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to new beginnings®
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Hal and Kathy
Gershman



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Everyday reminders that your partnership matters – every day

Dear Friends,

Earlier this fall, our team hosted a tour for two special donors, who were visiting from out of state. Throughout the tour, I watched like a doting parent as each department lead shared how they supported clients and offered their favorite reflections about client experiences that left lasting impacts.

Following the tour, what struck me most was the donor’s feedback: “I didn’t meet anyone today who had a job,” he said. “Everyone we met today loved their work. One of your colleagues referred to this as a calling and it absolutely showed.” His observation reminded me how much our partners’ encouragement contributes to our team’s tenacity. Our staff’s ownership of a holistic approach to ending violence in two generations is a trait within our 43-year-old agency that I’ve come to learn transcends time. Your reinforcement of our day-to-day commitments makes sure I never take it for granted.

As we near the end of 2023, we want to thank you for walking alongside our team and clients. For the families we serve this daily support often means the difference between another sleepless night or a first step toward freedom. In fact, throughout their time with us, many families often interact with several team members who assist with emergency services as well as the ancillary challenges that often surface following a crisis: transitional housing, transportation assistance, career service support and therapy sessions.

Your devotion sends a message of hope and courage to people like Meghan and her children. Their story, on page 4, is a testament to your kindness. While CVIC provided safety services to nearly 3,000 clients in 2022, this is only 25 percent of the estimated number of people in Grand Forks County who will be impacted by domestic violence or sexual assault in their lifetime. Our work is not over.

Thanks to your support, we are moving closer to closing this gap. Our 18th annual Judd Sondreal Memorial Rise & Shine for Peace breakfast this past May was our most successful event to date – breaking records for attendance and funds raised. More than 700 attendees collectively invested \$580,000. We are grateful to Lisa Sondreal for underwriting this event in honor of her late husband, Judd, and Dakota Medical Foundation for their generous leadership gift that jump started our fundraising efforts. Special thanks also to MobilePro and Brady Martz for additional event contributions.

Your commitment also enabled us to earn national recognition as one of Mutual of America’s six (from a pool of 500) Community Partnership Award recipients. This prestigious achievement applauds the powerful partnership you enabled us to develop with Grand Forks Public Schools, and its potential to empower youth to prevent future violence. Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies (MACP) sees a brighter future with CVIC’s partners, too. In addition to reinvesting in the Safer Tomorrows Road Map, MACP invited us to participate in an inaugural assembly alongside 20 other grantees this past October. We look forward to leveraging our learnings on two-generational strategies designed to further enrich family stability in Grand Forks County and beyond.

Thank you again for your dedication to our team and those we serve. Your everyday support reminds us every day, that our jobs are a calling. We cannot thank you enough.

With gratitude,

Coiya Tompkins Inman

Coiya Tompkins Inman



Annual breakfast drew more than 700 attendees.



Keynote breakfast speaker Sarah Gustafson (center) and her family.



Lisa Sondreal (far right) and her daughters Brittany (far left) and Annaka (center).

From nightmare
to new beginnings

Meghan's Journey

When the unimaginable happened, CVIC was there for Meghan and her children.

“My daughter was a small child when I married my second husband. It wasn’t long before we added to our family and she became a happy older sister. We looked like a perfect family to the outside world but I was barely holding it together at work and at home. My once-loving husband was having horrible fits of rage. I thought I could manage them, but as the frequency of these violent episodes grew, my life became a nightmare of abuse and rape.”

As her terror mounted, Meghan found a lifeline in an unlikely place.

“I didn’t know what to do or how to help myself. And then I saw a sign for CVIC’s hotline on the door of a public restroom. I called the number and told the CVIC advocate who answered what was happening – I was terrified to leave my husband and even more terrified of what would happen if I stayed. She calmly and clearly provided the information, support, and comfort I needed.

Over the next few months, I called CVIC periodically. Step by step, they helped me to prepare emotionally and logistically for what I knew deep inside: I needed to get myself and my children to safety.”

The police became involved.

The day after a particularly violent assault, Meghan called a close friend who knew about her situation. Worried for Meghan and her kids, the friend immediately called someone she knew in law enforcement, whose advice was urgent and clear: “Tell Meghan to put together a ‘go-bag,’ grab her kids, and leave before her husband kills her.”

That night, Meghan’s husband brutally assaulted and repeatedly raped her.

Meghan called CVIC for help. Shannon, director of shelter, gave Meghan the address of a secure location where Meghan and the children were able to meet her and follow her to shelter.

When she went to pick up her oldest daughter at school, Meghan received unimaginable news.

“The school principal was waiting for me as I entered my daughter’s school. It had come to his attention that my oldest daughter was being

sexually abused by her stepfather. He immediately called the police to file a report. I was stunned by the news and heartbroken that my sweet child had silently endured years of suffering at the hands of my husband.

When my children and I arrived at the secure location, Shannon was there. We followed her to the shelter, where we then lived for six months. During this time, Shannon helped us to get into a rental assistance program, which enabled us to move into our own apartment. Having a place of our own was wonderful. The fact that our apartment was in a secure building that required a key to enter gave us a feeling of security and comfort, especially as we began the long and difficult process of healing.

CVIC has been amazing throughout our ordeal. They assisted me in securing an order of protection against my husband and helped me to navigate the court system as he was brought to trial. CVIC's advocates have been essential in helping me rebuild trust with my oldest daughter and helping her find her way through

this terrible trauma. They also offered me language that has helped me provide comfort and understanding for my three younger children, especially as they come to terms with the fact that their father, whom they love, is now in prison."

With fear behind her, Meghan is rebuilding her family's life.

"Recently, I bought a house, which was huge. It's great for the kids to be able to play outside. We have a fenced in property with lots of privacy, which is important to me, especially in the wake of what happened and my ex-husband's trial.

Having my career as a nurse has been important to my recovery. It not only provides income to support my family, but my work also feeds my soul. Shannon and CVIC did so much to help heal my family. I'm hoping that I can use my training as a medical caregiver to provide the same healing to patients and loved ones who are also suffering."

"CVIC has been amazing throughout our ordeal.

They assisted me in securing an order of protection against my husband and helped me to navigate the court system as he was brought to trial."

- MEGHAN, CVIC CLIENT

You have the power to create new beginnings for families like Meghan's. Your gift of **\$156** would mean a night in shelter for a family in desperate need, and **\$611** would provide a child with one trauma-informed therapy session to start the healing process.



Eyre named 2023 Jim Vigness Peacemaker Award recipient

Andrew Eyre, team lead and assistant state's attorney for Grand Forks County, received the 2023 Jim Vigness Peacemaker Award. Since 2002, this award has been given each year to community members who go above and beyond to help end interpersonal violence in our community. "Eyre is frequently assigned cases involving domestic violence and sexual assault. No matter the circumstances, he handles each case with the utmost care and consideration," CVIC's crime victim witness



Jodi Sorum, 2022-23 Chair, Coiya Tompkins Inman, President/CEO, Andrew Eyre, Assistant State's Attorney Grand Forks County

team shared, "He goes above and beyond to make sure that victims are aware of their rights, notified of developments in the case, and most importantly, given a voice throughout the criminal justice process."

Freeman named 2023 Changemaker Award recipient



Andres Freeman, UND assistant athletic director (pictured here), has been named the 2023 UND Changemaker by CVIC at UND. This award recognizes individuals on the UND campus who are creating a positive change to end dating and domestic violence and sexual assault.

Freeman leads "Set the Expectation", a prevention initiative all UND student-athletes participate in and support to reinforce that sexual assault and physical violence are never okay. He was nominated by his peers in the UND athletic office and was presented the award in October during the Take Back the Night rally, an annual event held on the UND campus during Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

New Choices relocates



New Choices, CVIC's violence intervention program, has moved to a new location. The New Choices team is excited to host clients in an inviting, well-designed and safe space. "As grateful as we were for the space we were in, this new space has a message of hope for our clients," Taylor Redmann, director of domestic violence intervention (pictured above), shares, "We believe in the ability to change, and we are finally in a space that matches that message."

CVIC welcomes new members to board of directors

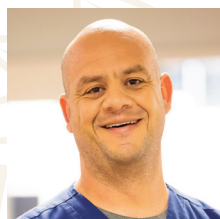
Three new community members have stepped up recently to volunteer their time and expertise to serve the agency. Each member of the board brings something unique to the position and is an integral part of the CVIC team.

Cory Geffre serves as executive vice president of hospital operations/chief nursing officer of Altru Health System and has nearly 30 years of experience in health care leadership and business development.

Courtney Ritterman is a co-owner of Dakota Commercial and a licensed real estate agent. Following the city's major flood of 1997, Dakota Commercial was instrumental in coordinating the renovation of CVIC's main office in downtown Grand Forks. They again assisted CVIC with a major capital campaign of Mary's Place, a 36-bed shelter constructed in 2017.

Kay Schraeder serves as the vice president and chief financial officer at Minnkota Power Cooperative. Prior to joining Minnkota's finance team in 2006 as an accountant, Schraeder worked at Brady Martz, where she served on the auditing team for CVIC's account.

To learn more about these and other members of our board of directors, please visit our website.



Cory Geffre
Altru Health Systems



Courtney Ritterman
Dakota Commercial



Kay Schraeder
Minnkota Power Cooperative



Tracy LeDuc, CFO

LeDuc named to NDANO board of directors

Tracy LeDuc, chief financial officer of CVIC, was named to the board of directors for North Dakota Association of Nonprofit Organizations (NDANO). Founded in 1977, NDANO is a statewide membership association whose mission is to educate, advocate and connect to strengthen nonprofits. “Not-for-profits are the driving force behind the many remarkable services that are enhancing and enriching individual lives, families and communities,” LeDuc said. “That is what led my heart to serve not-for-profits throughout my career. I look forward to continuing the development of NDANO’s invaluable resources for education, advocacy and connection as well as increasing membership and awareness of NDANO.”

Love receives Distinguished Mentor Award

CVIC Director of Prevention and Education, Brittany Love, received the Greater Grand Forks Young Professionals Distinguished Mentor Award. This lifetime achievement award recognizes exceptional mentors who dedicate a portion of their career to training and developing young professionals in their workplace and community. Love’s commitment to growing the next generation of leaders is inspiring.



Pictured left to right, Taylor Redmann, Caleb Eilts, Haley Beeter, Brittany Love (center), Cierra Bohm, Nadia Lewis, Kari McLean, and AJ Buntrock

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Hal and Kathy Gershman

A fervor for education and the arts and ways to incorporate benevolence into these important community elements run deep for Hal and Kathy Gershman.

They are former owners of Happy Harry’s Bottle Shop (where Hal is now president and chairman of the board) and founders of Hal and Kathy Gershman Family Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting scientific, educational, artistic and medical charitable purposes (Kathy is Professor Emerita of Educational Foundations and Research at UND).

As longtime friends of CVIC, Hal and Kathy saw the value of the organization’s long-range vision early during their interactions with Kristi Hall-Jiran, CVIC’s former president/CEO and current executive vice president/chief philanthropy and partnership officer for Altru Health System, another key CVIC partner.

“The CVIC has had a singular impact on Grand Forks and the surrounding area. We have supported the work of the CVIC since it started many years ago. Kristi and her committee were brave and cogent advocates of ending domestic violence. Their tireless early work made supporting the new CVIC feel absolutely necessary,” Kathy said.

In more recent years, the couple was excited to learn about the agency’s work with Grand Forks Public Schools and the team’s efforts to educate young people in school about domestic violence. Through its Prevention and Education efforts within the Safer Tomorrows Road Map, a holistic approach to ending interpersonal violence in two generations, CVIC staff have educated more than 26,000 youth since 2018.

“The CVIC’s active and fulfilling partnership with the Grand Forks Public Schools in this effort is a model for the nation. Grand Forks is justifiably proud of its schools’ and the districts’ participation in violence prevention education is one more reason for that pride. It is hard to predict precisely the long-range impact the CVIC will have on families, but we are happy to see the effects of this education already in school incidents and self-reports,” Kathy said.

The couple encourages anyone who’s interested in making a difference to consider connecting with CVIC on some level.

“It’s an opportunity to make powerful change for your community,” Hal said. **"This organization has made a significant change in the quality of life in our city and fills a need here unlike any other. We are proud to be able to help them."**

Read more about the Gershman’s story and their passionate support of CVIC in *Two Generation Guardians* by Coiya Tompkins Inman, available for ordering on our website.




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Ways to make a meaningful impact

- **INVEST** in CVIC families with a Dream Maker Society pledge, Rise Up monthly gift, or one-time cash gift
- **CONTRIBUTE** to CVIC's endowment and provide an enduring way to support survivors
**Individuals who pay ND income tax may take a 40% credit up to a total of \$10,000 (or \$20,000 if filing jointly) for gifts to CVIC's qualified endowment fund.*
- **PLAN** to give a gift through your will, beneficiary designation, or qualified charitable distribution and leave a legacy of generosity for future generations
- **DIRECT** a holiday gift to our Client Emergency Fund to help families with urgent needs such as medical, transportation and housing resources
- **GIVE TODAY** Scan this smart code or go to cviconline.org/donate/ways-to-give



Ignite hope and resilience this holiday season

