



CALIFORNIA STATE COALITION OF RAPE CRISIS CENTERS

Newsletter ♦ Summer 1994

From the Chair
Patricia Occhiuzzo Giggans

This fiscal year has found your Coalition Board very much engaged in the work of our statewide organization. The Color of Violence Conference last October proved to be an outstanding success with over 200 participants from many of the counties across the state including Medoc, Sonoma, Orange, Tulare and Contra Costa. Participants also attended from other states such as New York, Oregon, Washington and Nevada. The Women of Color Caucus-South did a wonderful job in organizing this first time ever conference of this kind. On the strength of this success the Coalition has been invited to be a Co-Sponsor of a national violence prevention conference organized by the L.A. County Violence Prevention Coalition in May, 1995.

The Board has been very focused in several areas. One certainly has been dealing with the plethora of legislation that has come across your desks and ours. We were able to design a CSCRCC legislative position paper energized by the Bay Region to guide us in our deliberations about which legislation is worthy of our support or not. We have also made a strong networking contact with the statewide office of N.O.W. They are interested in supporting expanded funding for rape crisis centers for our rape intervention and prevention efforts. Elizabeth Toledo, the N.O.W statewide coordinator came to our Board meeting that was held in Fresno and then invited CSCRCC members for a strong presence at their Statewide Conference in May. Our coalition was very well represented by Leah Aldridge, the chair of the Women of Color Caucus-South and a LACAAS staff member. Leah gave one of the opening addresses along with Patricia Ireland, National Chair of N.O.W. and long time feminist thinker/activist/author Robin Morgan. Through our collaboration on the Clothesline Project throughout our state we hope that our two statewide organizations - N.O.W. and CSCRCC will expand the voice of survivors to have impact on policy issues. Our Board rep from the Central Coast Region-Jamie Leigh from the Ventura Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence is chairing our statewide Clothesline Project. We held a T-shirt Bee at our agency and it was very moving for everyone to create these memorial shirts honoring the violent experiences that women survive

on a daily basis. The CSCRCC suggests that centers organize a shirt-making at their sites with advocates, survivors and staff. The SAC has been meeting and considering changes in the funding formula. Board member Lee Ann Eager from Fresno RCC is our Coalitions liaison to the SAC, she has been carefully attending to the details of the proposed changes.

We are also pursuing a new look for the Coalition and perhaps a new name. Our new brochure is done and the Board is going to experiment with some fundraising by enabling friends of the Coalition to support us through a donation. You will be hearing more about this in the very near future. Please think about a new name for our group. The CSCRCC is a tongue twister; it doesn't rhyme with anything; and you can't dance to it. We need a catchy name so, please think about it. Let's vote on a new name at our annual meeting which is Tuesday, evening September 13th at the NOVA Conference in San Francisco. We will also be holding elections for Chair and Co-Chair. We are saying so-long to Monica Williams who has left the Compton Rape Crisis Center and has resigned as Co-Chair of the Coalition. We wish Monica best of luck and appreciate all that she has contributed to our Coalition and to the lives of women in her community and beyond. Folks may leave Rape crisis but rape crisis never leaves us. So we know that Monica will forever be connected to these issues, as we all are and will be.

One of the major items that we will be discussing at the annual meeting is a proposal to engage in certain steps to organize and fundraise for a statewide office and a staff person to coordinate the work of the Coalition. For years there has been a dream to one day have a functioning office. The CSCRCC Board has been developing a plan to make this happen. We were spurred on by a proposal for a merger with NAAR (National Action Against Rape) last year. Out of those discussions has come what we hope you will agree is a forward thinking vision and proposal to advance the impact, success and reach of our statewide organization and further support the work of rape crisis centers.