



Dear Mayor Myers and Council Members:

Thank you for your continued support of the Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women (CPVAW) and our mission to collaborate with local stakeholder partners and law enforcement to ensure best practices are implemented when responding to, preventing and prosecuting sexual violence in Santa Cruz, CA.

In September 2020, longtime feminist activist, Ann Simonton became our Chair and Delphine Burns, Monarch Services Communications Manager became our Vice-Chair. Given the challenges presented by the pandemic and unexpected changes to our membership we weren't able to meet very often. We are proud of the work CPVAW has carried out this year to prevent sexual assault, sexual harassment, and domestic violence in the City of Santa Cruz. Following is a summary of the work that our commission has accomplished this past year:

Using Nicole Lezin's "2019 Needs Assessment Findings" to guide our work, we began collaborating with local agencies in our community. During the past several years our county did not offer forensic exams for victims of sexual assault and women in need of those services had to travel over the hill to get their testing done. Testing began locally in September of 2020 and CPVAW is now working alongside the Sheriff's Office and the SART (Sexual Assault Response Team). CPVAW collaborated with SART to present a webinar on April 20th, 2021 entitled, "The Bystander Moment" with the internationally known, Dr. Jackson Katz. This film event and talk was organized by SART coordinator, Claudia Llamas-Padilla.

Ms. Llamas-Padilla also worked with Chair Simonton to create 3 Public Service announcements (PSAs) in Spanish with English subtitles, that continue to run regularly on Community TV Channel 27 and have been shared widely on social media platforms. These PSAs encourage survivors of sexual assault to report their assault and highlights the fact that reporting and testing does not force them to bring charges against their assailant. Having a record of abuse is vital for us to end it. The PSA work is part of CPVAW's ongoing initiative to create diverse and educational PSAs. We are very happy now to be working with GadgetBox to create a series of PSAs, one that will encourage our community's nurses and doctors to train to join SART. The lack of local, trained SART members led to the demise of our local services and CPVAW is working to help ensure that doesn't happen again.

CPVAW is now collaborating with SCPD to gather statistics of rape, domestic violence and sexual assault. We are very happy to have Lt. Vasquez sharing monthly reports and statistics on sexual assault and homicide in our city. As this is part of CPVAW's mandate we more recently formed a Police Sub-Committee with Commissioner Dena Loijos taking the lead. This committee helped distribute teal ribbons and pins during April's Sexual Assault and Prevention Awareness month for SCPD to wear and display on their car antennas, thanks to Commissioner Danielle Long and our collaboration with SART, who provided the lapel pins and ribbons.

We now collaborate with KidPower and the Director, Irene Van Der Zande, presented to us early in 2021. Our Vice-Chair Delphine Burns coordinated with KidPower during SAAPM

(Sexual Assault and Prevention Month 2021) to help create a very popular and well-attended webinar entitled, “How to protect kids from sexual violence without scaring them.” Vice Chair Burns also spearheaded work on creating an Instagram page for CPVAW and Simonton works on Facebook page for CPVAW.

Chair Simonton created four half-hour Community TV programs that run twice a week on Monday and Wednesday evenings on Channel 27 and can be [found on YouTube](#). Two of the programs focused on organizations working to encourage men to step out of potentially confining gender roles, in order to consider more effective and satisfying ways to deal with anger and violence. Statistics reveal that men hurt men more often than men hurt women. This reveals men have ample incentive to teach one another how to prevent violent behavior, which is key to CPVAW’s prevention work.

One TV program featured the success of Ashanti Branch’s “Million Mask Movement” and the [EverForwardClub.org](#) of Oakland and another acquainted our audience with BreakthroughForMen.Org and the many workshops available for men online and locally in Monterey. Another CTV program shared resources from KidPower, which is local but works internationally, to teach parents and children how to deal with bullies, unwanted touch, anger and much more through [kidpower.org](#). Our most recent program was a condensed version of Dr. Jackson Katz’s talk during April’s Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month’s presentation introduced by Forensics Director, Lauren Zephro. Part 2 is in the works with Jim Hart from Sheriff’s Dept.

Early this year Commissioner Karen Madura took the lead in creating educational posters for a trial run during St. Patrick’s Day this year as restaurants and bars began to open. These were placed inside bar urinals with one poster that asks men to speak up if they see an unsafe situation. Another poster for women reminds them of their worth and provides contact information if they need to leave an abusive partner. We will share both posters in gender neutral bathrooms. This project has now grown to include posters, coasters and brochures in collaboration with local graphic artist, Lynn Piquett. Lynn has created our new logo, poster designs and will help with an upcoming brochure for CPVAW. Commissioners Madura, Burns and Simonton are members of the Publicity Sub-Committee and will continue to do outreach into our community to help realize CPVAW’s goals of prevention, collaboration and education.

With our ever-growing reliance on online platforms, technology-facilitated forms of violence against women are continually on the rise. CPVAW has decided to pay special attention to these issues. In preparation for October (which is both National Domestic Violence Awareness Month and also National Cybersecurity Awareness Month) chair Simonton and Commissioner Roya Pakzad, who works with [Taraaz Research](#), have been planning an all-day online conference which will include social media cards posted on CPVAW’s Instagram and Facebook pages to raise awareness about online violence against women. These cards will provide safety tips on issues around cyberstalking, cyberbullying, social media harassment, dangers of dating apps, OnlyFans and more. We will offer an online conference of speakers on topics with experts in the field of technology, violence prevention and in partnership with local organizations.

Beginning in September we will start working on four 1-minute PSAs with GadgetBox and we look forward to working with community leaders to promote the need for education,

compassion and collaboration to help prevent sexual assault and violence in our community and beyond.

In the upcoming year CPVAW will consider collaborating with a group out of Boston called [“Mentors in Violence Prevention.”\(MVP\)](#) This group offers “gender violence prevention leadership training.” The goal is to provide local leaders with information and inspiration about how to use their leadership platform (both professional and personal) to help create and sustain environments in which sexist abuse will not be acceptable. This is not only because violence is against the law, but -- because it violates shared group norms and shared values. The MVP group model is used internationally to great effect utilizing peers, coaches, teachers, police officers, military, faith-based leaders, business leaders and more to lead the way to a safer community for all.

Currently the Commission is working on the 21-22 scope of work. We are planning a weekend retreat in September where we will further train new commissioners, create and finalize our 21-22 priorities, scope of work and evaluation plan.

We hope you are excited and inspired by the work of our stellar Commissioners and that you will continue to honor the importance of early intervention and leadership training as a way to lessen, if not end sexual and domestic violence in our community. Thank you for this opportunity to update the council and for your dedicated service to our city.

Sincerely,

The CPVAW Commissioners:
Vice-Chair: Delphine Burns
Commissioner: Dena Loijos
Commissioner: Danielle Long
Commissioner: Karen Madura
Commissioner: Roya Pakzad
Chair: Ann Simonton