



the blue bench

Putting an end to sexual assault through prevention and care.

ANNUAL REPORT

2015



What motivates us?

At The Blue Bench we believe that NO ONE is deserving of sexual assault. In Colorado, we are faced with the difficult statistics that many --too many-- are suffering in the wake of sexual violence. It affects survivors, their families, their friends and whole communities. Until these statistics change, and we live in a world without the fear of assault, our work is not complete.



Dear friends,

It is a bittersweet realization that 2015 was marked by a flurry of sexual assaults and rapes in the media. Bitter in that there are so many still suffering, sweet in that this issue has been propelled to the national stage with a newfound force.



Our asset --as advocates for survivors, as supporters, as educators and as a community-- is our voice. It's our responsibility to talk about assault. To name it. To call out instances of victim blaming and harmful attitudes. To yell out for those who can only muster a whisper. Sexual assault is a community issue that demands a community response and we have worked diligently throughout 2015 to activate our own community to help us in the fight.

We are honored to work with so many outstanding community organizations and to have developed so many community partnerships over the years--a feat we continued expanding upon in 2015-- but a community is not just the businesses and organizations that fill it...a community is YOU!

More often than we can count we are connecting with you all in exciting new ways. Those who speak with our community outreach team often become volunteers. Some even find the courage to come forward to name their own experience with assault and seek the help they need. Past clients become board members or host fundraising events in their homes. Hotline volunteers become hospital advocates.

You are a community that commits to spreading awareness. Who comes to the aid of those who need it and who becomes a resource in your own right. We thank you for your contributions. For your time. For your voice. For your connection.

This year, like all years, I continue to be overwhelmed by and deeply proud of the accomplishments of The Blue Bench. And to all of you, who rally behind us every day, know that each day is one step closer to the realization of our hope: a world in which sexual assault does not exist. In these next pages, you'll see a snapshot of the progress we have made toward this goal...a goal that truly would not be achievable without your continued support. It is with such gratitude that I say *thank you*. We could not do this work without you.

Karmen Carter
Executive Director

Start by believing.

When someone tells you they've been sexually assaulted, YOUR REACTION MATTERS!

What if an assault survivor only reaches out once for help? And what if when they do so, they're met with doubt? These kinds of reactions are more common than you may think, and likely contribute to the large percentage of assaults that go unreported.

Start by Believing is a national public awareness campaign developed by End Violence Against Women International that focuses on the public response to sexual assault.

Adopted by Denver in 2015, the main goal of the campaign is to empower friends, family members, first responders and others with the knowledge of how to react when someone tells them they've been sexually assaulted.

Positive reactions to reports of sexual assault increase the likelihood that victims will reach out and utilize community support services.

Likewise, a positive community response to reports of sexual assault will ensure offenders are held accountable for their crimes and prevent them from continuing to inflict similar violence on others. **A perpetrator assaults an average of six times, meaning that just one positive response can prevent five additional victims.**

In 2015, End Violence Against Women International awarded the Professional Impact Award to Sergeant Shawn Saunders (DPD) and the team that worked on the Start By Believing campaign in Denver. The Blue Bench's own Executive Director, Karmen Carter, was a proud member of this team.

To be recognized for our work in changing the community conversation around sexual assault is not only a true honor, but lets us know that we are on the right track

towards eliminating sexual violence and victim blaming behaviors in our community.

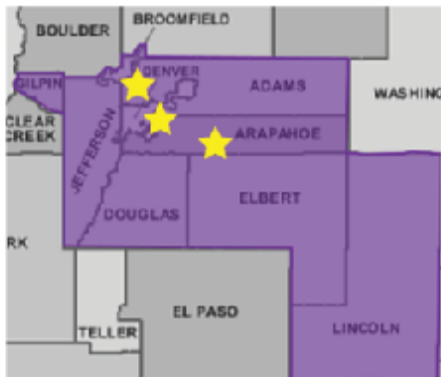


Community matters

115,828
HOTLINE CARDS PASSED OUT TO THE COMMUNITY



3 OFFICES SERVING



9 COUNTIES STATEWIDE



60 COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS ATTENDED

20,700

TOTAL HOURS CONTRIBUTED BY OUR VOLUNTEERS



Healing is possible.

A YEAR IN CLIENT SERVICES

At The Blue Bench we pride ourselves in our comprehensive care options, spanning each survivor's individual needs and healing process. Our services are offered at low or no cost to our clients with a goal of connecting ALL survivors to resources that help them establish a sense of empowerment and self-sufficiency.

Whether our staff and volunteers are answering calls on our 24/7 hotline, meeting clients at the hospital, accompanying them on criminal justice appointments, or working with them in group or individual therapy sessions, The Blue Bench provides a safe environment where survivors can truly heal. Below are some of the sentiments we hear most frequently from survivors who have utilized our services.

I am not alone.

I am strong.

It wasn't my fault.

I love myself.

I got my life back.



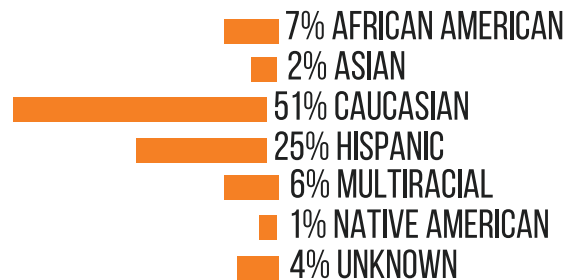
CLIENT SERVICES

2015 BY THE NUMBERS

Our therapists, case managers and hotline advocates support survivors, provide them with resources and give them tools to heal.



**SERVED 2,612
TOTAL CLIENTS**



**ANSWERED 2,161
HOTLINE CALLS**

Changing the conversation.

A YEAR IN PREVENTION

What do you think of when you hear “The Blue Bench”? For many, its the work we do in our community to support those who have been victims of sexual assault. While this work makes up much of our mission, we also put our resources into an equally important endeavor: prevention.

We know that sexual violence can be prevented with data driven, collaborative action (NISVS, 2010) and that for these methods to be successful, we need to employ a community-based approach to programming.

Fostering a healthy community is not just about providing support in the aftermath of an assault; it’s about supporting the healthy emotional development of those who make up the community. To do this, The Blue Bench provides scientifically-supported prevention programs focused on developing skills needed to help the community reshape the dangerous rape culture that perpetuates sexual violence.

For middle-school-aged children, our “Let’s Talk About It” program help students identify healthy relationships, boundaries and how to be an ally in preventing potentially harmful behaviors.

For high school and college-aged students, we use the scientifically-supported “Bringing in the Bystander” program, which focuses on understanding our role in prevention and intervening as an active bystander.

We also help educate local businesses, bars, law enforcement, prisons and more to ensure that these prevention tactics are reaching all corners of our community. This work has allowed us to partner with numerous important institutions including the Denver Public Schools Community Partnership System, The Colorado School of Mines, the Denver Police Department and the Campus Partners Collaborative.

We believe a focus on prevention will shift the attitudes and behaviors of generations to come by arming them with the knowledge necessary to reject the societal norms that allow sexual violence to occur.

PREVENTION

2015 BY THE NUMBERS

Through our prevention & education programs and issue advocacy, we are shifting how our community thinks and talks about sexual violence.

REACHED



SINCE 2014

205% INCREASE IN SCIENTIFICALLY SUPPORTED PROGRAMS

114% INCREASE IN REACH AT COMMUNITY EVENTS

62% INCREASE IN PREVENTION PROGRAMS PRESENTED



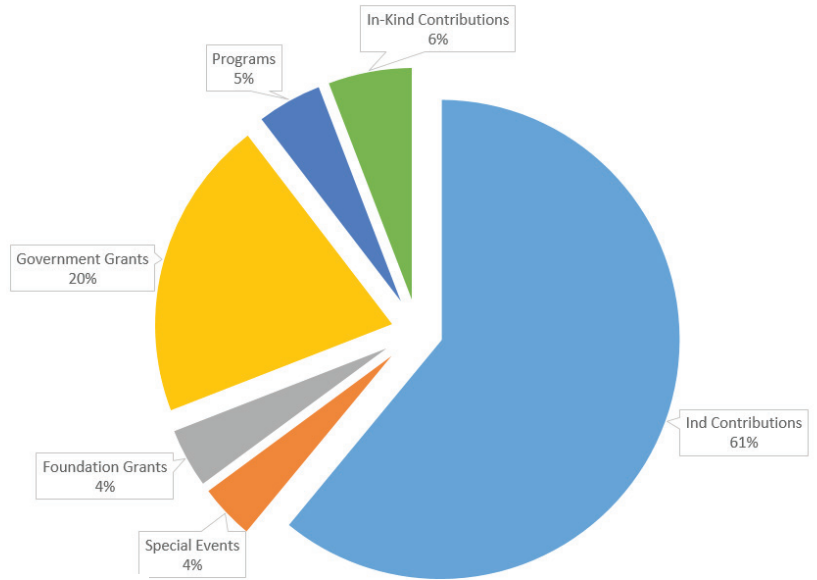
2015 Financials

In 2014, The Blue Bench made the strategic decision to sell our property in Downtown Denver in order to provide for the long term sustainability of the organization’s mission to eliminate sexual assault.

The proceeds from this sale were placed in reserves held by the Rose Community Foundation, providing both short term funding for new and innovative programming as well as long term operating reserves.

In addition, with a commitment made by our board of directors to the future growth, expansion and sustainability of our organization, an endowment fund was created.

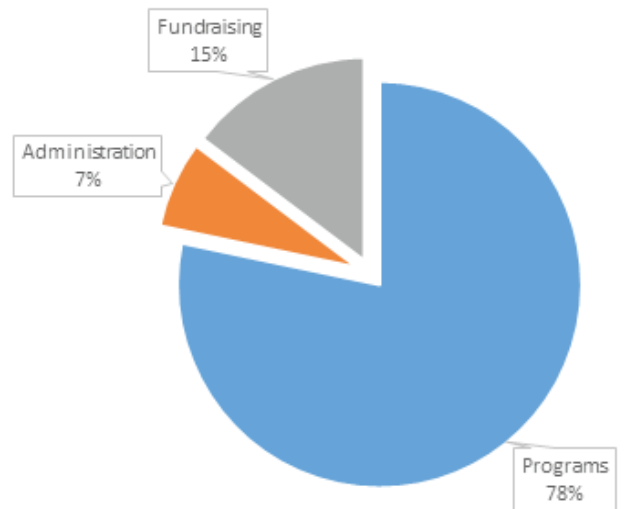
With these available reserves, we were able to fund board-directed programs in 2015 and to make an investment in the future. We greatly appreciate your partnership in this important effort!



Revenue

2015 Revenue

Source	Revenue	Percent
Individual Contributions	\$976,869	61%
Special Events	\$62,487	4%
Foundation Grants	\$67,095	4%
Government Grants	\$328,291	20%
Programs	\$73,212	5%
In-Kind Contributions	\$93,488	6%
Total Operating Revenue	\$1,601,442.00	100%



Expenses

2015 Expenses

Source	Expense	Percent
Programs	\$1,276,673	78%
Administration	\$113,582	7%
Fundraising	\$240,527	15%
Total	\$1,630,782.00	100%

Our Supporters

The Blue Bench acknowledges those who have given generously in 2015. Your contributions have made all the difference. Thank you!

\$10,000 +

17th Judicial District VALE Funds
18th Judicial District VALE Funds
2nd Judicial District VALE Funds
1st Judicial District VALE Funds
Amy Gaines & Ron Litvak
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice VOCA (Victims of Crime Assistance)
EnCana (USA Cares Foundation)/ Encana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc.
International Association of Drilling Contractors Denver Chapter

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Adelaide Energy, Inc.
The Albany Foundation
Anschutz Family Foundation
The Colorado Health Foundation
The Denver Post Newspaper
Helen K & Arthur E Johnson Foundation
Karen & Dean Liley
National Christian Foundation

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Adams County, State of Colorado
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Cherry Creek Has Heart
Global Prairie
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\$1,000 - \$2,499

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Yazoo BBQ
Mary Zanotti & Christopher Duke
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\$500 - \$999

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**WE APOLOGIZE FOR ANY
 ERROS OR OMISSIONS.**



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*Term completed 12/31/15

Welcome to our new 2016 board members!

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 Sage River Consulting, Inc.

Paige Nobles
 Made Movement

Chris Vanderveen
 Channel 9 News



The Blue Bench Campaign

This summer, The Blue Bench will launch the inaugural "The Blue Bench Campaign", a citywide effort aimed at educating the community about the issue of sexual assault and to raise awareness and support for the programs and services provided by The Blue Bench.

As a Community Partner and supporter of The Blue Bench Campaign, your gift will provide you with a high-quality blue bench, sturdily and handsomely constructed of long-lasting, weather-resistant aluminum and stainless steel. You can then place your personalized blue bench on your corner - or in your lobby, foyer, garden, or another space of your choice, such as a local school.

The blue bench image symbolizes a safe place for the community to gather, as well as security and caring for victims of sexual assault. We envision a community with a blue bench on every corner - a community where everyone can feel safe and secure from sexual assault.

For more information about the campaign or to purchase one of just 40 blue benches, contact Heidi Wilhelm at 303-329-9922 x 316 or email her at hwilhelm@thebluebench.org.

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www.thebluebench.org