**Anchorage Disability Abuse Collaborative**

**To:** Kara Moller, Program Manager, Office of Violence Against Women

**From:** Sherilyn Leone, Project Coordinator/Director

**Date:** November 2, 2020

**Re:** Statement of Focus, Grant# 2017-FX-AX-K0008

For several years, Alaska Native Justice Center (ANJC), Standing Together Against Rape (STAR) and Hope Community Resources (Hope) have partnered to discuss, share ideas and address the service needs of our community. For example, in 2015, STAR began facilitating the Anchorage Disability Abuse Response Team (DART), funded by the University of Alaska Center for Human Development and invited ANJC and Hope Community Resources, among other agencies, to join the monthly meetings. Staff exchanged training, resources and discussed ways to overcome identified barriers to service provision.

By 2017, that previous working relationship was extended to include work on this grant program. ANJC approached STAR about partnering for an OVW grant related to serving victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault with disabilities. STAR recommended Hope Community Resources as a partner. Anchorage Disability Abuse Collaboration (ADAC) was formed to respond to the interrelation of domestic and/or sexual violence for Alaska Natives, people with disabilities, and D/deaf individuals and to address the need for more culturally aware, trauma informed, and accessible services.

# **The Partnership**

## **Alaska Native Justice Center (ANJC)**

Established in 1993 in response to the increasing disproportionate rates of victimization, incarceration and other justice-related issues impacting Alaska Native people throughout Alaska, ANJC promotes justice through culturally based advocacy, prevention and intervention initiatives to restore dignity, respect and humanity to all.

## **Hope Community Resources**

Hope Community Resources (Hope) is a nonprofit organization serving Alaskan children, adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injury, mental health challenges, and Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals. Hope provides services through seven regional offices located throughout the state. The Purpose of Hope is providing, or accessing resources to provide, needed supports selected by people to live meaningful lives in their communities.

**Standing Together Against Rape (STAR)**

STAR is a grass roots, community-based nonprofit based in Anchorage. Its mission is to prevent sexual trauma and provide comprehensive, collaborative crisis intervention, advocacy and support to victims/survivors, their families and our communities. STAR offers a confidential statewide sexual assault crisis line for support, information and referral. STAR Advocates provide information about reporting options, support through investigations, crisis intervention, safety planning, and court accompaniment. STAR offers case management, emergency assistance, therapeutic counseling, and support groups at no cost to participants. STAR’s Prevention & Education programming uses evidence-based strategies to make zero tolerance of sexual violence an acknowledged and lived community core value.

# **Our Work to Date**

ADAC has been meeting once a week since February 2020. During our meetings, we have incorporated a weekly check-in to help build bonds and support for one another. This has promoted an atmosphere of openness, respect and trust. The Project Director meets once a week with our Technical Assistance advisor with the Vera Institute of Justice. ADAC partnership completed our first deliverable, the Collaboration Charter, in August 2020. Within our regular meetings, we also discussed at length how we might narrow our focus, as presented in this focus memo. We have continued to meet and discuss our upcoming deliverables navigating through COVID 19 guidelines/restrictions and a change in Program Coordinator/Director which occurred in July 2020. While the change occurred, there was no break in having a Project Director; in fact, the outgoing and incoming Project Director had an overlap in employment to allow for the most continuity we could achieve during this turnover.

**Our Focus Population**

As we navigate through this endeavor, there has and continues to be much discussion and consideration about where and how we can affect the most change as a result of this project opportunity. Each agency has their expertise in the community and has valuable input in making decisions. During our in depth conversations, it was decided that our focus population would be derived from our expertise and knowledge as individual agencies. ANJC brings their knowledge, expertise and resources regarding domestic violence survivors. STAR has their knowledge, expertise and resources for sexual violence survivors. Hope provides services for people with a broad spectrum of disabilities, they have been well known in the Anchorage community for over 50 years as an agency supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities beginning in 1968 as Hope Cottages. They bring their knowledge, expertise and resources regarding the IDD community to this collaboration. Therefore, ADAC has chosen to focus on the population at the intersection of intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), Alaskan Natives and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

**Capacity to Create Change**

The Members of ADAC bring agency knowledge, skills and resources in Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence and IDD services. ADAC will utilize these assets to focus on adapting and implementing change for survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence in the Anchorage area for Alaska Native people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Through the collaboration, we aim to identify, address and motivate change in policies, practices, and services.