

PARTNERSHIP AIMS TO IMPROVE RESOURCES FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

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RICHARDSON, Texas, Dec. 19 -- The University of Texas at Dallas issued the following news release:

Researchers from UT Dallas are partnering with Genesis Women's Shelter & Support and the Conference on Crimes Against Women (CCAW) in a planning grant to develop an institute and an educational curriculum to better serve victims of domestic violence across Texas.

The W.W. Caruth Jr. Foundation at Communities Foundation of Texas awarded the \$530,000 grant to CCAW, the national conference hosted annually by Genesis and the Dallas Police Department.

The 18-month grant brings together the Genesis team and UT Dallas' **Institute for Urban Policy Research** (IUPR) to analyze all aspects of developing an Institute for Coordinated Community Response. If the research findings and development plan are approved, CCAW would be eligible to apply for a multimillion-dollar grant to implement the institute.

The institute would train and mentor prosecutors, victim advocates and law enforcement officers who work in areas with few resources and want to increase the efficacy and response to victims of domestic violence.

Dr. Denise Paquette Boots, a senior research fellow with IUPR and an associate professor of criminology at UT Dallas, said the institute's goal is to help level that financial playing field to create better results for women, children and others affected by family violence.

"I foresee it being a true, collaborative relationship in which we work closely with our partner at Genesis in helping to identify who will benefit the most and what education, training, resources and networking will help them to have the best outcomes, both for the practitioners as individuals and the victims they serve," she said. "The institute will address the issue of domestic violence as a public health and public safety concern."

Boots said she expects institute participants will be recruited from varied backgrounds across North Texas and the state - some new to the field and some veterans - faced with myriad challenges.

Dr. Timothy M. Bray, director of the IUPR, and Boots will work closely with Genesis staff to create the advanced educational curriculum and consult on the long-term, national-level evaluation plan for the institute. Two graduate research assistants and staff from IUPR will work on the project under their direction.

Co-principal investigators Boots and Bray said the institute will bridge the frequent disconnect between research and application, allowing them to bring best practices from the field, evidence-based programming and empirical research from within academia to practitioners directly.

Bray said research shows the most successful prosecutions in family violence cases are those in which multiple agencies work together: victim advocates, law enforcement, courts and prosecution staff.

"We know domestic violence has lifelong effects on kids and on families as a whole - beyond the immediate family suffering from the violence," Bray said. "If we can train practitioners to identify these problems early, formulate intervention and bring in restorative services to help children and battered spouses deal with the aftermath of crimes, then we can help stem the tide of that generational impact."

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