

2024



SUPPORTING SURVIVORS SUMMIT

Exploring the complexities of domestic violence

PRESENTED BY:



Women's Center & Shelter
of Greater Pittsburgh



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2024

Regional Learning Alliance Learning and Conference Center

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|--------------|
| A Welcome from Nicole Molinaro | 3 |
| Our Sponsors | 4 |
| Conference Schedule & Menu | 5 |
| Keynote Speakers | 6-7 |
| Session: 10:15 a.m. | 8 |
| Session: 11:30 a.m. | 9 |
| Session: 1:45 p.m. | 10 |
| Session: 3:00 p.m. | 11 |
| Conference Center Map | 12 |
| WC&S Mission, Vision and Values | 13 |
| WC&S Services | 14-15 |
| Sponsor Ads | 16 |

Dear Friends, Colleagues, and Supporters of WC&S and STANDING FIRM,



Welcome to the Supporting Survivors Summit! As we honor Domestic Violence Awareness Month and our 50th year of serving survivors of domestic violence, I am overwhelmed with a profound sense of gratitude and awe for the incredible community that surrounds us.

Because of our amazing community of supporters, WC&S served 7,453 individuals and provided 33,490 counseling hours agency-wide last year, the most ever counseling hours in the agency's history. Together, we are creating a safer, more compassionate community for everyone, including through learning experiences such as those being provided today.

The need is still great, and we remain steadfast in our mission to support and empower survivors. While great strides of progress have been made in the field, challenges that have always existed - such as a lack of belief when reporting DV, adverse survivor experiences with larger systems when reaching out for help, and lack of community awareness — continue to be present for survivors of domestic violence and felt by those that work to prevent the prevalence of these issues.

Our aim is to raise awareness and involvement in the community regarding DV, reaching those who need help and those who can provide support, and engaging with other agencies whose work overlaps with the services of WC&S.

Your partnership as an ambassador of safety in learning more about the plethora of challenges that can manifest for survivors of domestic violence strengthens our collective ability to respond effectively. Prevention education and intervention can mean the difference between spotting or not recognizing the red flags of an abusive relationship, learning the cycle of violence, and how to help someone to safely leave an abusive relationship. We appreciate opportunities to spread information about domestic violence awareness, prevention, and intervention in the community and in the workplace.

Your support is crucial as we continue our efforts and life-saving work to help survivors and their children. We thank you for joining with us today, and every day, as we work toward changing the systems that impact those experiencing domestic violence.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Nicole".

Nicole Molinaro, President/CEO

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CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. | Registration / Coffee / Breakfast |
| 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | Keynote |
| 10:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | Sessions |
| 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. | Lunch |
| 1:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Sessions |
| 4:00 p.m. | Happy Hour Networking |

MENU

Grilled Garlic & Herb Chicken

Stuffed Peppers – with sausage, wild rice, fresh herbs

Oven Roasted Potato Medley – Red Skin, Sweet & Yellow Gold Potatoes

Seasonal Veg Medley

Focaccia Bread

Spring Mix Salad

Seasonal Desserts – Chef's Choice

We invite you to join us for a **networking happy hour at 4:00 p.m. in the Atrium** immediately following the Summit. Participate in meaningful discussions while enjoying light refreshments as we close out a day of learning together.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Dr. Elizabeth Miller

Dr. Liz Miller is Distinguished Professor of Pediatrics, Public Health, and Clinical and Translational Science at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, physician in Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine, and Director of Community Health at UPMC Children's Hospital Pittsburgh. Trained in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics and medical anthropology, she has over 20 years of practice and research experience in addressing gender-based violence prevention and adolescent health equity in clinical and community settings. Her clinical focus is serving youth who have been incarcerated or child welfare system-involved and who are unstably housed. She is deeply committed to working with survivors, practitioners, advocates, and community members to be actively involved in designing violence prevention research that is culturally responsive, survivor-centered, and healing-focused.



Vanessa Ford-Taylor

My name is Vanessa Ford-Taylor, and I am a survivor of domestic violence. I have been on a journey of healing, forgiveness, and advocacy since the year 2000, and I am reaching out to share my story with you.

From the tender age of 12 until I was 25, I endured unimaginable abuse at the hands of someone I once loved. At the age of 25, I faced a harrowing moment when I was beaten with a baseball bat, leaving me in a wheelchair for months. Doctors told me I would never walk again. However, against all odds, on October 7, I will celebrate my 35 years as a walking victorious woman.

My journey is one of resilience, forgiveness and empowerment. Despite the trauma I endured, I chose to forgive the man who inflicted such pain on me — the father of my children. Through forgiveness, I found freedom. Today, I am passionate about helping other women realize that they too can heal and become the person that they are designed to be.

In addition to spreading awareness about domestic violence, I have organized numerous fund-raisers and events to support survivors and raised awareness about various issues affecting women. I have spoken at prisons, churches, girls groups, schools, colleges, and institutions, sharing my story and advocating for change.

My story has touched countless lives, and I have dedicated myself to spreading awareness about domestic violence and advocating for survivors. I have authored a book and established a foundation to support women on their journey to healing.



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Dr. Sheila Collins

Dr. Collins has a bachelor of philosophy from Monteith College, Wayne State University in Detroit, a Masters in Social Work from the Wayne State University School of Social Work in Detroit and a PhD in Adult and Continuing Education from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.



In her social work career, Dr. Collins co-founded and directed the Center for Co-Equal Education at the University of Nebraska, training and consulting with school districts across Nebraska on their implementation of Title 9. As a social work professor at the University of Nebraska Dr. Collins headed an NIMH funded grant to work with agencies to improve services to Native American and Mexican American clients in the panhandle of Nebraska. She taught at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth and at the University of Texas at Arlington where, inspired by research from her dissertation, *The Career Development of Women Administrators in Social Work, Nursing and Education*, she co-founded and directed the Women and Work Research and Resource Center working with corporations to better utilize their female employees. After leaving the university, Dr. Collins co-founded and directed with her husband, the largest out-patient behavioral health care clinic in North Texas, Iatreia Institute for the Healing Arts.

Even to the present day, Sheila considers herself a dancer. Having performed in a regional ballet company while still in high school, and later in summer stock, in nightclub productions in Las Vegas, in an award-winning film, in the national company of a Broadway show, as a founding member of a contemporary dance company Festival Dancers, out of the Jewish Community Center in Detroit, and now as a improvisational performance artist, she calls on lessons learned from her dancing life. She is passionate about empowering others to trust the wisdom of their own bodies and use improvisational singing, dancing, storytelling tools to access creativity and find support and ease when traversing tough times.

Sheila believes that life's toughest challenges call us out to discover our better selves. That in facing such challenges as grief, loss, illness, and death of a loved one, we become who we truly are. Her writing, keynote speaking, and improvisational artist performances, contain thought provoking discoveries of ways to deal with the tough challenges life asks of us so that by meeting them we become stronger and more resilient.

MEDICAL TRACK:

Emerging Research, Accelerating Practice in Healing-Centered Engagement

Join Dr. Maya Ragavan (UPMC) and Mallory Hendricks (AHN) & Lauren Schlegel (AHN) to understand the importance and value of healing-centered engagement in research and in practice.

(Approved for 1 CEU for Social Workers)

ECONOMIC JUSTICE TRACK:

Protections for Survivors at Work and at Home

Helping survivors stay employed and stay housed is often required by law. Join representatives from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the City of Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission to receive an overview of the relevant laws at the city, state, and federal levels, including the charge filing process, strategies to spot issues impacting survivors on the job and at home, and understand the concept of reasonable accommodations.

(Approved for 1 CEU for Social Workers)

(Approved for 1 PDC via SHRM)

LEGAL TRACK:

The Cycle of Violence and the Courts: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

The criminal justice system is designed to punish those who violate laws and deter crime. But what does this experience look like for a survivor? Join for this candid and informative panel discussion addressing the challenges survivors face with law enforcement and the criminal courts. Speakers will also identify emerging issues and the work that remains to adequately respond to DV.

(Approved for 1 CLE)

11:30 a.m. Sessions

MEDICAL TRACK:

Coercive Controlling Violence: The (not so) Silent Abuse

The concept of coercive control includes a pattern of behavior an abuser uses to dominate their partner and limit their freedom — and it can often be subtle. Join Dr. Shannon Edwards to learn about coercive control tactics such as isolation, gaslighting, monitoring and more.

(Approved for 1 CEU for Social Workers)

ECONOMIC JUSTICE TRACK:

Building Safety Through Survivor Financial Independence

Financial abuse — along with emotional, physical, and sexual abuse — includes behaviors to intentionally manipulate, intimidate, and threaten the victim to keep a victim in the relationship. Join Neighborhood Allies and the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania to understand more about the ways financial abuse may appear and resources available to support a survivor's financial stability through the Financial Empowerment Centers.

(Approved for 1 CEU for Social Workers)

LEGAL TRACK:

Manipulation and Grooming of the System by DV Perpetrators: Information for Professionals in the Criminal and Social Services Systems

Perpetrators' abuse extends beyond their victims — and includes the manipulation of systems to their advantage in court, in healthcare, and in the community. Join WC&S MENS Program Intervention Specialist Bridgette Reinsmith, MA, to explore 5 common perpetrator tactics, as well as how they might present throughout the IPV cycle of violence, and strategies to respond.

(Approved for 1 CLE)

(Approved for 1 CEU for Social Workers)

MEDICAL TRACK:

Sleep Coercion in the Cycle of Violence

Many abusers target a survivor's sleep by interrupting it, monitoring it, or being violent during times of rest — all tactics designed to impact a survivor's mental and physical health. Join Dr. Karen Jakubowski (UPMC) and Kate Thurston-Griswold, MSW, LSW, to learn about the connection between intimate partner violence and sleep disruption, the role and barriers of health professionals in screening this type of violence when sleep problems are present, and to good practices to identify this issue and provide support.

(Approved for 1 CEU for Social Workers)

ECONOMIC JUSTICE TRACK:

Past Due: Investing in Survivor Financial Stability

Financial abuse occurs in 99% of abusive relationships. Join Pennsylvania Women Work, Neighborhood Legal Services, and STANDING FIRM to understand the challenges this type of abuse presents to survivors and how employers, legal aid providers, and workforce development programs may enhance their efforts to help survivors reach and maintain financial independence.

(Approved for 1 PDC via SHRM)

LEGAL TRACK:

Domestic Violence and the Federal Response

Prosecution of domestic violence crimes happens at the federal level, too. Join Assistant United States Attorney Nicole Vasquez Schmitt and Victim Assistance Specialist Adrienne Howe to understand federal criminal charging options in IPV cases and victims' rights/services in the federal system.

(Approved for 1 CLE)

MEDICAL TRACK:

Vital Signs: Enhancing Provider Response to Intimate Partner Violence

Healthcare providers often lack the training and system support to respond with confidence to DV disclosures. Join Janice Goldsborough, MS, Medical Advocacy Coordinator at WC&S, to learn easy-to-use steps to identify, assist, and refer DV survivors.

(Approved for 1 CEU for Social Workers)

ECONOMIC JUSTICE TRACK:

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Victimization Among Marginalized Communities: Centering the Experiences of Trans & Gender Diverse (TGD) Survivors

Fully recognizing a survivor's experience means understanding IPV at the intersections of marginalization and oppression. Storytelling methods are one way to more fully understand, support, and amplify survivor voices. Join Kayla Ortiz, MPH, Research Assistant for the Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh, to learn more about the important findings and perspectives offered by participants for consideration in future research and/or practice.

LEGAL TRACK:

Tailoring Family Court Relief to Fit Survivor Needs

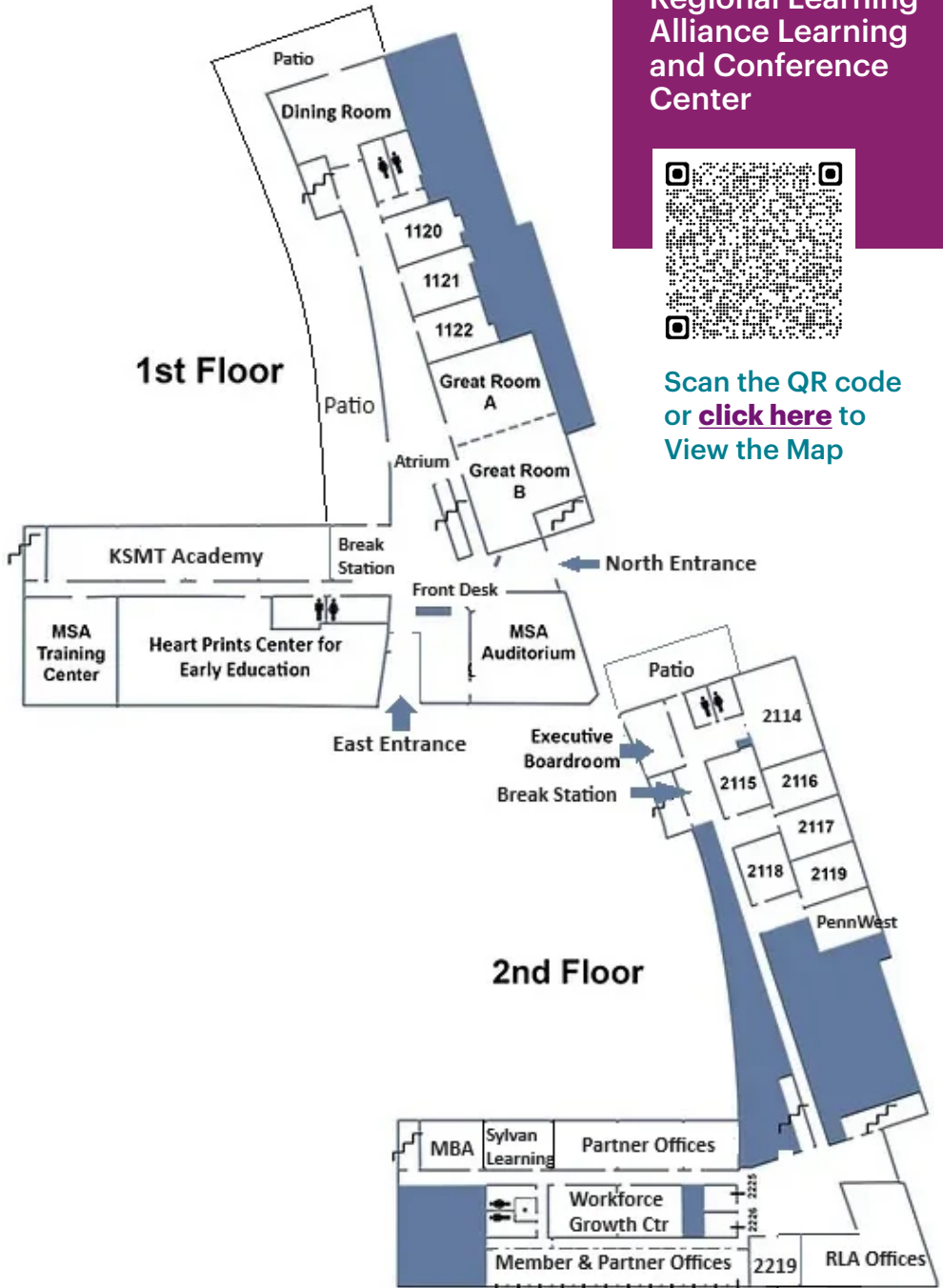
Safety concerns for survivors and their families spike during family court matters such as divorce and custody proceedings. Join WC&S Legal Director Brittany Conkle and WC&S Legal Advocacy Manager Maddi Potter to understand general experiences, new developments such as Kayden's Law, and availability of options for protection in Allegheny County.

(Approved for 1 CLE)

Regional Learning Alliance Learning and Conference Center



Scan the QR code
or [click here](#) to
View the Map



WC&S Mission

We will strengthen our ability to meet the individual and evolving needs of those affected by domestic violence by investing in the growth of our people, deepening community engagement, and amplifying the voices of all survivors.

WC&S Vision

We exist to end domestic violence and create safe spaces for help, healing, and hope.

WC&S Values

Safety

Uplifting Others

Compassion

Courage

Equity

Survivor-Centered Advocacy

Stewardship

WC&S SERVICES

Hotline Services

Our hotline is available 24/7 and text & chat services are available from 9a-5p, Mon-Fri. Trained advocates provide support, safety planning, and explain options to anyone who has experienced domestic violence (DV) from a current or former partner or those concerned about a loved one or coworker.

Emergency Shelter

WC&S' Emergency Shelter provides safety for adults and children in immediate, lethal danger. Services include safety planning, goal planning, and advocacy for housing, career, health, & mental health. WC&S provides all basic essentials so that families can begin their journeys of healing. On-site housing for pets is also available.

Children's Advocacy Program (CAP)

Our Children's Advocacy Program (CAP) provides a safe, welcoming, culturally competent, and nurturing space where child survivors of DV can heal from trauma. Our goal is to help children explore their feelings in an open and positive environment, while their parent addresses housing, employment, and other needs to rebuild their lives.

Legal Advocacy & Civil Law Project (CLP)

Our non-attorney legal advocates help survivors navigate the justice system by providing court accompaniment, safety planning, emotional support, and connection to resources. Civil Law Project attorneys represent qualifying WC&S clients, providing free representation in cases involving Protection From Abuse (PFA) orders, child custody, spousal support, and divorce.

Prevention, Education & Outreach (Schools & Community)

WC&S delivers training and presentations on DV awareness and dating violence prevention to students in middle school through college, criminal justice professionals, human service providers, clergy members, corporations, and other professional groups.

Wellness Team

The Wellness Team provides inclusive support and counseling services to domestic violence survivors to foster hope, resilience, and healing. Support groups help survivors to tell their stories and grow stronger through shared experiences. Therapy is also available for survivors who are interested in exploring their trauma in a more individualized way.

WC&S SERVICES

High-Danger Initiative

WC&S established a program to work with high-danger survivors who are most at risk for being killed by their partner or ex-partner in the wake of an increase in recent intimate partner violence-related homicides in Allegheny County. High-danger survivors who are identified by the courts and WC&S receive emergency, multi-departmental and multi-organizational case management to meet their immediate safety and other needs.

Services for Refugees, Immigrants, & Limited-English Speakers

This specialized team includes multilingual staff members who work at two levels — assisting individual clients on-site and in the community and advocating improvements in systems to better serve RIL clients.

Children, Youth, & Families (CYF)

Children, Youth, & Families (CYF) Specialists consult with and coach CYF caseworkers who serve families experiencing intimate partner violence with a co-occurrence of child abuse or neglect. They provide individual and group services to adult survivors, including safety strategies, court accompaniment, case management, resources, provider relations, and more.

Immediate Needs Coordination (INC) Program

Our Immediate Needs Coordinators meet the urgent emotional, psychological, and physical health & safety needs of clients who are not staying in Shelter or have left Shelter. The INC Program also assists survivors with meeting their basic needs, such as transportation, housing, utility, food, and more.

Medical Advocacy

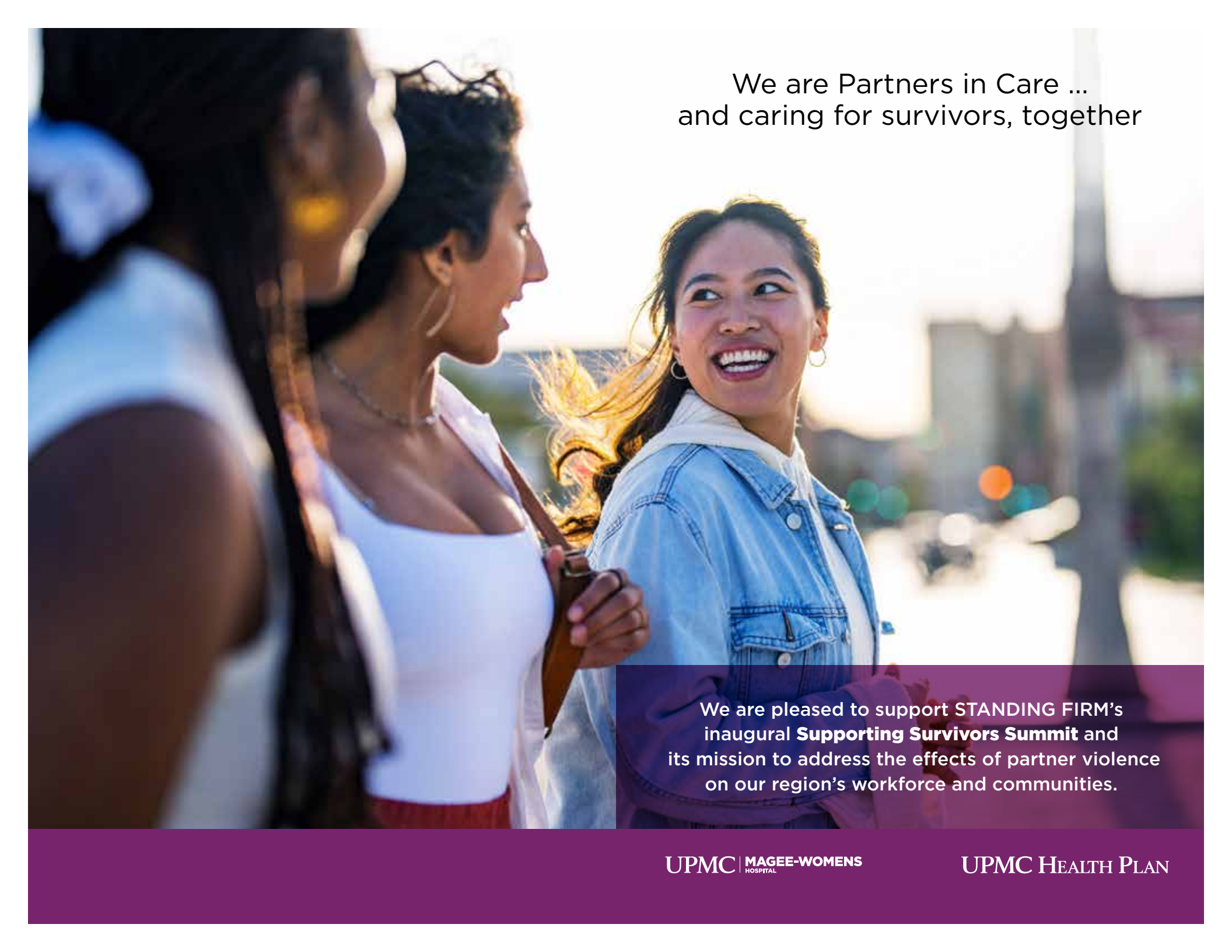
The Medical Advocacy Coordinator works closely with area hospitals, clinics, and doctor's offices to provide crisis intervention, educational resources, and hands-on trainings. They serve as a liaison between healthcare professionals and WC&S clients to advocate for their healthcare and health insurance needs, in addition to locating medical providers.

MENS Group (Men Embracing Nonviolence & Safety)

The MENS Group is for men who need help with changing their violent and abusive behaviors. This off-site program offers education and tools to help those who use abuse understand and take accountability for their actions and begin to gain control of their feelings and behaviors.

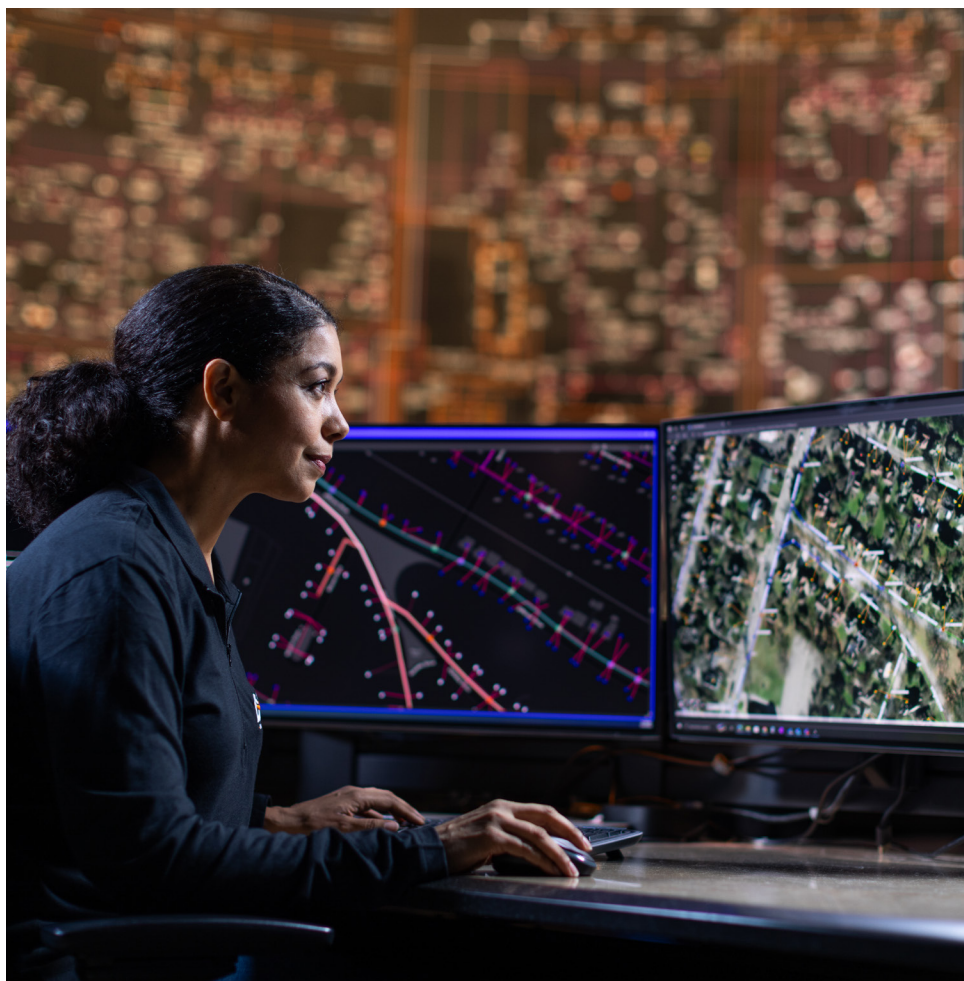
STANDING FIRM: The Business Case to End Partner Violence

STANDING FIRM alerts employers to the financial, safety, and human costs of partner violence in the workplace and workforce and equips them with tools for taking effective organizational action.

A photograph of two women laughing together outdoors. The woman on the left is seen in profile, wearing a white top and a necklace. The woman on the right is wearing a denim jacket and is smiling broadly. The background is a bright, hazy outdoor setting, possibly a rooftop or balcony, with a cityscape visible in the distance under a sunset sky.

We are Partners in Care ...
and caring for survivors, together

We are pleased to support STANDING FIRM's inaugural **Supporting Survivors Summit** and its mission to address the effects of partner violence on our region's workforce and communities.



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STANDING FIRM®

A national program of Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh

Domestic violence comes to work. STANDING FIRM helps you to respond.

Together, we will build a network of equity, safety, and support for survivors and your organization.

DV is Costing your Workplace & Workforce



1 in 4 women, 1 in 7 men, 1 in 2 LGBTQIA+, and 1 in 2 persons with disabilities experience & report partner violence in their lifetime.



99% of all partner violence cases include financial abuse.



1 in 6 women & 1 in 17 men have experienced stalking in their lifetime; nearly half before age 25.



53% of people surviving partner violence report losing at least one job because of the violence.

27% of workplace violence incidents are related to partner violence.

Healthcare costs for people experiencing physical abuse are 42% higher than peers.

83% of partner violence survivors report that the abuse impacted their ability to do their job.

50% of victims missed one or more days of work.

Our Services

Consultation Services

- Custom Plan for Success
- Policy Review/Creation
- Address/Mitigate Risk

Training

- eLearning Modules
- Live/Recorded Webinars
- Customized Training Available
- Training Solutions for all Levels of Employees

Membership

- Join our Employer Alliance
- Premier Membership Portal
- Monthly/Quarterly Newsletters
- Discounts to Events

Resources

- Resource Library
- 24 x 7 Hotline

Who We Are


Deep Industry Experience

15 years of helping organizations create a supportive workplace culture for survivors by driving systemic change.

Expertise

We are committed to providing innovative solutions encompassing inclusion, financial equity, employee retention, and compliance.

Contact Us

 412-894-4568

 standing-firm.org

 contactsf@standing-firm.org



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the Love
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Help WC&S
honor our 50th
Anniversary



Post messages of hope and anniversary well wishes to your social media and include **#WCS50**.

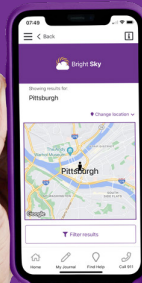
Messages will appear on our Anniversary Wall at **wcs50.org**

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message now



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SUPPORTING SURVIVORS SUMMIT

Exploring the complexities of domestic violence