

# Abusers Transformed: Men must look within to end the cycle of violence

By Susan Bonne

For many men, abusive patterns were established in childhood, when they witnessed violence at the hands of fathers, gang-member peers and society at large. But transformation — ending the cycle of violence and learning the art of partnership — starts from looking within at core values and belief systems.

Ty Schroyer knows both sides of the story. A former abuser himself, he went through a treatment program in 1981, changed his life, and then devoted the next 19 years to helping other men learn to be in relationships without resorting to



**Ty Schroyer**

verbal or physical abuse. Currently the Victim Witness Coordinator for St. Louis County in Duluth, he understands that abuse is about control, and that many if not most perpetrators don't see the error of their ways until forced to view their actions through others' eyes.

“Men don't go into domestic violence groups on their own. They are usually there for one of two reasons: their partner is going to leave them if they don't participate,

or they are under court order to go through a program,” he notes.

Jeremy NeVilles-Sorell, a national technical assistance provider and former group facilitator in Duluth, concurs. “Men start the [therapeutic] process,” he says, “and think, ‘I'll just do this and I'll be done’ but it doesn't work that way.” Sorrel is an African American and Native American whose cultural backgrounds often inform his therapeutic approach.

At the same time, NeVilles-Sorell says most men engaged in domestic violence realize that the situation isn't working for them. They're getting pressure from their partners, kids, relatives and law enforcement. So why do some men attend domestic violence treatment programs and make no changes, while others do change and put abuse behind them?

## Processes critical to behavior change

National research highlights the importance of overcoming denial of violent behavior and engaging in new ways of thinking and acting. A survey of nine men who had successfully changed their abusive behavior as a result of an intervention program identified the following four processes as critical to their success: recognizing and taking responsibility for past abusive behavior; developing empathy for

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## Executive Director's Message— Setting the stage to transform individuals and communities

By Dr. Oliver J. Williams,  
executive director



**Dr. Oliver J. Williams**

This issue of *Assembling the Pieces* is about transformation. Our feature article on the next two pages talks about perpetrators who have embarked on the process of change and have been able to transform their lives. We also talk with

experts who have studied how individuals who commit to the process of change can become emotionally healthy and productive members of society.

We don't often get the opportunity to hear from men who have done the work and gotten on the path to transformation. We need to know what we can learn from them. However, since we can't always predict who will be successful in the change process, we want to be clear that hope that someone will change is not a reason for women to stay in a dangerous relationship.

We are not focusing on transformation to encourage women to stay in unhealthy relationships. This article is meant to share information with people who work with men who batter and batterers to offer hope that they can change their behavior and insight into what's most effective — particularly what men say has been essential in their journey to change.

We interviewed men who have been in the process of transformation, their partners who can validate their changes, and others who can vouch for them as well. We also review the research and talk with men who have done the work with this population to see what they have observed.

During the next issue, we will look at how victims of domestic violence have been able to extricate them-

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# Abusers Transformed *(continued from cover)*

others; accepting full responsibility for changing abusive behavior; and improving communication<sup>1</sup>.

The process begins, says Schroyer, with an admission of the truth of what's going on, followed by accepting responsibility. Once there, men are encouraged to reflect on why they batter, conduct a values inventory, and finally, learn to see their partner as an equal deserving of respect and civility.

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A values inventory is important, Schroyer believes, because values are the foundations of beliefs and actions. “We grow up and don’t really reflect on our values and the beliefs that create our thinking, which in turn creates our emotions. These beliefs and values influence us, but we’re not paying any attention to them, we’re just living our lives.” In his work with batterers, he asks participants to reflect on their thinking and beliefs, to lay them out and to ask, how sound are they? Do they make sense? Who are we as men?

Schroyer also challenges the men in his groups with the idea that battering doesn’t just ‘happen’—rather, all behavior is intentional and can be traced to underlying belief systems.

If action is intentional, then excuses like ‘I just lost control’ don’t hold up. “When we do something nice, we never say, ‘oh, I was just out of control,’” Schroyer points out.

Some values are based on societal mores, including a deep strain of sexism that Schroyer believes is inherent in all of us. “Women have been treated as second-

class citizens for hundreds of years,” he states. “This societal thread allows men to believe on some level that they have more authority than women. Sexism makes it easier for men to ‘cross the line’.”

## A Call to Men

Ted Bunch, founder of A Call to Men in New York Men and the director of Safe Horizon’s Domestic Violence Accountability Program, holds similar views. Teaching 300 to 400 men a week in offender classes for over 10 years, he came to believe that societal forces underlie men’s abuse of women, and that it will ultimately take a societal response for men to change.

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“It’s a matter of male dominance, male privilege, entitlement and the historical oppression of women,” he explains. “It’s based in English common law, which held that women and children are a man’s property.



**Warren Edwards grew up on the streets of Harlem, where “all my role models were men in control.”**

“We’re looking for treatment where there is no illness. Domestic violence is how men act out their sexism,” he explains. “If she doesn’t do what he says, he’s supposed to do something about that.” Yet Bunch also stresses that men are capable of controlling their behavior and should be held accountable.

“He’s capable of not abusing. His abuse is exclusive and selective to one person...[he can] control his anger with his friends, his boss, the police....He turns it off when he leaves the house and turns it back on when he gets home.

Sexism underlies the notion that it’s okay for men to control women, and control is at the heart of abusive or coercive behaviors. Don Chapin, a facilitator at Portland Oregon’s Crossroads program, has been doing batterer intervention work for 27 years. He also believes that the culture at large is part of the underlying problem.

He notes that while most men aren’t abusive, “all men are on a continuum” when it comes to controlling behaviors; the culture permits and even encourages the idea that men can and should exert control. “Unlearning that lesson is a lifelong process,” says Chapin.

“Society gives us ‘permission’ to act in controlling ways,” he adds, stressing that controlling a partner need not be physical to qualify as abuse. “A lot of men don’t understand what their controlling behaviors are; they think of abuse as hitting, and if they’re not hitting [their partner], then they’re not abusive.” Controlling behaviors may include displays of anger, intimidation, verbal abuse or threats.

Men who have undergone transformation can look back and recognize how a need for control influenced their life choices. Former drug dealer, gang member and abuser Warren Edwards grew up on the streets of Harlem, where “all my

role models were men in control.” A life of violence landed him in prison, where for 10 years, nothing was in his control. When he got out, he wanted to control “everything and everybody,” a common feeling among men reentering their lives and relationships. In Edwards’ case, his outlet was to abuse his intimate partner.

Today, Edwards counsels other men and runs a group in a batterer intervention program at My Home, Inc. in St. Paul. What led to his transformation? Most experts agree that self-understanding is key, along with a real desire to change. My Home Director Farris Glover says, “A program works as well as the individual wants it to. Warren is a perfect example of that.”

Chapin notes that no change is possible until a man is honest with himself and others—and honesty must be defined as more than truthfulness. Abusers must honestly look at their behavior and then accept responsibility for that behavior, and not make the system or a partner an excuse, or a contributing factor, to violence or abusive actions. Once a man understands his motives and has accepted responsibility for his actions, change can take place.

Both Chapin and Schroyer suggest that men involved in the process find or create a support system for themselves, not unlike AA, where they can turn for counsel and help, especially if they find themselves in a crisis. It’s important, however, to choose an objective observer, and not just a relative or close friend who may not hold them accountable.

Equally important is the emotionally safe treatment environment or ‘asylum’ created through respect and the shared experience that groups and facilitators offer. In fact, in one study of the effectiveness of batterer intervention programs, this was the single most important factor in behavioral change<sup>2</sup>. Group leaders like Edwards, who were former batterers themselves, have credibility and can also offer unique understanding as to the batterer’s frame of reference, “[meeting] the client where the client is at,” according to Glover.

In another study, 20 men who were previously violent and who were violence-free for two years credited their change to two primary complementary factors: an externally presented opportunity to create a new nonviolent identity (e.g., spiritual experience, supportive or benevolent

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## Executive Director’s Message (continued)

selves from unhealthy relationships and rebuild their lives. We will examine how women are able to transform by talking with survivors, practitioners and researchers.

We sadly recognize the passing of Radhia Jaaber (page 5). Radhia was an inspirational human rights activist, advocate against domestic violence and a 2003 IDVAAC Wellstone Humanitarian Award winner. We meet Ulester Douglas and learn about his work with Men Stopping Violence in Atlanta (page 4). And we meet two new members of the IDVAAC team, Associate Director Marcus Pope and Executive Assistant Angie Scheibe (page 6).

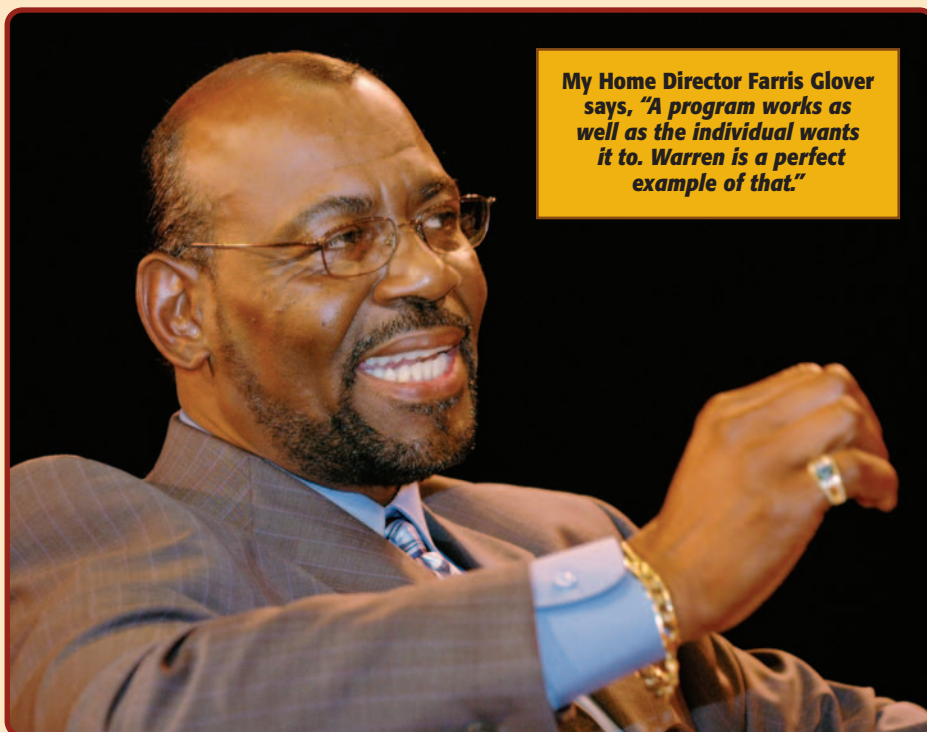
## Next conference March 19-20 in Long Beach

All of the IDVAAC staff is hard at work, preparing for our next conference, “A Contract for Change,” which will be March 19-20 in Long Beach, Calif. Our focus will be on how we can transform communities by creating commitments and mobilizing leaders to end domestic violence in the African-American community.

Domestic violence intersects with other social challenges that affect the quality of life in the entire African-American community. What we have learned from our research in several communities across the country is that African-American community-based efforts to end domestic violence is limited at best. This conference will explore strategies to mobilize concerned individuals, community advocates, criminal justice representative, social services practitioners and other stakeholders to adopt a contract to reduce domestic violence in the African-American community.

Plenary sessions and workshops have been designed to facilitate knowledge, to build skill and introduce models for mobilizing change at the individual, organizational and community level.

For more details, see the back page of this newsletter. We hope you will join us for a life-changing event, which is sponsored by IDVAAC and the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence against Women. ♦



# Meet Ulester Douglas of Men Stopping Violence

A commitment to pragmatic activism has fueled the work of Ulester Douglas for two decades. The men and women who have had contact with Men Stopping Violence, the Atlanta-based organization where Douglas serves as director of training, have been witnesses to and beneficiaries of that commitment.

Douglas did not, however, start his journey in this work. Traveling from his St. Kitts' birthplace to enter the University of Michigan in 1982, Douglas had plans for a career in communications; he received his bachelor's degree in that field. But, energized by the South African divestment movement of the 1980s, which was very active at the U of Michigan, Douglas developed an interest in work that connected to a larger social justice movement. He also decided to seek a graduate degree in social work.

"My interest in community organizing and clinical work made social work the ideal profession and Michigan the ideal school," said Douglas. "I was able to major in interpersonal practice and minor in community organizing."

One of the highlights of Douglas' social work education was being awarded a National Institute of Mental Health Graduate Fellowship. This was an intensive and extensive clinical training, under the guidance of Dr. Kathleen Faller, in providing therapeutic services for families affected by incest.

After graduation in 1992, Douglas worked as a family therapist at the YWCA counseling center in Grand Rapids, Mich., where he also facilitated groups for men who batter women. When Douglas decided to move to Atlanta, he knew he wanted to continue in violence prevention. Men Stopping Violence was the ideal place to put his passion into practice.

"I had read about Men Stopping Violence before I arrived in Atlanta," he said. "I was impressed and inspired by their approach to addressing men's violence against women."

## Male allies as agents of social change

When Douglas joined Men Stopping Violence in 1994, he became part of a social

change organization that seeks to actively engage men in the work of ending violence against women.

"Patriarchy insists on defining violence against women as a women's issue, one that men need not be concerned about, despite evidence that most of the crimes committed against women are perpetrated by men," said Douglas. "At Men Stopping Violence, we are clear that men's violence against women will not end until men assume more responsibility for the problem as well as the solutions."

The notion that men have both the power and the responsibility to end male violence against women is part of the framework of Men Stopping Violence's programs and policies. MSV works from a set of core principles that includes such concepts as listening to women's reality, community accountability, and intersectionality – the interrelationship between violence and other forms of oppression, such as racism, heterosexism and classism.

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Most important to MSV's day-to-day work with men, is the principle that organizing male allies in communities takes precedence over intervening with batterers. While MSV does work with batterers, the organization focuses on encouraging *all* men to take responsibility for the culture that condones violence against women. This approach means that in MSV classes men who have been identified as batterers share space with men who have not.

## Community-based prevention

Community-based approaches are built into MSV programs. This is quite evident in programs such as the Internship, which invites young men to explore the work of



Ulester Douglas

addressing violence against women through education, mentoring and real-world experiences. Many Internship graduates have gone on to positively impact their communities. Among MSV Internship graduates are pastors, law school and graduate school students, advocates in violence prevention and intervention programs, and others.

Another initiative that engages men in a community setting is Because We Have Daughters™, a program that encourages fathers to see the world through the eyes of their daughters. At monthly gatherings, fathers and daughters have fun and forge stronger connections, but also take time to consider safety issues facing girls and young women.

MSV is also developing a new curriculum designed to engage men, whether identified as abusive/violent or not, in becoming agents of social change. This course will provide men the opportunity to learn more about men's violence against women and offer practical ways men make a difference in their home and communities.

"Working on this curriculum has been exciting for me, because its community-based focus is right in line with where I started in this work," Douglas said. "I know that I have made the right choice about the work I do and where I do it, when after 14 years, I still look forward to going to work and still believe that what we do really makes a difference in women's lives." ♦

# Radhia Jaaber Memorial

## ***Long legacy of human rights activist, advocate against domestic violence and IDVAAC Wellstone Humanitarian Award winner***

By Michelle Theilmann

Radhia Jaaber, who passed away August 17 of breast cancer in Washington D.C., dedicated much of her life reaching out to those who suffered from domestic violence. She passionately educated people around the world through speaking, writing, consulting, and training with the mission to raise awareness of the issue and strive for change.

As a high school student growing up in Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1969, it was considered “radical” when Jaaber asked the school to teach students more about the history of black people. Friend and co-worker at Praxis International, Ellen Pence recalls, “Radhia Jaaber has been an activist since that sophomore year in high school in the struggle to end the oppression of women, of African American people, of all people marginalized and kept back.” Jaaber went on to receive her Bachelor’s of Science degree in Psychology from Northeastern University in Boston, and her Master’s Degree in Psychology from Kean University in Union, New Jersey.

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Jaaber was an activist, a poet, a speaker, an artist, a consultant, a writer, a therapist, a teacher, a gender-culture critic, and a mentor. “She taught about working with men who abuse women, but she never stayed within the small boundary of those teachings,” says Pence. “She talked about men's use of violence in the context of a world that degrades them. She simultaneously stood next to, behind, or, when necessary, in front of women who are so often the objects of men's violence. She was committed, without conflict, to raising the status of both men and women.”

Jaaber displayed vigorous commitment to the issue of domestic violence and support programs through her participation in both national and local organizations. In 1990, Jaaber co-founded The Empowerment Project, Inc., a Maryland-based community program that addresses issues concerning oppression. She served

as an advisor to the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence as well as the Battered Women's Justice Project.

Jaaber was also a consultant and trainer for Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project and National Training Project. For Praxis International, an organization that works toward the elimination of violence in the lives of women and children, she worked first as a consultant, then as an employee, also serving as a board member representing employees' interests.



Radhia Jaaber

Jaaber authored two poetry books, *A Familiar Renaissance: A Collage of Writings for the Reawakening Woman* and *The Garden of My Soul*, both of which combine poetry, spirituality, and wisdom. She also addresses the issue of black male violence while calling for change in the co-authored *Kinship Journey*.

Jaaber's passion for human rights issues was apparent to those around her. Pence fondly recalls, “No conversation with Radhia lasted long without her saying, ‘well, that's just it’...then she'd break into a story to make connections between current discussion and the social connection to the poor, the held back, those who live outside of the dominant culture.”

Jaaber received the first-ever IDVAAC Sheila and Paul Wellstone Humanitarian Award at the June 2003 IDVAAC Conference for her dedication to the goals of IDVAAC, as well as the issue of domestic violence.

“Radhia will be remembered as a person of tremendous grace, spirituality, and knowledge,” says friend and colleague Joyce N. Thomas. “She was always advocating for someone else.”

Jaaber was a loving, devoted mother of three children, Saudia, Huda and Adeeb. “Her children were what made her have hope when so many things would seem hopeless; she was their rock and they were the ground upon which she stood,” says Pence. Jaaber is also survived by her father, sister, and brother. ♦

# Meet New Associate Director Marcus Pope

Marcus Pope remembers a pivotal moment in his professional career that drew him to IDVAAC and highlighted the fact that it was where he wanted to be.

"In July, 2005, I was hired by the Minnesota Center against Violence and Abuse (MNCVA) to work on a collaborative project with IDVAAC," Pope remembers. I was given a great opportunity by the late Ann Kranz, which allowed me to work closely with Dr. Oliver Williams and gain exposure to the field of domestic violence. Pope was in charge of coordinating a project that focused on developing an online curriculum which, as he puts it, "is an introductory level curriculum regarding domestic issues and intervention strategies for working with the African-American community."

"I knew Dr. Oliver Williams prior to this role, but I got to work intensively with him through this project," Pope said. "I became familiar with the published literature on the issue of domestic violence and met a few of IDVAAC's steering committee members and program associates." Pope explained that such experiences "generated an interest in becoming more involved with IDVAAC and

the important work that Dr. Williams is carrying out around the country."

Today, Pope is the associate director of IDVAAC. One thing Pope is especially excited to contribute to IDVAAC is his experience building relationships corporations and foundations.

"This is an organization that is almost exclusively funded by federal sources," Pope said. "I have a background working with foundations, writing foundation grants, and cultivating relationships with different types of donors." Pope believes that diversifying IDVAAC's funding will help to strengthen the organization and will support more future projects.

## Creating more community connections

Additionally, Pope is especially interested in bridging gaps between the research institute and people facing domestic violence issues in the community. "We want to be

more intentional about partnering with community-based organizations and we believe such partnerships will be mutually beneficial," Pope said. "For example, we'd like to engage in community-based projects to help facilitate the implementation of best practices and evidence-based practices."

Prior to starting at IDVAAC, Pope spent the past three years working in the University of Minnesota's School of Social Work. Pope worked in the Youth Studies department, as an academic adviser and mentor to undergraduate students.

Additionally, Pope worked in the Twin Cities as a program director for a health care and social service agency called Neighborhood Involvement Program (N.I.P.). N.I.P. offers a community clinic, a rape and sexual abuse center, a counseling center, therapy associates, a seniors program, a youth program, and the academic-based Cargill Scholars program. ♦



Marcus Pope

# Meet Executive Assistant Angela Scheibe

After graduating from the University of Minnesota with a concentration in art, Angela Scheibe has spent her post-collegiate in accounting and administrative work. Additionally, Scheibe has volunteered with service animals, specifically dogs, to help train them to work with hearing-impaired and disabled individuals.

"I helped with the initial obedience training and care, until the animal graduated to the next level of training," Scheibe said.

Scheibe found this type of volunteer work very rewarding.

"I knew that I wanted to work professionally with people in need of help," said Scheibe.

As soon as she learned about the Institute of Domestic Violence in the African American Community, Scheibe knew it was where she wanted to work.

"I applied for the job, and I really love it. I love the people, and I love what they do; it's very stimulating," Scheibe said.

## Preparing for the future

So far, Scheibe has found motivation in her job through learning about the impact IDVAAC and other similar organizations truly have on the community.

"I went to L.A. and met a woman there who runs an organization that offers safe houses for women that have been victims of domestic violence. She took us to a tougher part of L.A. and gave us a tour of a facility with some women and their children who had been victims of domestic violence," Scheibe said. "It was wonderful to see that there were real results; good things are happening. We are one step removed at a research institute from the problems we are working to solve."

Scheibe is excited to continue working on her current projects and anticipates that her immediate future will be filled with learning.



Angela Scheibe

"I am really excited to be a part of this. I think I'm most excited about learning more about what the staff at IDVAAC and other similar organizations do. Right now, I know what they do, but I don't know how they do it, how they communicate. Some of the stories I hear, some of the people I talk to, are really compelling," she said.

As an executive assistant, Scheibe is responsible for a variety of the Institute's financial functions. "I'm in charge of preparing grant requests, coordinating financial activities associated with IDVAAC projects, and providing financial management for the Institute's budgets. For example, I have been updating the computer system, working on accounting projects and just handling general everyday financial duties," she said.

It is clear that Scheibe's decision to join IDVAAC is a good fit for her career, and for the organization. ♦

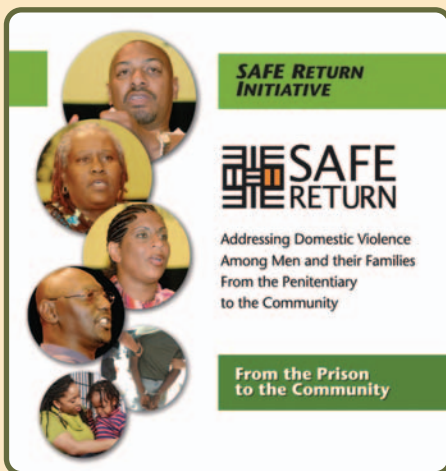


## Safe Return Initiative DVD receives Telly Award and is now available

IDVAAC is pleased to announce that its Safe Return Initiative DVD received a bronze (second place) 2006 Telly Award, an international award with more than 12,000 submissions from around the world. The Telly Awards recognize exceptional programming commercials presented on local, regional, and cable television as well as film and video.

The Safe Return Initiative examines the issue of domestic violence when men are released from prison, re-enter their communities, and return to their families. Each year, 650,000 men are released from prison; one and four African-American men have been in prison. Many incarcerated men experienced violence themselves, whether as a child, a peer, a community member, or a prison inmate.

In addition to being a victim of violence, many formerly incarcerated men re-enter the community angry, which puts them at risk for being violent toward their families.



The video promotes “safe returns” that allow men to return to their communities without continuing the cycle of violence,

while keeping the safety of families paramount. Our toll-free number is 1-877-643-8222; locally call 612-624-5357. And our IDVAAC e-mail: [nidvaac@umn.edu](mailto:nidvaac@umn.edu).

## Joyce Thomas to be inducted into prestigious American Academy of Nursing

IDVAAC Steering Committee Member Joyce Thomas will be inducted as a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing (AAN) on Nov. 11.



Joyce Thomas

Thomas was selected for being “a premier nursing leader and scholar in the child abuse arena,” says Jackie Campbell, Ph.D., RN, Anna D. Wolf Chair and professor at John Hopkins University. Campbell co-wrote Thomas’ letter of nomination with Phyllis Sharps, Ph.D., RN, professor at John Hopkins University.

In addition to recognizing Thomas’ accomplishments in nursing, AAN Fellows Campbell and Sharps commended her contributions to IDVAAC.

The Academy is comprised of 1,500 accomplished nursing leaders with various backgrounds in education, management, practice, and research. Being a fellow not only recognizes one’s achievements, but enables members to work closely with other leaders to address policy issues.

## IDVAAC domestic violence reports on several U.S. cities now available

IDVAAC’s latest reports, “Community Insights on Domestic Violence among African Americans,” assess how domestic violence and other issues impact Minneapolis, Minn.; Memphis, Tenn.; Birmingham, Ala.; Seattle, Wash.; Greenville, N.C.; San Francisco, Calif.; Detroit, Mich.; and Philadelphia, Penn. IDVAAC’s Executive Director Dr. Oliver J. Williams prepared these reports along with other partners and contributors.

These reports utilize community interviews and focus groups about the causes and outcomes of domestic violence in these communities. Participants also shared ideas about how to prevent and decrease domestic violence in the African-American community.

Each report called for policies that reflect and define the unique needs, challenges, and issues faced by African Americans, as well as community-led decision making and actions.

The reports state that this project “seeks to inform a wider audience comprised of domestic violence service providers, criminal justice practitioners, and public officials about the unique manifestation of violence in the African-American community.” Individual reports on each city are now available through IDVAAC. To request a copy, please contact IDVAAC at 612-624-5357 or [nidvaac@che.umn.edu](mailto:nidvaac@che.umn.edu).

# Abusers Transformed *(continued from page 3)*

other) and the personal agency to make the most of that opportunity<sup>3</sup>.

Positive reinforcement is also a powerful motivator. Edwards described a moment in which a comment from a stranger outside a bar literally led him to the changes that turned his life around. “You deserve better than this” were the words.

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**“There’s a freedom in that—you have a friend, a companion that you’re eye to eye with.”**

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“People want to be good,” says Edwards. “Nobody wakes up in the morning and says, ‘I ‘m gonna whup my woman today’....it doesn’t work like that. It’s a process that leads people to do those things.”

Bunch’s perspective on society’s complicity in abuse and his commitment to a respectful treatment education and accountability model shape his message. “I tell [perpetrators] that they’re no different than good “non-abusive” men...they just go farther in acting out their beliefs.”

In the same vein, Schroyer makes time to focus on positive action--what it takes to be in a loving, healthy relationship. He stresses the importance of developing intimacy and a sense of true partnership. “People start to benefit from the rewards...she responds, and it builds,” he explains. “There’s a freedom in that—you have a friend, a companion that you’re eye to eye with.”

While some experts liken going through a domestic abuse program to drug or alcohol treatment, others shy away from this framework and the language of addiction. There are, however, similarities. As with substance abuse, a man can stop battering all at once, but true change takes

time and continued work and the tendency to violence or controlling behavior may always be there.

In another study, 20 men who were previously violent and who were violence-free for two years credited their change to two primary complementary factors: an externally presented opportunity to create a new nonviolent identity (e.g., spiritual

## **Safety of victims is paramount**

IDVAAC Executive Director Dr. Oliver Williams reminds us that transformation should not be taken for granted as permanent.

“We can’t predict that, and like alcoholism, we can’t trust it,” he said. “People sometimes regress. Women want to believe that men will change. They love the person but hate the violence. In getting men to change, safety must be paramount. Men need a plan to identify what to do in place of violence and abuse.”



**Ted Bunch of “A Call to Men” says that it will ultimately take a societal response for men to change.**

Bunch agrees, noting that programs can provide a false sense of hope and safety. “Can individuals change? Absolutely,” he says, yet also contends that until society

changes, and all men take it upon themselves to confront and disavow abuse, women must temper optimism with realism. “She has to plan for the man she knows him to be, not the man she hopes him to be.”

Barb Jones-Schroyer, who co-facilitates classes with her husband, Ty, talks about rehabilitation in the context of the five “R’s”—remorse, repentance, restitution, restoration and reconciliation—developed by Rev. Dr. Marie Fortune of the Faith Trust Institute.

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**“They have to understand what domestic violence is, and be realistic... no one changes overnight. It’s a lifelong process.”**

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“Remorse is first. It isn’t change; in fact, it might just be tears,” notes Jones-Schroyer. Then comes repentance, which represents “a 180-degree turnaround” in a man’s views of his own behavior; this is the point where a man takes responsibility for his actions. The next step is restitution, in which he does “whatever it takes to make amends to his partner, whether that’s paying child support, making repairs to the home, or telling the truth and restoring her name.” This is where trust begins to be reestablished.

Restoration, she explains, is when a man feels good about himself again, when he feels restored to God and to his community. Only then can reconciliation take place, “and only then if she wants it,” says Jones-Schroyer. “Sometimes the wounds are too deep.”

## **Women must focus selves**

Latisha Edwards, partner to Warren Edwards and a Minnesota county victim’s advocate for women and children affected





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by domestic violence, notes that women need to focus on their own, and not their partner's, progress.

"[Women] need to understand why they stayed in the relationship and to seek their own services--women's support groups, personal counseling or both," says Edwards. "They have to understand what

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**"Are they willing to confront someone else and call him on his behavior? He may refrain from telling sexist jokes, but the next step is to confront the person who is still doing it and tell them how you feel and why it's unacceptable."**

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domestic violence is, and be realistic...no one changes overnight. It's a lifelong process."

She also sees a lot of children go through the system, and works with women to consider the effects of violence on their lives, as well. "If a woman can't find a reason to leave for herself, she can usually find the strength to leave for the children," says Edwards.

Jones-Schroyer knows how hard it can be to leave, and although her work is faith-based, she takes issue with the church's tradition of valuing marriage over a woman's personal autonomy and safety. "One of the things we say to women is that 'your life comes before any marriage. Choose life for yourself.'"

As a facilitator, Jones-Schroyer believes in the work, yet cautions "these classes are not a panacea—women need to always put their safety first." She advocates women joining support groups, empowering themselves and setting limits. "If good things happen [in the relationship], that's a bonus."

Twenty years later, Ty Schroyer still says he works on himself to increase his capacity for intimacy, to love and respect

his partner, and to go against "a whole lot of stuff the culture puts out there."

And while personal accountability is primary to change, Chapin notes that holding oneself accountable isn't the finish line either. It's when a man begins to question societal norms and hold others accountable that change has happened on the deepest level. "Are they willing to confront someone else and call him on his behavior?" asks Chapin. "He may refrain from telling sexist jokes, but the next step

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**"We as men have to tell our boys, brothers, cousins, friends, coworkers, to challenges those beliefs. It takes all of us together... 90 percent of the problem is men, and 10 percent of men are causing the problem. Where are all the other men? We all have to participate."**

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is to confront the person who is still doing it and tell them how you feel and why it's unacceptable." He notes that non-abusers have a role to play as well.

"We as men have to tell our boys, brothers, cousins, friends, coworkers, to challenges those beliefs. It takes all of us together...90 percent of the problem is men, and 10 percent of men are causing the problem. Where are all the other men? We all have to participate."

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