

# Report from the 2003 Thurston County Domestic Violence Summit

## **Background**

In the Fall of 2001, the Prosecutor's Office requested funding for a domestic violence summit from the Gender and Justice Commission. At the same time, the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Task Force became interested in the idea of sponsoring a domestic violence summit. The two groups agreed to co-sponsor the event and asked this reporter act as chairman of the summit. As the process continued, the planning group was expanded until it ultimately included Mary Pontarolo (Safeplace), Dan Kimball (Thurston County Sheriff's Office), Dee Koester (Thurston County Prosecutor's Office), Mary Williams (Thurston County Health Department), Jill Cooper (Providence St. Peter Hospital), John Tennis (Thurston County Information Officer), Janet Tanaka (Associated Ministries), Miki Newberry (Office of the Attorney General), Gloria Hemmen (Administrative Office of the Courts), and Chris Wickham (Family and Juvenile Court). Nancy Ashley, a professional facilitator from Seattle, was hired to help prepare and facilitate the summit. The planning committee had grant funds of approximately \$5000 from the Gender and Justice Commission, and approximately \$1000 from the Prosecutor's Office.

It was agreed that the Summit would take place in May, 2002, and planning for it began in January, 2002. Although the schedule was going to be tight, planning for that date continued until late winter, when Ann Bridges resigned from the Task Force and the Directorship of Safeplace. In order to allow her replacement time to become involved and to better prepare for the summit, it was agreed to delay the summit until January 31, 2003.

## Planning

The planning committee first adopted the following mission statement:

*The Thurston County Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Task Force and the Thurston County Prosecutor's office are seeking to develop a plan for improving the county-wide response to the problem of domestic violence.*

*On May 17, 2002 these two organizations, in conjunction with the Washington State Gender and Justice Commission, will host a summit for interested persons in Thurston County.*

*The goal of the summit will be to examine community values in respect to domestic violence and to determine specific action steps that government, community agencies, and county residents can take to reduce the incidence of domestic violence. An important part of the activities will be to identify responses that provide greater relief for victims of domestic violence.*

Sub-committees of the planning committee were then established in the following areas with the chairpersons indicated:

Business	Miki Newberry, Office of the Attorney General
Chemical Dependency	Donna Bosworth, Thurston County Health Department
Elected Officials	Ed Holm, Thurston County Prosecutor
Faith-based Organizations	Janet Tanaka, Associated Ministries
First Responders	Chief Kaleinahea, Littlerock Fire Department
Health Care Providers	Jill Cooper, Providence St. Peter

	Hospital
Juveniles and Domestic Violence	Mary Williams, Thurston County Health Department
Law Enforcement	Capt. Dan Kimball, Thurston County Sheriff's Office
Media	John Tennis, Thurston County
Mental Health	Marcee Stiltner, South Sound Mental Health
Prosecution	Jon Tunheim, Thurston County Prosecutor's Office
Treatment Providers	Norm Nickle, Hoy and Nickle
Victim's Advocates	Beth Hislop, City of Olympia
Vulnerable Adults	Capt. Dan Kimball, Thurston County Sheriff's Office
Judicial	Commissioner Chris Wickham, Thurston County Superior Court

The sub-committees began working in about May, 2002 and submitted their work products by November 1, 2002. The facilitator, Nancy Ashley, then summarized the work products of the sub-committees into various recommendations. A copy of that summary is attached.

### **The Summit**

On January 31, approximately 140 out of 164 registrants appeared at the Summit. Out of those 140, approximately 116 voted on the various recommendations. Attached are the summarized results of the voting along with a profile of the persons voting.

Later in the day, the participants formed ten work groups who developed action plans on the top ten recommendations voted by all participants earlier in the day. These work groups then presented their ideas which were then summarized into a draft action plan.

## **Post-Summit Work**

On February 5, a full report of the summit was given to the task force at its regular meeting by members of the planning committee. It is expected that the executive committee of the task force will then determine which of the ten recommendations to attempt to implement. New committees for each final recommendation will be formed with convenors to be named for each committee. A summary of the results will be sent to each participant, along with a response form to indicate interest in working with one or more of the committees. The task force will oversee the work of the committees, with staffing performed by volunteers from Associated Ministries.

On the anniversary date of the summit, an event will mark the progress made toward accomplishing the goals set forth at the summit.

## **Recognition for Participants and Planners**

Evaluations of the summit process were received at the conclusion of the summit and were overwhelmingly positive about the process and the summit itself. On behalf of the planning committee, I want to again thank all of the persons involved in preparing for the summit and conducting the summit itself. I also want to thank the participants who worked hard to prepare action plans for the next steps in this process.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Wickham, Chair

2/27/03

