2016-17
Report to the Community

The Willow Domestic Violence Center
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The Willow (then known as Women’s Transitional Care Services) established one of the first safe shelters for survivors of domestic abuse in the Midwest. Run initially by volunteers, The Willow was dedicated to safety, support, and shelter of survivors of domestic violence in Lawrence, Kansas, through empowerment-based advocacy. Since that time, there have been changes to the name, changes to policy, inclusion of Franklin and Jefferson counties, and a broadening of the scope of assistance to include human trafficking. Despite the growth, our core values remain the same. The Willow still maintains the community-driven ethos of empowering survivors, regardless of gender, to break the cycle of violence and ensure shelter, safety, and hope to survivors and their families at times of great crisis and vulnerability.

This year has been a change and transition for The Willow. We were excited to present our first ever public fundraising event Mic Drop: Lip Sync Competition. This fantastic fundraiser, performed at Liberty Hall, saw ten acts compete for local celebrity judges Ric Averill, Deja Brooks, and Lawrence Mayor Leslie Soden. This was an excellent opportunity to bring The Willow’s goals and mission to the community, while at the same time raising awareness of our programs and supporting our services. We could not do what we do without the support of our donors and our community.
24-Hour Crisis Assistance

The Willow hotline is always available for questions, crisis, shelter, and information. This year we received 3,817 calls and spent over 500 hours assisting survivors with safety planning, information, arranging shelter, working towards transitional housing, food and clothing assistance and other benefits. These vital services offer our survivors and their families a fresh start.

"The Willow has shown me that domestic violence doesn't just happen between the hours of 9-5, Monday through Friday. It can happen at all times of the day or night, but it has also shown me that survivors can find their courage around the clock as well. And we will always be there for them."

Gabby Munoz
Overnight Shelter Advocate
The Willow’s 30-bed shelter operates year-round, with a full-time staff of Willow advocates and volunteers. We offer shelter to all survivors, regardless of gender identity, in Douglas, Jefferson, and Franklin county.

Seeking shelter this year:
- 149 women
- 5 men
- 89 children

Human trafficking survivors served:
- 40 women
- 2 men

“"I am not alone, we will get through this.”

“"I can go forward even if it is hard.”

“"I deserve better.”

What do you like most about working at The Willow?

“The beautiful minds and hearts of survivors, advocates, and community supporters. I’m inspired every single day.”

Kelsey McClasky
Director of Survivor Services
The Willow’s HOPEworks and outreach programs provide presentations, trainings, and support groups to survivors. These trainings focus on the reasons for, and types of, domestic violence and human trafficking, seek to break the cycle of violence, power, and control in abusive relationships, and provide our community with tools to effectively recognize and assist survivors they may serve in their workplace.

Outreach

4,523 students received Willow Presentations
SAFE program, health relationships, dating violence, bullying

1,308 professionals received Willow Training
Doctors, nurses, law enforcement, victim advocates

2,575 survivors and families participated in Willow Support Groups
Parenting support, survivor support, financial planning
Children’s Services
We provide a range of services — in shelter, home, and the community — ranging from art and music programming to healthy parenting classes.

Court Advocacy
For many survivors, the court system is the first time they will face their abusers since seeking shelter. Willow advocates helped survivors in 213 court cases and helped with 135 protection orders this year.

Volunteers
Volunteers commit to comprehensive training in order to work hand-in-hand with survivors, help empower and enrich lives, and bring hope and support to those moving forward.
- 80 Volunteers
- 8,863 Hours of Service
- Total Value to Our Mission $146,239.50

“I can credit the Willow with saving my life. It’s been extremely healing for me to work with these amazing survivors and to be a part of their journey.”
Willow Volunteer
Financials

**Income**
- Federal and State Grants: $806,725.47
- Local Grants: $208,962.79
- Contributions and Fundraising: $165,843.06

Total Income: $1,181,531.32

**Expenses**
- Staff: $942,825.38
- Fundraising Events: $10,823.68
- General Operating: $201,422.97

Total Expenses: $1,155,072.03

A continual increased income from both grants and donors allows us not only to provide more services, but also to focus on trainings and presentations to increase knowledge of domestic violence and how to help stop it throughout the community.
Since becoming the Willow in 2010, the range of services and number of staff have grown significantly. We currently have 28 employees serving the Douglas, Franklin, and Jefferson county areas. This year saw the addition of a Director of Development to further expand our ability to provide services, as well as providing more support for our Rural Outreach programs focusing on smaller communities within our service area.

Staff

“Seeing a survivor gain that power and control back in their lives and believing in themselves is everything in this work.”
Cassie Thompson-Myers
Franklin County Program Coordinator

“As Survivor Access Advocate, my goal is to empower and advocate for people who are under represented. I love the opportunity to be innovative in this role and help fill the gaps where needed.”
Sarah J Saunders
Survivor Access Advocate

“What do you enjoy most about working at The Willow?”

“Working at the Willow is such a rewarding experience that has taught me about the resiliency of the human spirit. It is incredibly uplifting to watch someone come from the worst place possible and emerge a whole and happy person.”
Hanna Hawley, CAP Program Coordinator

“While working with people who have experienced trauma can be an intimidating/overwhelming job, it is also a very rewarding one. The Willow promotes a supportive culture that understands this is hard but necessary work.”
Felix Rodriguez
Director of Survivor Services
Management Team

Joan Schultz
Executive Director

Will Averill
Director of Community Engagement

Felix Rodriguez
Director of Survivor Access

Kelsey McClasky
Director of Survivor Services

Megan Stuke
Director of Development

Alicia Cusano-Weissenbach
Director of Volunteer Services

Nikki Petrozz
Director of HOPEworks

Volunteer Advocate Training,
December 2016
The Willow could not do what it does without the support of the community. These local supporters contributed to the Willow in 2016-2017. Individual, family, and some organizations are not listed out of respect for confidentiality. We make every effort to ensure each gift is recorded, however, if you feel your group is listed incorrectly or omitted, please advise Will Averill at 785-331-2034 x105, or waverill@willowdvcenter.org.

100 Women
Advanced Center PA
Advantage Heating & A/C
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Amazing Skin & Makeup
Ameriprise Financial
Aimee’s Cafe
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Cans for the Community
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Central Methodist Church
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Douglas County Community Foundation
Downtown Lawrence, Inc
Eagles’ Rest
Eleven Productions
Envy
First Baptist Church
First Methodist Church
First State Bank & Trust
Free State Brewing Company
Fuzzy’s Taco Shop
Genesis Clubs of Lawrence North
Girl Scout Troops #672 & #4912
Golf Course Superintendents Assoc. of America
Greenroom Salon
Haase and Long, Inc
Hair Experts Salon & Spa, Inc
Harris Repair
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Lawrence Rotary Club
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Thank You
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