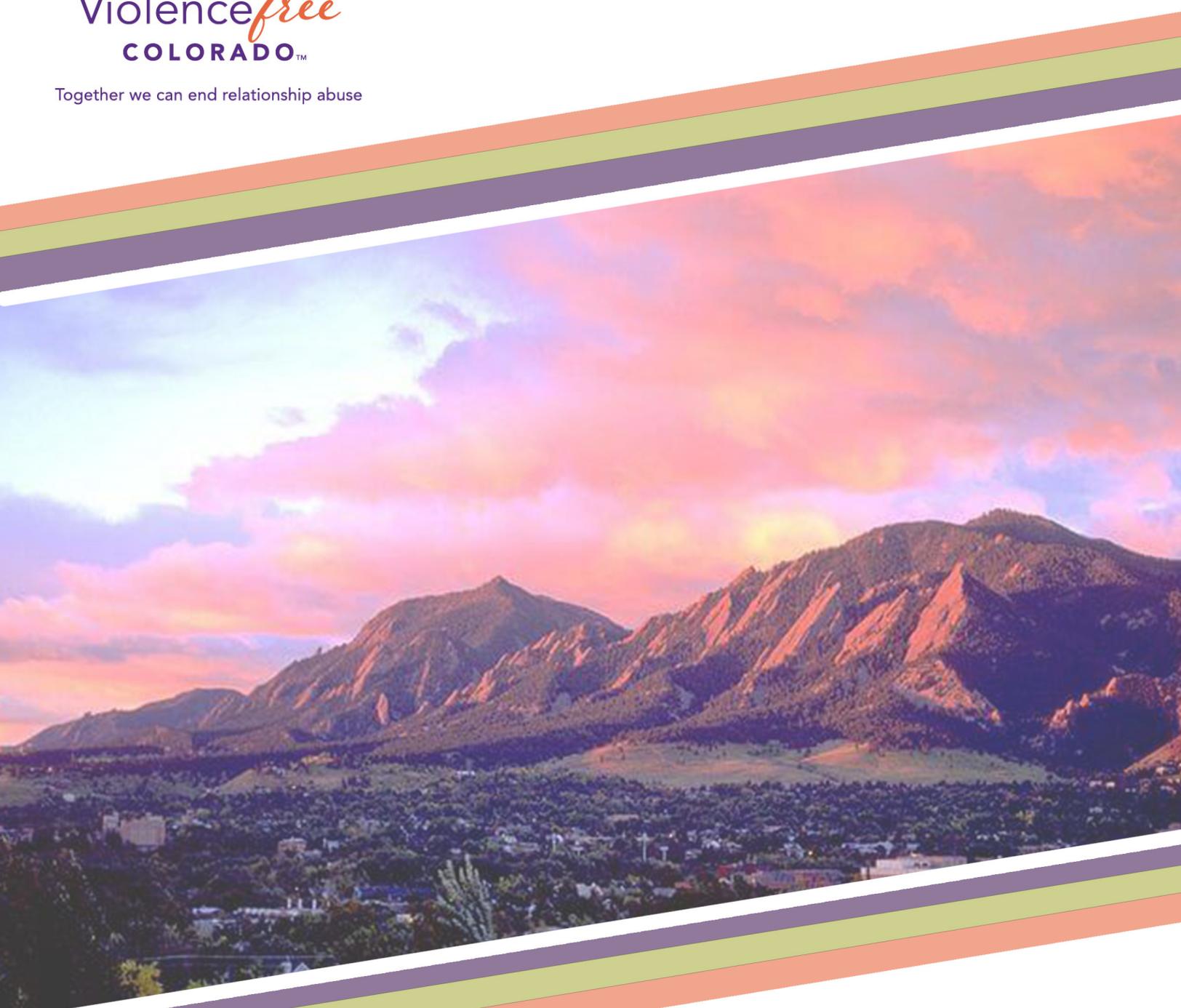




Violence *free*  
COLORADO™

Together we can end relationship abuse



# 2023 Annual Report

# From our Board

As I reflect on the past year, it's hard to put into words my amazement and gratitude for the growth and change our organization made in 2023.

In late 2022, as we continued to pull ourselves through leadership transitions and the pandemic, still finding our footing, there were times when - where we are today - felt very far. During periods of struggle like this, lines from the poet Margaret Wheatly's poem "Turning to One Another" came to mind.

*There is no power greater than a community discovering what it cares about.*

*..Ask "What's possible?" not "What's wrong?" Keep asking.*

*..Remember, you don't fear people whose story you know.*

*..Real listening always brings people closer together.*

*..Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world.*

*Rely on human goodness. Stay together.*

*—Margaret Wheatley, "Turning to One Another," 2002*

Wheatley reminds me that the hard and necessary conversations need not be our last words but can be healing and generative. That period of deep challenge can lead to a reset and be restorative, preparing us for what is next.

As we closed 2023, I began to witness a new sense of renewal for Violence Free Colorado.

The joy of staff finding fulfillment in their work.

The rewards of hard-fought relationship building and coalition work with our partners.

The synergetic ways in which we can each bring our contributions, working together over struggling alone in our work.

Our movement is ever evolving and remains relevant despite our wish that it be otherwise. On our way to seeking positive change, we will make many mistakes, and yet we must find ways to move forward, with lessons taken to heart, and a renewed resolve.

It is that intention that I hope we can hold in 2024.

Thank you to our staff and organizational leadership for seeing this work forward.

In gratitude,

Nicole Castillo, Co-Chair VFC Board of Directors



# Our Team



## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Adam Evans (he/him) Board Co-Chair

Nicole Castillo (she/her) Board Co-Chair

Jody Curl (she/her) Board Secretary, Project SafeGuard

Jenny Abbott (she/her) Board Treasurer, Advocates of Lake County

Laura Pearson (she/her) L Elizabeth Events

Nhu-Minh Le (she/her), Colorado Health Foundation

"I am honored to serve on the Board of VFC. I have enjoyed watching the growth in the VFC team and their commitment to deliver meaningful support and services to member organizations. The work being done at VFC ultimately helps organizations in ensuring that services being offered to survivors are done so in a trauma-informed and culturally responsive manner. I look forward to my continued partnership with VFC in 2024." ~ Jody Curl

"The strength of our coalitions is powerful. While we can do a lot through our individual choices and actions, by standing together amid our differences, we can achieve so much more. The power of the collective was felt at the in-person CAIA conference (appropriately called "Back Together") in June and resonated again at our Advocacy Day earlier this spring." ~Nicole Castillo





## OUR STAFF

2023 was a generous year, joining us in celebrating VFC staff!



**R**oshan Kalantar (she, her) joined Violence Free Colorado as our Associate Director at the end of 2020, and became our Executive Director early 2023. She's been working in the field of advocacy and gender-based violence for over 15 years. Born in Iran, Roshan grew up in Colorado and Arizona. She has lived and worked in Washington D.C., Boston, and New Orleans leading advocacy and education programs. After returning to Denver, Roshan served as Shelter Program Director at Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence and as a counselor in community and medical settings. She has also taught in education and counseling programs at Metropolitan State University, University of Denver and Iliff School of Theology. All of this work has been grounded in her training in Feminist, Womanist, Post-Colonial, Queer, and Critical Race theories.

**R**eJeania Tolliver (she, her) joined Violence Free Colorado as our Training and Program Director. Prior to joining Violence Free Colorado, she was the Associate Director of the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. ReJeania has worked in the anti-violence field for over ten years and seeks to ensure that all victims and survivors are treated with dignity and respect through her life's work. As a domestic violence and sexual assault advocate, trainer, coalition leader, and expert in rural programming, she is a powerful addition to our team.



**S**oledad Diaz (she, her/ella) Public Policy and Community Impact Director, joined us on September 2023. Originally from Chile, she brings a background in Law, and more that 15 years of experience in the advocacy and social justice field. Prior to joining Violence Free Colorado, she served as a bilingual legal advocate and the Shelter Program Director at SPAN. Last October, Soledad recieved the prestigious Beth Haynes Special Recognition Award, for her service to survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and her efforts to further the implementation of the Lethality Assesment Protocol.



Lindsay is our Housing and Economic Justice Program Manager and joined the coalition in 2019. She has been doing domestic violence work since 2011 with an emphasis in housing stability. She's worked a variety of roles over the years, including housing case management, grant coordinating, and collaborating with community partners to increase housing access for survivors of domestic violence. Originally from the East Coast, Lindsay moved to Colorado to pursue her degree and never looked back. In her spare time, she enjoys camping with her family and spending time with her daughter.

Miranda Encina, is a Two-Spirit/Queer Xicanx, born and raised in Boulder, Colorado with Indigenous roots from Apache and Navajo ancestry. Miranda has been our Culturally Responsive Technical Assistance Specialist since 2021, and was promoted to a Manager position in 2023. Miranda graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Colorado Boulder, double majoring in Ethnic Studies and Sociology. Their research focused on intergenerational resistance and complex trauma within Xicana/Indigenous communities.



Andrea Valeska Fernandez Duran (she/her/ella) Community Impact and Communications Manager. Andrea Valeska joined the Coalition at the end of 2023. She was born and raised in Chile and migrated to the USA at 23 years old. As a catalyst of change she has focused her career working with individuals and organizations to embrace healing, bio-individuality, and conscious leadership. As a survivor, and coming from a lineage of survivors, has inspired her personal and professional life to be of service and lead from a Trauma informed perspective. Andrea Valeska is an active advocate towards justice, self-empowerment, and the co-creation of sustainable systems in right relationships. She holds a degree in Engineering Business Administration, a BA in Business Management, and a Master's in administrative science with certifications in Nonprofit development and in Global Leadership. Andrea is also certified as an Integrative Health Coach and Healing circles facilitator.

Corinne (she, her) is our Finance, Operations, and Grants Manager. She joined our team in October 2022 after spending three years managing administration, operations, and volunteers at a direct service domestic violence agency. At Violence Free Colorado Corinne helps keep numbers, documents, systems, and grants up to date so that we can in turn support survivors and member organizations across Colorado. Outside of work, Corinne is pursuing a masters in nonprofit management. She is a self-identified nerd, cat mom, nature enthusiast, and crafting dabbler.



Alma (she/they) is our Economic Justice Specialist. Born in Miami, Florida, with family roots in Honduras and El Salvador, Alma is dedicated to ending the cycle of violence in family systems and intimate partnerships, drawing from their own complex experiences. Alma obtained their GED in 2004 and pursued studies in Political Science at Florida International University before relocating to Colorado in 2014. With nine years of experience as a domestic violence advocate, Alma has served in various capacities, including housing advocacy, economic empowerment programming, and

legal advocacy and accompaniment.

Kathleen Melendy, (she/her) is our Public Policy Specialist. She holds a degree in Gender Studies from Simmons University in Boston. She taught self defense to elementary and middle schoolers and interned in a women's day shelter before coming to Boulder in 2018 to work at a reproductive and sexual health clinic. From there, she moved to the Colorado State Capitol, where she quickly transitioned from a Legislative Aide to the Speaker's Advisor to Program Manager for the House Democratic Legislative Aides. She joined the Violence Free team in 2023, bridging her passion for ending gender-based violence with expertise in policy, training, and leadership.



**D**avid (he/him) is a Training and Technical Assistance Specialist and joins the Violence Free Colorado team after 4+ years working in direct service with survivors of Domestic Violence. David has experience as a child and family advocate, housing navigator, and community educator. David is passionate about improving the safety and wellbeing of survivors through ongoing education and advocacy at both the statewide and grassroots level. Outside of work, David enjoys sports, time with family, and hanging out with his bunny Apricot and two cats Raven and Luna.



*"I am proud to be leading a team of training and technical assistance providers who bring their unique lived experiences to incorporate Accessible, Culturally Responsive, and Trauma-Informed (ACRTI) support for domestic violence advocates all across Colorado. Our team is dedicated to strengthening relationships, developing equitable policies, and providing top-quality training to ensure that the necessary support is available to those who need it the most."*

*-ReJeania Tolliver*

*"Policy work is the space where we make things happen. We listen and engage with survivors, advocates, community partners, legislators, and we become the bridge between the law and the experiences of survivors. I am profoundly honored to be a part of this team, and for being able to inform our policy work in alignment with our mission and upholding the values that we, as a coalition, stand for".*

*- Soledad Diaz*



# Training and Technical Assistance

## IN 2023 WE:

- Led online communities for Housing Advocates, Shelter Directors, Flex Funds Recipients, Program Supervisors, and Advocates/Leaders seeking to deepen their Accessible, culturally responsive, Trauma-informed (ACRTI) work.
- Continued our work on expanding language justice in our training and technical assistance.
- Built and led Bilingual Cohort providing an online platform for Bilingual advocates to be in community.
- Worked with our partner coalition, the Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CCASA), to share innovative ideas with hundreds of advocates through the Colorado Advocacy in Action Conference.
- Shared new ideas and information through newsletters, social media, and website.
- Built a new course on Ethics for our Online Learning Center.
- Continued our work with the Domestic Violence Program (DVP) by providing technical assistance to domestic violence programs to support survivors with over \$5 million in flexible funding, integrating ACRTI into our Flex Funding member calls.



**4**

Hosted Supervisory coaching sessions for member programs

**274**

CAIA Attendees

**450+**

Technical assistance calls responded

**20+**

Statewide Trainings for advocates provided

**20+**

Specialized trainings tailored to the needs of a member program or agency

**540+**

Hours of professional development



# ACRTI

ACCESSIBLE, CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE, AND TRAUMA-INFORMED

## REQUESTED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COMMON THEMES

- » Supporting leadership of color
- » Best Practices for supporting LGBTQ+ staff
- » Best Practices for supporting LGBTQ+ survivors in shelter
- » Best Practices and harm reduction (Substance Use)
- » Organizational trauma and Impact Response Plans
- » Accessible, Culturally Responsive, Trauma Informed (ACRTI) Practices
- » Confidentiality
- » Intersections of Human Trafficking and IPV
- » Supervisory Support

## A LITTLE OF WHAT WE DID

- » Created upcoming Online Learning Center Course on Ethics- To be released 2024
- » Participated on a National Coalition roundtable on IPV and LGBTQ+ needs
- » Hosted four ACRTI Supervisory Coaching sessions from the National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, and Mental Health
- » Collaborated with programs to gather current best practices for Overdose Awareness Month and a National Panel
- » Began the process of our Organizational Land Acknowledgment Statement
- » Conducted multiple coaching sessions for new and experienced leadership
- » Hosted a Facebook live event for Servicios De La Raza Dia De Los Muertos event
- » Conducted a Series of trainings on support Afghan refugees
- » Violence Free Colorado has a book club! The books that we read as a staff are So You Want to Talk about Race by Ijeoma Oluo and What My Bones Know by Stephanie Foo

## WEBINARS

- » Foundational Advocacy Video - Accessible, Culturally Responsive and Trauma Informed Practices (English)
- » Intersectional Perspective on Historical Oppression and Trauma Stress (English / Español)
- » Human Trafficking Webinar Series
- » Beyond the Sensational: Recognizing the Intersections of IPV and Human Trafficking (English / English ASL)

## WEBINARS

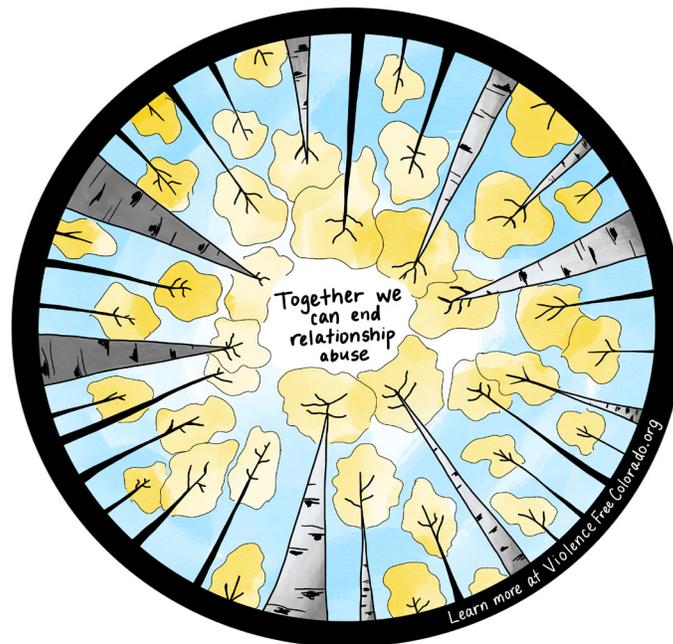
- » Interconnectedness of Survivorship-Supporting Diverse, Intersectional needs of Survivors of IPV & HT (English / English ASL)
- » Harm reduction Webinar Series
- » Harm Reduction Part 1 (English / English ASL, Español)
- » Harm Reduction Part 2 (English / English ASL / Español)
- » Economic Justice (English)
- » Self-Care for Advocates (English/English ASL / Español)
- » Bank On English/English ASL
- » Addressing Abortion Rights and Access (English/Eng ASL / Español)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- » 2023 Afghan Refugee Project
  - Translation document Bank- Common phrases for signage (Pashto, Dary)
  - Release of Information (Pashto, Dari)
  - General Services and Client Rights (Pashto, Dari)
  - Translation and interpretation support
  - Other Resources

2023 was about expansion and growth in every way! It was amazing to work with so many member programs and to also connect with advocates in person. "One of the most vital ways we sustain ourselves is by building communities of resistance, places where we know we are not alone" bell hooks

- Miranda Encina



## HOUSING CONVENINGS

In 2023 VFC Housing Team began hosting and facilitating regional housing convenings for advocates working alongside survivors to address their housing and financial stability needs.



The convenings provided virtual training opportunities for advocates to increase knowledge regarding different housing resources and approaches to address barriers that survivors face and resources available to increase survivor's financial empowerment including, but not limited to, safe banking opportunities.

The Convenings also provided advocates with a space to engage and learn from one another about the success and challenges that different programs across the state have encountered and an opportunity to connect with one another in person, to build a supportive community for housing advocates.

## FLEX FUNDING



Alma Salamanca and Lindsay Christopher

In 2023 VFC Housing Team continued to provide training and technical assistance to the 36 programs across Colorado participating in the DVP Flexible Funding Assistance Project.

VFC provided support to programs related to implementing flexible funding in their programs, distributing direct cash assistance to survivors, and other issues as they arose throughout the project.



Alma Salamanca, Lindsey Christopher and ReJeania Tolliver

## ALLSTATE FUNDS

Up to 99% of survivors of DV report experiencing financial abuse as part of their experience of domestic violence.

In 2023 VFC supported 3 programs in Colorado with a small amount of Allstate funds to sustain and enhance their economic justice programming.

Each program utilized these funds in different ways - Programs used these funds to provide matched savings opportunities to survivors in order for them to meet financial needs and goals.

They also used funds to collaborate with community partners to increase survivor's understanding of their financial circumstances, their spending habits and increase their knowledge of their finances so that they have the ability to make informed financial decisions and choices.

## HOUSING SYSTEMS ADVOCACY

In 2023 the Housing Team worked closely with Metro Denver Homeless Initiative to provide training and technical assistance to different programs in order to better support community based domestic violence organizations and increase housing options for survivors of domestic violence.

VFC worked with MDHI and other Colorado Continuums of Care to better understand the challenges that CoC's face in regard to collaboration with DV programs.

VFC began working deeply with MDHI and developed plans for virtual and in person trainings in 2024 that bring CoC staff and DV programs together to build relationships and collaborate to build policies and procedures that meet the needs of CoCs and DV programs, while maintain safety and confidentiality of survivors. VFC will use this process and model to replicate this work with other CoC's and VSPs across the state in 2024.

*"I am incredibly excited to join the Violence Free Colorado team. I believe that supporting survivors and advocates throughout the state of Colorado is a privilege and I look forward to working with programs and individuals alike. As someone with several years of direct service experience, I hope to bring a perspective that amplifies and honors the unique challenges that survivors face. As I settle into this role, I commit myself to ongoing learning and a focus on centering the experiences of those who have historically been marginalized or neglected. It is my sincere hope that I can provide the kind of support that survivors and advocates deserve in order to continue to move toward a safer future. I look forward to working and growing together."*

*-David Karnes*



## OVERALL TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE HOUSING THEMES

*"2023 brought lots of opportunities to connect in person and I am excited for this to continue in to 2024".*

*- Lindsay Christopher*

*"In the coming year, as VFC's Economic Justice Specialist, my aim is to collaborate with coalition members to co-create a comprehensive economic justice platform for domestic violence survivors in Colorado. This includes addressing survivors' economic hurdles by listening to survivors and direct service advocates, spearheading a legislative effort to establish coerced debt protections for survivors of financial abuse, and nurturing partnerships with financial institutions statewide to enhance survivors' long-term support systems".*

*- Alma Salamanca*

The VFC Housing Team supported several programs with TTA regarding Master Leased Units to increase housing options for survivors of domestic violence. This work included providing information about this method, different approaches to master leasing, as well as materials to support this model, including support with policies and procedures, welcome packets, survivor expectations and responsibilities, and sample leases to name a few.

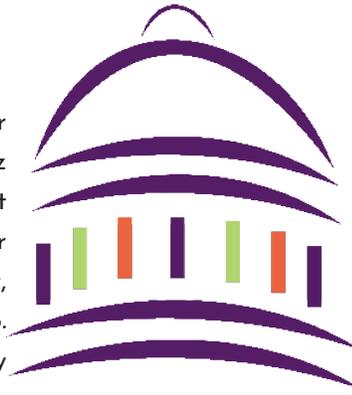
The VFC Housing team provided TTA to member programs and many housing providers regarding the intersections of domestic violence and housing stability as well as the protections available to survivors under the Violence Against Women Act. This training provided members with guidance and information to better support survivors in obtaining or maintaining safe housing. It also served to ensure that housing providers have policies and procedures in place to support survivors in their properties in a survivor-driven, trauma informed way and that survivors are not losing their housing as a result of experiencing domestic violence.



*ReJeania Tolliver and Lindsay Christopher  
NNEDV Economic Justice Summit*

# Public Policy

**2023** marked an exciting new beginning for the Public Policy Team. Soledad Diaz joined our team as Public Policy and Community Impact Director, bringing years of experience as a shelter director, legal advocacy and community engagement, and a background in law to Violence Free Colorado. Kathleen Melendy then came on as Public Policy Specialist, bringing with her a strong grounding in the legislative process from her time on staff for the Colorado House of Representatives. Together, Soledad and Kathleen worked to expand VFC's Public Policy Committee, center accessibility and representation in our policy work, and build diverse coalitions of informed and passionate advocates ready to engage with state legislators on the most pressing issues facing Colorado survivors.



*"It's so rewarding to support survivors and advocates as they navigate the legislative process. The Capitol can be an intimidating environment, but by bringing our expertise and lived experience directly to legislators, we get to see the ripple effects of changed hearts, minds, and policies."*  
- Kathleen Melendy

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The Public Policy Team aimed big as we approached the 2024 legislative session. Based on the priority legislation goals, the team drafted bills to:

- » Reduce barriers for survivors during the civil protection order process
- » Increase identification of and proper response to domestic violence through the child abuse reporting hotline, and
- » Secure sustainable funding for victims' services.

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## How we did it

- » Conducted proactive outreach to grow and revitalize our Public Policy Committee
- » Led trainings for advocates on how to engage in the legislative process and effective lobbying
- » Strengthened VFC's public policy presence by increasing our communications program
- » Began planning the team's first ever Day at the Capitol with the Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CCASA) to bring advocates and survivors to the Capitol to speak directly to state legislators
- » Created the Coalition for Sustainable Crime Victim Services Funding along with CCASA and Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance (COVA), building a broad network of organizations that rely on VOCA funding to align our message and policy work behind a shared goal of adequate, consistent funding for victims' services

# Community Impact

## ONE MILE CLOSER TO HOPE

Each time we listen to and support survivors, we are one mile closer to a future without domestic violence. On October 19th VFC and Rose Andom Center hosted a walk to the Colorado State Capitol to make our voices heard!



Our Champions Majority Leader Monica Duran, Representatives Meg Froelich and Regina English bringing purple to the Capitol



VFC Executive Director Roshan Kalantar and Angie Ceseña, Latina Safehouse's Executive Director

# EVERY 1 KNOWS SOME 1

Domestic Violence Awareness Month



# COLORADO ADVOCACY IN ACTION CONFERENCE

**BACK  
TOGETHER**  
JUNE 5-7, 2023 | DENVER, CO

*We were so excited to finally be back together!*



CAIA 2023 was memorable for many reasons. With over 270 attendees, advocates from all around our state came to Denver to learn together.

“What have we learned since 2020? What practices do we keep as we move forward? What do we leave behind?” Our keynote panelists Cora Lee Poole, Tawana Davis and Carla Respects Nothing shared their perspectives on this moment and where we go from here.



## CAIA AWARDS

### Bluebell Excellence in Advocacy Award

This award is for an individual advocate working directly with domestic violence survivors in Colorado. This advocate demonstrates a deep understanding of the root causes of violence, recognizes the connections between domestic violence and other forms of oppression, and tailors their advocacy to address these connections when working with survivors. They see survivors as individuals with diverse and varied needs, promoting autonomy and self-empowerment and using innovative practices to support survivors’ healing and thriving. This person balances their advocacy work with their own self-care, community connections, growth, and healing.

### Aspen Organizational Excellence Award

This award is for an organization directly serving domestic violence survivors in Colorado. This organization tailors their services to address the connections between domestic violence and the complexities of survivors’ lived experiences. This organization is advocating for social change both inside and outside of its walls, and staff at all levels are engaged in improving their services, policies, and systems to (re)center resilient communities in their advocacy work. This organization also cultivates a culture of self- and community-care at all levels of its agency through tangible actions that support staff wellness, time off, and healing.

# CAIA 2023

Congratulations to all our award recipients at the Colorado Advocacy in Action Conference!

**AQUAMARINE AWARD:** Majority Leader, Representative Monica Duran. "I was honored to receive the Aquamarine Award from Violence Free Colorado. My whole life I have battled to be heard, to be seen, to be taken seriously. After I was elected as State Representative five years ago, I was given the opportunity to show the world who I am. My biggest question was how do I represent all the things that matter to me, what was I going to say. I have a responsibility to not be quiet, I needed to be loud and say I am a domestic violence survivor."

We are grateful for your fierce commitment, partnership and constant work for DV survivors.



Bluebell Award for Excellence in Advocacy:  
Tsunemi Maehara from SPAN



Aspen Award for Organizational Excellence: Project Safeguard



Bluebell Award for Excellence in Advocacy:  
Bertha Garza from SafeHouse Denver



*We can't wait to see you again in Colorado Springs*

Roundtables

40+ Workshops

Networking

Awards Luncheon

and more...

# UPLIFTING

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

[www.ColoradoAdvocacy.org](http://www.ColoradoAdvocacy.org)

# Our Financials

2023 was a year of stability for Violence Free Colorado. In our financial corner, we maintained our collaborative relationships with grantors, increased our spending on policy and technical assistance, filled out our team, and began new engagement with donors. Much of the year was focused on laying down a strong base for success over the next three to five years, planning for the financial ability to add new staff positions and grow organizational capacity. We were fortunate to connect with incredible supporters of all kinds and would like to extend an emphatic thank you to everyone who gave time and funds to Violence Free Colorado.

*"It was exciting to add new Violence Free Colorado staff members in 2023. One of the highlights for me was our engagement in vision and mission growth with a full, passionate, and enthusiastic team."*  
-Corinne DiVittorio

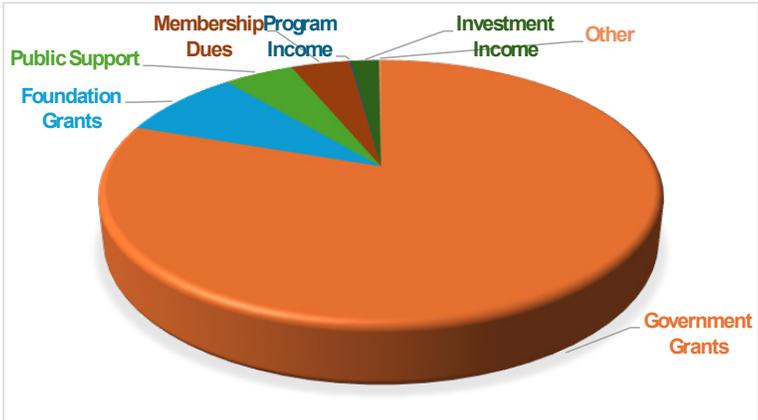
Breakthru Beverage staff, Board Co-Chair Adam Evans, and Uma Evans showing off Breakthru's incredible donation.



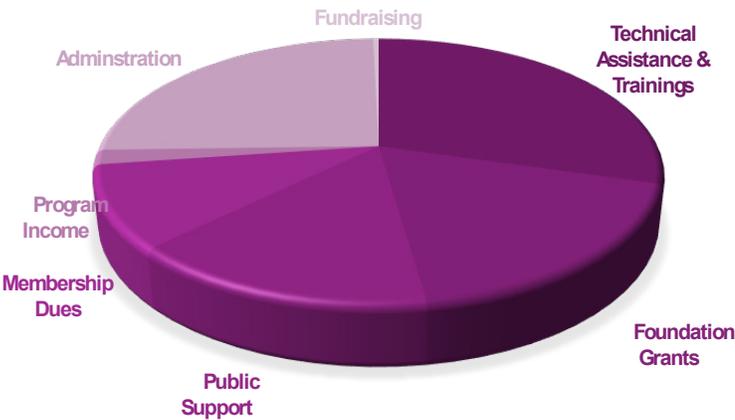
Breakthru Beverage Colfax Marathon Team raising funds for Violence Free Colorado.

# REVENUE

Government Grants	\$ 801,599
Foundation Grants	\$ 85,600
Public Support	\$ 48,728
Membership Dues	\$ 41,114
Program Income	\$ 1,075
Investment Income	\$ 19,005
Other	\$ 1,387
<b>Total Support and Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 998,508</b>



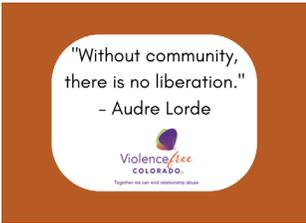
# EXPENSES



Program Services	
Technical Assistance & Trainings	\$ 287,174
Foundation Grants	\$ 177,348
Public Support	\$ 145,633
Membership Dues	\$ 98,023
Program Income	\$ 17,328
Administration	\$ 244,012
Fundraising	\$ 3,698
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 973,216</b>

"Joining Violence Free Colorado has been a wonderful and full circle experience. It is an honor to be part of the statewide voice for Domestic Violence awareness, prevention and action within the systems. Looking forward to co-creating towards the same vision and seeing what 2024 has to offer".

- Andrea Valeska



# MEMBERSHIP

DV Programs:	42
Community Partners:	13
Individuals:	12
Students:	
Reciprocal:	5
<b>Total Membership:</b>	<b>62</b>

# Looking Forward

## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I've read enough Impact Reports to know that this is where I report to you. I tell you all the great things we did in 2023 - and there is a lot to tell. The pages before this one tell you a lot about what we did in 2023.

We responded to requests for technical assistance when our members had specific questions. We provided deep support when our member programs needed to train a new team, update policies, or review program structures. We tailored trainings to the specific needs of programs and communities. We built statewide trainings based on trends we saw across the state and across the country. We added protections to systems by helping to enact laws supporting survivors. We filled gaps in funding expanding how Colorado pays for victim's services.

In 2023, we listened. We responded. I am extremely proud of that work and of all we did - for you and for the survivors you serve. I can't stop there, though, not at the end of 2023. 2023 wasn't just a year of doing, it was a year of becoming. As proud as I am of the work we did, I am equally proud of who we have become.

In 2023 the staff at Violence Free Colorado spent over 350 hours learning. We learned about new research, new interventions, and new ways to advocate for equity and change. We learned about how to teach and how to train. We learned about the history of anti-domestic violence coalitions and got to know our peers across the U.S. We spent time working to understand who Violence Free Colorado IS and who we WANT TO BE - to our members, to each other, to the state, and to the movement. In 2023, Violence Free Colorado re-connected with our place in the movement to end gender-based violence and oppression.

As advocates, you know that harm to the body is never as violent as harm done to the soul. Helping a survivor

reconnect with the strength of who they are and where they are rooted is the most important work we can do. This is the work that Violence Free Colorado did in 2023. We know who we are and where we are rooted. We are a team dedicated to learning and teaching because we believe that education is a source of liberation and power. We are a team dedicated to building coalition and deepening collaboration, because we believe that we are stronger together. We are a team dedicated to expanding access because we know that truth is found in the work of justice making.



We enter 2024 knowing who we are, rooted in community and history, and ready to create change. In 2024, we will continue to do good work. I am happy to report, however, that we will do much more. We will continue to become. The best part of becoming is that it doesn't stop. We never arrive at a finished place; we are never complete. We become and continue to become more.

Thank you to the Board and staff at Violence Free Colorado for being willing to do more than work or even work together - thank you for being willing to explore who and what we are. Thank you to our member programs for walking with us as we learned not just to do but to become. Who and what we become next will be determined by our relationships with you and with each other. I am humbled and excited to do the work of becoming even more with each of you.

Roshan Kalantar