



Annual Report
2021

*Hope is being able to see
that there is light despite
all of the darkness.*

— Desmond Tutu

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Women's Center

LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

For the past 40 years, the Montgomery County Women's Center has studied the trends of our community and listened to the needs of victims. We have held steadfast to our goals to be a beacon of hope and light to those in their darkest hours. For all of us, the past few years have been marked by extreme challenges, but, throughout it all, we have never faltered in our mission. While the global pandemic continues, the ongoing domestic violence epidemic has taken a backseat. When people experience abuse, everything – from what they wear, to their meals, to who they talk to – is controlled by their abuser. Added to this oppressive and toxic living environment, there is a very real fear of being attacked or even killed. Unfortunately, the global pandemic has dramatically increased domestic violence.

Like others, we were deeply saddened last year by the murder of Gabby Petito, a young woman who was senselessly strangled by her boyfriend. For many, the case was a horrific reminder that domestic violence kills and that it does not discriminate. We honor Gabby's memory as well as those of the many others who have lost their lives to domestic violence. We embark on the current year with the continued commitment to preventing similar tragedies.

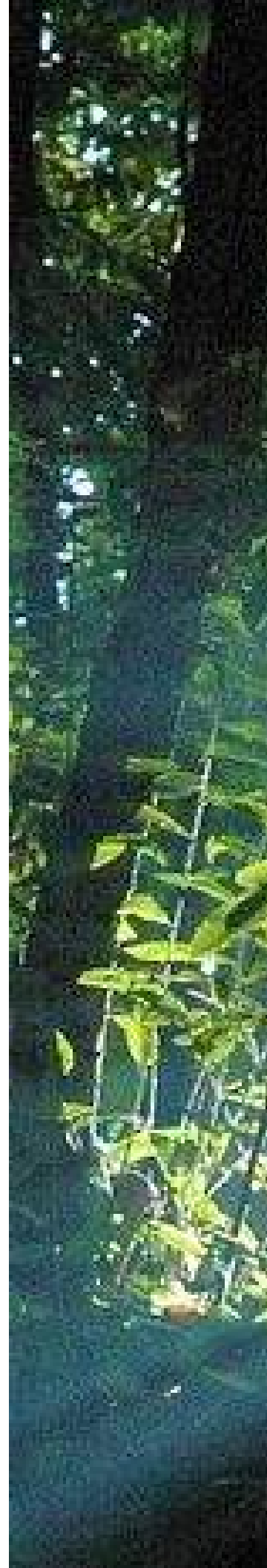
While the coming months present uncertainty as COVID infections continue to rise, if the past is a prelude, we have learned that, together, we will make a difference. We are humbled by the dedicated efforts of our selfless volunteers and the charitable support we receive from our donors. We are also grateful for our staff who proudly report to work each and every day and give generously of themselves to our lifesaving mission. Finally, we are inspired by the courageous survivors who continue to walk through our doors and call our hotline. They are the powerful reason we continue doing this work.

Sarah Raleigh

*Sarah Raleigh
President and CEO*

Vicky Pafk

*Vicky Pafk
Chairperson*





OUR IMPACT

The global pandemic highlighted the vulnerability of the critical safety nets that many people rely on. For this reason, it was crucial that the Montgomery County Women's Center stay on the front lines, and we continue to provide life-saving 24-hour crisis hotline, emergency safe shelter, transitional housing, legal services, counseling, advocacy, medical accompaniment, and community and school-based outreach.



The pandemic has been hard on everyone, but it has been particularly difficult for our amazing employees who have tirelessly adapted to help those most affected by domestic and sexual violence. It is against this backdrop that our staff has creatively shifted in the way we provide services. To them we extend our heartfelt appreciation. We would like to highlight our remarkable and brave staff heroes of 2021.



Kathleen Cascio has fearlessly led the Advocacy program throughout the pandemic. She came to us in July 2020 after 14 years of serving in the United States Navy. Kathleen is the mother of three young children and lives in Spring, Texas, with her loving husband. Last year, after realizing the impact the limited response to local hospitals was having on sexual assault survivors, she stated, "We are first responders and must resume in-person accompaniment." In 2021, she led her team to respond to an unprecedented 515 medical accompaniments after a sexual assault at 13 hospitals. This was only possible with Kathleen's commitment.




Terrence Brimsy frequently serves as the first point of contact for many in our community. He is incredibly knowledgeable about the range of services we provide and firmly believes in the Agency's mission. Terrence has been with the Agency for seven years as a Senior Transportation Specialist, and he always models an incredible work ethic and attitude. He and his fiancé celebrated the birth of their first child in July of last year. When asked about his work with the Agency, he said, "This is the first job I have had where I feel really appreciated."



Kevin Ly, also a Senior Transportation Specialist, has been with the Agency nearly four years. He comes to work each day excited to serve our community and provide resources for survivors and their children. He serves as a mentor to fellow staff and has an amazing ability to motivate those around him. Kevin is a native Houstonian who lives with his wife and four children. When asked about his work with the Agency, he said, "I know the work I do has value ... I'm happy."

The impact Terrence and Kevin make was so apparent when this note was sent after they had made a delivery to a survivor and her children. The family had just left our emergency shelter and obtained permanent housing: "Today, I realized that even people who don't know you can extend kindness that you have never experienced. I just want to let you know that Terrence and Kevin were so incredibly patient and wonderful when they delivered a houseful of furniture for my family. The amazing kindness and humor they had with my kids made me realize that we are going to be more than just okay. The world needs more people like them!"

Kathleen, Terrence, and Kevin share a commitment to their community, families, and the mission of the Montgomery County Women's Center. The resolve and heart of our staff have been inspiring, while the strength and resilience of the survivors we serve have been incredible.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Women's Center 
24-HOUR HOTLINE: (936) 441-7273

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OUR MISSION: To lead the effort in preventing domestic violence and sexual assault through Crisis Intervention, Assistance, Advocacy, & Social Change.