

LEGISLATIVE #

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OVW Domestic Violence Homicide Prevention Demonstration Initiative
Project Narrative
OMB Number 1122-0020
Alachua County, Florida Application

Project Narrative: Alachua County has been a pioneering community in addressing the issues surrounding domestic violence and domestic violence homicide reduction, particularly considering ongoing and recent collaborations and community responses, like the Alachua County Domestic Violence Task Force, Intimate Violence Enhanced Services Team (InVEST), the Eighth Judicial Circuit Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and the Alachua County Domestic Violence High Risk Team. This rural North Central Florida region has developed innovative and impactful programs that span the breadth of local resources with influence from statewide partners/funders like the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV), Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Office of the Attorney General (OAG). Unfortunately even in the face of efforts to date, our community still experiences the chilling aftermath of intentional injury and domestic violence homicide. The purpose of this Alachua County Project is to build greater capacity for project partners (the Alachua County Department of Court Services, Peaceful Paths, Alachua County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) and Gainesville Police Department (GPD), that will enhance services that provide ongoing risk management to high-risk offenders, improve victim support and protection in high danger cases, improve protection order efforts and enhance training on best practices in domestic violence system response. To that end, this project seeks funding for a dedicated domestic violence (DV) Electronic Monitoring Officer and related equipment, a part time DV high-risk case manager, Hope card (wallet sized card with permanent protection order for victim) equipment & supplies,

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and a staff assistant, equipment/supplies to develop DV training modules on best practice.

Funding is also allocated for the research partner. As a result, project partners will enhance current efforts in Danger Assessment, the local Lethality Assessment Program and High Risk Team thereby improving readiness to participate in Phase I & Phase II of this initiative.

1. Describe service area for the project including location, population and demographics.

Alachua County is located in the North Central part of Florida. The County encompasses 969 square miles and includes nine municipalities, with the county seat in Gainesville. The County has an estimated year round population of 256,232, including more than 50,000 University of Florida students. The demographic includes 48% male and 51% female. The median age is 27.4 years. Approximately, 71% of the population race is white, 19% African American and 5% Asian. Hispanic or Latino (of any race) is 7.7%. (Source: Alachua County Government, FY 2012 Adopted & FU 2013 Planned Budget-Demographics). ***Include crime rates, particularly domestic violence and domestic violence homicide.*** The statistics presented are an indication of crime and criminal activities, reported by Alachua County law enforcement agencies for 2011. The data is reflected in the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) database of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. In Alachua County in calendar year 2011 there were 1,531 DV offenses – which includes homicide (4), manslaughter (2), forcible sex offenses (32), aggravated assault (328), aggravated stalking (12), simple assault (1,094), threat/intimidation (17) and simple stalking (10). There were 1,172 related arrests. UCR reports also provide the relationship of victim to offender (spouse, parent, child, sibling, other family, cohabitant). **Law enforcement protocols for multi-jurisdictional efforts and participation in the National Incident –Based**

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Reporting System (NIBRS). Alachua County law enforcement agencies have established protocols for multijurisdictional efforts which include but are not limited to: (1) Domestic Highway Enforcement, (2) Gang Intervention Unit, (3) Internet Crimes Against Children, (4) High Intensity Drug Trafficking Task Force, (5) Combined Communications Center, (6) U.S. Marshall Task Force and (7) Drug Enforcement Task Force. The State of Florida and its law enforcement agencies participate in the Uniform Crime Report System (UCR), not NIBRS.

2. Describe your community's efforts to address domestic violence. Identify individuals and organizations involved and the duration, leadership, coordinated community response efforts and technology used in your response.

Alachua County has numerous efforts with proven leadership working collaboratively to address domestic violence. This project's workgroup is composed of 1) Gerie Crawford of Court Services, 32 years as a Criminal Justice practitioner, 2) Dr. Theresa Beachy, CEO of Peaceful Paths, over a decade of service at PP, 3) Laura Knudson, Bureau Chief at the Sheriff's Office, over 20 years dedicated to victim services, 4) Captain Lynne Benck at the Police Department over two decades of law enforcement experience, 5) Dr. Nancy Hardt at UF Family Data Center over 25 years in medical practice and related research 6) Teresa Drake, J.D., of the UF Source Program, prior prosecutor, trainer for Aequitas and Family Law attorney – 20 years of experience and 7) Loretta Golden, Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center, 30 years of experience at the Center. They lend their leadership and expertise to this effort. Their agencies are active participants in local DV efforts. ***Alachua County Domestic Violence Task Force (ACDVT)*** has been active for over two decades. Partner agencies have a long history of working together on Coordinated Community Response (CCR) in this task force, currently chaired by Beachy. ***Alachua County High Risk Team*** is co-led by Beachy (PP) and Knudson

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(ACSO). ***Eighth Judicial Circuit of Florida Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team***, chaired by Martha Burt, M.D., Office of the Medical Examiner launched in September, 2012 after previous attempts for Alachua County based DV Fatality Review. Two local team members also serve on the Florida DV Fatality Review Team. In 2007 Alachua County was designated as having one of the highest rates of domestic homicide in the State of Florida and chosen for a pilot grant funded project of the Attorney General and Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence -**Intimate Violence Enhanced Services Team (InVEST)**. Peaceful Paths and the Alachua County Sheriff's Office have worked together in the InVEST program (2007 – present) to identify and support high-risk victims. The grant currently funds an InVEST Advocate (Peaceful Paths). From 2009 to 2011 InVEST funded training initiatives which resulted in Alachua County receiving community wide trainings based on promising practice in DV. That training mirrors OVW's designation of model projects: **Danger Assessment** (completed March 2009 with Dr. Jackie Campbell), **Lethality Assessment Program-LAP** (completed June 2009) with the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence and the **High Risk Team (HRT) Model** (completed June, 2012) with Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center. In the Summary Data Sheet, the reader was given information on the applicant, **Alachua County Government and the lead agency, Alachua County Department of Court Services**. Court Services has demonstrated long term commitment to offender accountability and victim safety, evidenced by referrals to the Batterer's Intervention Program, involvement in Mental Health Court, Electronic Monitoring (EM) /Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) supervision program and their dedicated Domestic Violence Court Officers. **Peaceful Paths (PP)**, a non profit agency, has been the certified domestic violence center in the County since 1974 and at the core of the prevention and intervention efforts. The

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agency offers a crisis hotline, full time emergency shelter, transitional housing, victim advocacy children's programming, community and professional training, counseling and support groups, community awareness and intervention, medical response services and batterer's intervention programming. **Restraining Order Assistance Program (ROAP)** (1997- present) is a PP partnership with the Clerk of Court to provide victims seeking an injunction a trained advocate to assist in completing paperwork, providing support in the civil process, and referrals for legal services. Currently the injunction application is available on-line. **Delta Project Youth Violence Prevention program** (2003-present) PP utilizes public school & youth programming venues to present research based, healthy relationship skills curriculum to youth aged 11-24, addressing individual and relationship issues. Peaceful Path's **InVEST advocate** reviews all domestic violence police and sheriff reports and High Danger LAPs. The InVEST advocate works to provide wrap around services to high-risk victims in coordination with the Sheriff's Office. **Alachua County Sheriff's Office (ACSO)** has been active with the InVEST team since 2007 and has 3 years of experience with the LAP. The collaborative partnership with Peaceful Paths is sustained today even though grant funding has fluctuated. PP InVEST advocate, ACSO Victim Advocates/their supervisor and the supervisor of ACSO Special Victims Unit (SVU) of the Detective Bureau review all recent domestic violence cases and high danger LAP screens in person weekly and discuss concerns about victims who may be in a lethal situation. Advocates and SVU work to assure safety of survivor/victim. ACSO advocates work with the Special Victims Unit (SVU) to respond to scene when requested, provide well being checks to high-risk victims, seek additional photographs and link to PP services. Advocates assist with protection orders, transportation, court accompaniment and other victim related services. Peaceful Paths

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InVEST advocate coordinates safety planning. InVest Team members provide 911 cell phones to high risk victims as a way to increase safety and access to advocacy services and law enforcement. **Gainesville Police Department (GPD)** a recipient of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) grant to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program for three (3) grant cycles(since 2003), repeatedly demonstrates capacity to meet performance standards. Partners include Peaceful Paths, State Attorney's Office, Alachua County Victim Services & Rape Crisis Center and Black on Black Crime Task Force. They inform our community as a whole in pro-arrest policies, coordination with criminal justice partners, protection orders and education of the judiciary. GPD's dedicated Domestic Violence Unit provides comprehensive investigation of DV cases and follows protocols for providing vertical case investigation and prosecution. State Attorney's Office, dedicated attorneys prosecute DV cases, working closely with DV Unit. GPD is currently working to develop, test, and implement enhancements to the court system database & the police records management system that will monitor the issuance of Protection Orders including information contained in First Appearance documents, specifically "No Contact Orders." GPD efforts and expertise in this arena create the foundation for county-wide impact. **The Rebuilding Program and DV Unit** (2003 –present) is a partnership with Black on Black Crime Task Force to address survivor support programs in minority neighborhoods within the city. Life coaches are linked with DV victims to educate & empower them in vulnerable times. A faith based initiative is a companion component that trains local churches to recognize & address domestic violence by partnering with the local DV center & law enforcement resources. **The Source Intimate Partner**

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Violence Assistance Clinic (2009-present) is an Office of Justice initiative at UF that partners the College of Law, College of Medicine, Shands Hospital and Peaceful Paths to address the needs of domestic violence victims entering clinical settings throughout UF & provides legal services, victim advocacy & comprehensive case management to an underserved population of poor and immigrant victims. Strong community collaborations and partnerships in Alachua County are bolstered by the technology used by law enforcement agencies to track criminal activity and promote offender accountability. **National Crime Information Center (NCIC)** is a computerized index of criminal justice information (i.e.- criminal record history information, fugitives, stolen properties, missing persons). It is available to Federal, state, and local law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies and is operational 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. **Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC)** - The State of Florida's central database for tracking crime related information. **Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS)** - The central repository of criminal history records for the State of Florida, providing criminal identification screening to identify persons with criminal warrants, arrests and convictions that impact employment, licensing, eligibility to purchase a firearm, as well as a variety of criminal justice functions. CJIS provides a clearinghouse of missing and endangered persons to assist law enforcement in recovering missing children and adults, and provides information to on career offenders, sexual offenders and predators. **Criminal Justice Network (CJNet)** - A secure, private, statewide intranet system managed and maintained by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to connect Florida criminal justice agencies to various data sources provided by the criminal justice community.

3. Discuss why you would like to participate in the demonstration initiative. Describe your community's strengths and weaknesses in addressing high-risk domestic violence cases.

Participation in this demonstration project fits within Alachua County's DV Task Force plans to address current weaknesses in DV response. This Initiative's designation of the Danger Assessment, the LAP and High Risk Team model as promising practices fits with Alachua County efforts to date. Securing technical assistance to further current efforts would ensure greater success with the local High Risk Team. The impact of identifying high danger with LAP and then creating community will to build safety and offender accountability with High Risk Teams can have far reaching effects, creating a safety net with the strength of many to guide victims to a safer place & give partner agencies a sense of hope that more can be done to stop the terror behind closed doors in our community. This community's strengths are evidenced in this proposal in the description of community efforts to address domestic violence (pg 3-7). These strengths are also evidenced by the comprehensive victims services network, law enforcement leadership that is dedicated to addressing intimate partner violence, victim safety and perpetrator accountability, and a successful record of securing funding and completing pilot programs. This project would be a natural addition to coordinated community response efforts, and most importantly, it will allow Alachua County's network to address the weaknesses that have been identified by the DV task force and High Risk Team (HRT). In assessing readiness before reviewing cases, the HRT identified several needed enhancements: 1) dedicated DV electronic monitoring, 2) a high-risk victim advocate to case manage for the HRT and ensure data collection, 3) Hope card (wallet sized card with information on the permanent protection order for victim) and 4) development of training modules on a format that ensures community access.

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As the lead agency in this proposal, the **Department of Court Services** looks to enhance current EM/GPS services & designate a position & equipment for supervision of high-risk offenders thereby improving screening & management methods. Through this project, **Peaceful Paths** seeks to fund a part time high-risk victim advocate (to compliment the InVEST advocate). Extensive cases & needed follow-up is daunting for one InVEST advocate. The high-risk advocate would address safety concerns, collect data, and coordinate high risk services. **The Alachua County Sheriff's Office** seeks funding to implement the Hope Card county-wide. The Hope card, a driver's license size card, allows someone who has been granted an order of protection in one jurisdiction to easily prove it in another jurisdiction. It contains information about the person (including a picture) restrained under the order and any children or other individuals who are protected under the order. The Hope Card is a best practice in risk reduction, first established in the state of Montana. **The Gainesville Police Department** plans to develop training modules for the community to further understanding of domestic violence & related risk factors. Modules may include: Pro-Arrest Initiatives, Danger Assessment, Lethality Assessment Program, High Risk Response Team Model, Protection Orders and No Contact at First Appearance Enforcement, Batterer's Intervention Program, Strangulation Risk & Documentation, Primary Aggressor and How to Avoid Dual Arrest. With project funds, GPD can also hire a staff assistant to collect LAP data from 2010 to present and into the future. With these weaknesses addressed, our community is uniquely positioned to conduct a multi-system homicide reduction initiative and address other concerns, like the barriers law enforcement faces when seeking to seize firearms in DV cases. In addition, efforts are informed by Fatality Review Board recommendations across the nation as we wait for the local board to flourish.

4. Describe any prior large-scale change initiative that your community successfully implemented.

The InVEST project funded community wide training over a period of 2 years. The Alachua County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) along with community partners hosted the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) in June of 2009. Forty leaders attended the Key Stakeholders meeting, representing all law enforcement agencies in Alachua County & joined by leadership from domestic violence, child welfare, legal services, probation, court services, family court, batterer's intervention & legal services. Train the Trainer session had 120 attendees from the listed agencies. ACSO and Peaceful Paths conducted in-service trainings in July and August, to prepare to launch 9/1/09. The Sheriff's Office was the first law enforcement agency in Florida to implement LAP & the first agency nationally to distribute the LAP electronically in real time. Peaceful Paths was the first domestic violence center in Florida to use LAP. (In January of 2010, the Gainesville Police Department followed suit.) To ensure continued understanding of LAP, ACSO training bureau developed an on-line curriculum on the LAP for staff review. LAP was integrated in the academy for newly hired sworn. In three years, ACSO conducted 1,251 LAP screens, 756 victims screened in as high danger. Of those who screened in (756), 416 victims spoke to the Peaceful Paths hotline. In the first two years approximately 37% of the victims who spoke to the hotline went for services. (3rd year statistics unavailable). The LAP screen affects one's understanding of high danger DV by focusing on the lives of victims who silently fear being killed. Through LAP and the community wide efforts in domestic violence, Alachua County stands ready to respond to the fear & work with OVW's Technical Assistance provider and local researcher to enhance capacity and to participate in this Demonstration Initiative.