

## **Religion & DV Issues Committee Meeting Minutes for September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

Meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Bernita Walker. Present were: Cecelia Walker, Bernita Walker, Varsha N. (Co-Chairs); Isabel Checa, Carla Tantau, , Mignon Richardson, Takiya Benjamin-McCullar, Carla Whitlatch, Stephanie Carillo, Alex Armendariz, Aide Prez, Angela Cesena

Staff from the Latina Safe House gave a presentation on the types of services provided to Latino Survivors. The background and need for creating of the agency was shared and throughout the presentation the intersectionality of religion and culture in the context of Domestic Violence were discussed.

Staff members shared their individual perspectives on culturally sensitive programming, stereotypes, micro-aggressions experienced as Latinos. For example, a staff member shared that many people believe in the stereotype and make the assumption that the main reason Latinos experience Domestic Violence is due to “Machismo”. Emphasis was placed on clients being in the ‘drivers seat’ and helping survivors specifically in the cultural context taking into consideration language barriers (including dialects) and the clients religion or faith as well. It was noted that survivors continue to be challenged by the influence within the Catholic Church on no divorce or separation of marriages. Challenges around bilingual services were shared amongst both staff presenting and members attending. Also, invaluable information on the significance of religious holidays and traditional dishes was shared. Staff members answered audience questions and space created for public comments. Co-Chairs are exploring creating a calendar which includes religious and interfaith holidays celebrated throughout the year.

Matters not posted on the agenda: None

**Next meeting is October 25th, 2022**

Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm