.

REIMAGINING MASCULINITIES INITIATIVE
CAN maintained its ongoing partnership with the Reimagining Masculinities Initiative, a collaboration between the Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change that strives to cultivate, support, affirm, and create male allies and advocates while exploring issues of masculinity and gender. This year featured numerous dialogues, films, and workshops that examined the ways that masculinity is constructed and expressed.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT STUDENT CONDUCT PANELIST TRAINING
CAN works very closely with the Office of the Dean of Students to ensure that all panelists that participate in hearing cases of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking) are appropriately and adequately trained to hear and assess these cases. In October, CAN staff provided their “Understanding the Victim/Survivor” training to a group of faculty, staff, and student members of the UIC community that will serve as panelists on these cases. As each year passes the relationship between CAN and the Dean of Students Office strengthens which ultimately leads to better trainings and improved outcomes.

Outreach & Education

ORIENTATION
In 2015, CAN in collaboration with UIC Orientation presented to all incoming First Year and Transfer students, as well as parents, guardians, and guests, about issues of interpersonal violence. CAN provided Student Orientation Leaders with 8 hours of in-depth training on the dynamics of sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking and bystander intervention. These Orientation Leaders took this knowledge and utilized it to facilitate small group discussions around these topics with their peers during the orientation program. CAN staff provided ongoing support for student leaders by helping them facilitate discussions, learn to navigate difficult questions and teaching them to provide crisis intervention when students felt triggered.

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Throughout October, WLRC/CAN hosted a variety of programs centered on raising awareness of the complexities of domestic violence and intimate partner violence, creating a culture of support for survivors and encouraging and teaching bystander intervention skills.

Along with the Alpha Psi Lambda fraternity, CAN hosted the **Relationship Goals Campaign** where individuals had their photos taken displaying what healthy and respectful relationships look and feel like.

CAN presented an intimate discussion, **A History of Violence: From Christopher Columbus to Domestic Violence**, where we discussed how a history of colonial violence has shaped how we understand others and how that impacts interpersonal violence today.

The **Reimagining Masculinity Initiative**, a collaboration between the Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change (CCUSC), hosted a dialogue “Domestic Violence and Violent Masculinity,” focused on how monolithic ideas of masculinity impact and contribute to abusive relationships. Later in the month, Visions for More Inclusive Masculinities focused on sharing visions and challenges for a masculinity that is more inclusive.

WLRC/CAN, Campus Programs and Alpha Psi Lambda Inc. joined forces to host UIC’s **Clothesline Project** which provides a space to create art and share messages of resilience, healing, and hope for individuals and communities impacted by domestic violence.

CAN, in collaboration with the Center for Advancing Domestic Peace and the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women’s Network, hosted a conversation, **When You Are In It: Understanding Abusive Relationships**, about domestic, intimate partner, and dating violence focused on how to support survivors and how to work with individuals who demonstrate abusive behaviors.

WLRC/CAN hosted a screening of **The Hunting Ground**, a documentary and exposé on interpersonal violence and rape reporting on college campuses and how these cases are often mishandled or even ignored. Opening remarks were offered by Chancellor Michael Amiridis and Attorney General Lisa Madigan. The screening was followed by a panel discussion that presented UIC’s resources, processes and policies and welcomed audience questions.

United Allies and Movement Against Sexual Violence held their 4th annual **Frozen Rights Action**, a performance art style event, that highlights how intimate partner and dating violence freezes peoples’ right to an education.

WLRC and UIC’s Muslim Student Association in collaboration with Arab American Family Services and Arete at University of Chicago hosted **Home: Haven or Warzone – How Healthy Families Build Healthy Societies** where we explored domestic violence, double standards, unrealistic cultural expectations and their impact on children and families.

Throughout the month we shared updates about the cases of survivors of domestic violence, Nan-Hui Jo and Tondalo Hall, both women of color punished for defending themselves from their abusers, and provided materials during our events for those who wanted to send the women messages of support and hope.
In December, WLRC joined forces with the 5000 Purses Project whose goal is to collect gently used purses and bags filled with supplies and toiletries for women facing homelessness.

We collected over 100 overflowing bags from the generous UIC community to support women and their children being served at the day shelter and domestic violence/trauma support center, Sarah’s Circle.
WLRC/CAN hosted another screening of the documentary film The Hunting Ground which was followed by a conversation with on-campus sexual assault advocates.

In Reclaiming Me: Surviving, Thriving and Supporting, presenter Meggie Zayas used her personal story to guide us through various aspects of interpersonal violence and to break down myths associated with sexual assault. She discussed the rarely talked about after-effects of trauma, including PTSD, triggers, and flashbacks and provided insight into how to be an active supporter to friends and loved ones in these situations.

In the workshop Queering Consent we explored consent—what it looks, sounds, and feels like—from a queer, body-positive, and sex-positive lens.

In her lecture SAFE Science: Toward Equitable Environments for Working in the Field, Dr. Julienne Rutherford discussed her research into sexual harassment and assault in academic fieldwork and explored how to move forward in making scientific pursuits safe for all scholars.

We hosted a number of Standing Silent Witness t-shirt decorating sessions for the UIC community to share messages of strength, resilience, healing, and hope for those impacted by sexual assault. Participants were encouraged to join WLRC/CAN at the end of the month as we stood with Rape Victim Advocates and other members of the Chicago community in their annual event in Federal Plaza where attendees stand for one hour to break the silence around sexual violence.

In collaboration with the CCSW Staff Advocacy Subcommittee and the UIC Police, WLRC/CAN hosted an Introductory Self-Defense Workshop & Panel Discussion where participants came together to gain valuable self-defense skills and develop an empowering mindset.

APRIL 2016

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

The goal of SAAM is to raise public awareness about sexual violence and to educate communities on how to prevent it. Throughout April WLRC/CAN hosted programs to educate on the dynamics of sexual violence, to create a campus community that supports survivors and holds perpetrators accountable, and to provide tools for intervening on rape culture.
The **Real Talk Brown Bag Series** presents social justice conversations through the lens of interpersonal violence.

**Distorting the Dominant Narrative: Understanding the Characteristics and Needs of Youth in the Chicago Sex Trade**
Through personal interviews with dispossessed young people who trade sex for survival and other needs, the presenters explored the experiences and the needs of those who are immediately impacted by the sex economy and the intended and unintended consequences of interventions based on the sex trafficking dominant narrative.

**Reproductive Justice**
A discussion around current issues and activisms related to reproductive justice and how to become informed and engaged on these topics on campus and beyond.

**Cuba, 1961: Empowering and Transforming Lives Through Literacy**
This talk examined the historical national Cuban Literacy Campaign of 1961 from critical literacy and curriculum frameworks.
In September 2015 CAN facilitated the 3rd Annual Peers to Allies Leadership Retreat providing comprehensive and evidence-based prevention education to 21 UIC students. This violence prevention program situates leadership development, bystander intervention, and social justice education as the cornerstones for student engagement.

Participants attended a three night camping retreat packed with workshops, interactive activities, and facilitated dialogues. The evidence-based curriculum led students to develop a deeper self-awareness including an increase in their ability to recognize the signs of interpersonal violence, practical bystander intervention skills, and training mandated by the Campus SaVE Act and Title IX, all while making meaningful connections with other student leaders from the UIC community. Through several years of assessment we know that Peers provides measurable results that directly contribute to making UIC a safer campus for everyone.
The retreat increases students’ understanding of being an ally and helps students build relationships with students from different peer groups.

“Hearing people’s testimony... it was amazing to have people open up to others they didn’t know well and to open myself up to others I didn’t know well”

“The most powerful moment was the testimonial because everyone got to really share with one another their experience... getting to know each other made me better understand the behavior of each person and to reflect on what it means to be a survivor.”

“Not being gay, but supporting someone’s decision to be and participating in their movement as an ally”

“I had never shared what I shared and I actually teared up, which usually I can control. It felt so good to share a piece of my story and to hear [the stories of] others. It felt inspiring.”

“Being in the privileged group, we can speak openly and ‘on the same level’ with people who share the same privilege and, ideally, [they will] listen to us.”
Advocacy

DIRECT ADVOCACY AND CLIENT SERVICES
2015-2016 was a big year for the Campus Advocacy Network. CAN was established at UIC in the 1990s to provide advocacy services to students, staff and faculty who experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or hate crime. We were the first on-campus victim service provider in the State of Illinois and one of the first in the country, and our work was guided by federal legislation like the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Clery Act, and state legislation including the Illinois Domestic Violence Act (IDVA), the Illinois Criminal Sexual Assault Statute and the state’s stalking, harassment and cyberstalking laws. Our advocates are all trained to state standards in domestic violence advocacy and sexual assault advocacy, and have extensive training in stalking advocacy.

Although the types of violence for which CAN provides advocacy services are not new to us, there has been a recent intense national focus on the issue of campus sexual assault, due in part to the release of the documentary The Hunting Ground and the US government’s It’s On Us campaign and which has resulted in over 300 Title IX cases filed with the Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (OCR). In April of 2011 the OCR put out the Dear Colleague Letter addressing the specific issue of campus sexual assault. VAWA reauthorized, Campus SAVE Act passed, Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Ed (IL) passed.

With the spotlight on campus sexual violence, we have experienced an uptick in survivors seeking CAN’s services. We anticipate the need for CAN’s services to grow as survivors become aware of and empowered to seek institutional support, and we are excited to meet this demand. In addition, CAN’s programming provided by our Education and Outreach team has increased the number of allies on campus. We look forward to continue serving UIC’s community of survivors and allies.

ADVOCACY LEARNING CENTER
We are excited to announce that advocates Andie Celerio and Athanasia Papaioannou were accepted to participate in the Advocacy Learning Center (ALC), a national training program offered by Praxis International in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. This intensive 18-month course will include three in-person events, numerous distance learning activities and a site visit and will focus on strengthening how advocates engage with survivors of violence, on working to improve institutional responses to violence against women, and on involving the community in ending violence. We congratulate them on this opportunity and wish them luck!

PRAISE FOR CAN

“When I was faced with one of the most difficult times in my life, when everything was falling apart around me, CAN was there to guide me and help me back on track. The Campus Advocacy Network is such an important support group for students who face difficult situations dealing with domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. These issues are not easy to talk about and it is often easy to feel lost and alone. CAN not only helped me get back on track emotionally by connecting me to additional resources, they made sure to remind me that my first priority; being a student would not be hindered by my situation. They are a honest, compassionate, and welcoming group. To me, CAN is considered my second home.”

—NOURHAN ELASAAWY
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