



VOLUNTEER TODAY!

We are in need of volunteers! Visit our Volunteer Page on our website and turn to page 5 to learn more about how you can be the change in a survivors life!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Dispelling the Darkness
Candlelight Vigil

Raising Hope with RSAC

More on Page 7



The last six months has been quite the whirlwind for us here at RSAC! We shared in our last newsletter that we were moving in April of this year, and we are now all settled into our new space. The difference it has made for our staff and clients is amazing. Everyone has their own space and were able to decorate to create a warm, inviting atmosphere for their clients. We even have extra space for our satellite staff when they come over and a dedicated intern office now. Like any big project, there were difficulties along the way. However, what I was reminded of throughout the whole process is that RSAC has a team like no other! Staff worked so hard to pack up our former office and unpack into our new office. We only planned to close down for a week to minimize disruptions to our clients, and we did it! While staff was a huge part of making the move successful, we also received so much support from our community that we never expected. From individuals to businesses, RSAC staff was overwhelmed with donations of money and items off of our [Amazon Wish List](#) to make our new space the best possible place. We are incredibly grateful and still in awe as we continue our services in this new “home”. A big thank you to everyone who donated to “Moving Forward with RSAC” (pg 4)!

In June, we were excited to invite the community to our open house (pg 3)! We had some wonderful food provided by several donors for the event, and canvases were available for guests to write inspiring messages to sexual assault/abuse survivors. These canvases will find a place on our walls to remind survivors they are cared for by our community. Over 100 attendees came from different walks of life: government officials, representatives from local agencies, and community members all came to share in our excitement!

As we look ahead as an organization, RSAC will continue to provide the essential services as we have for the last 40+ years for survivors of sexual assault and abuse in our community.



We also look forward to revisiting pre-COVID programming as well as new programs and to make changes where we need to best serve survivors of sexual assault and abuse. We hope you will join us this year in-person for our 3rd annual Dispelling the Darkness vigil (pg 7) to show survivors you support them and want to help end the stigmas associated with sexual assault and abuse. Thank you for all continuing to support RSAC in whatever way you do. We appreciate you all!

a message from RSAC
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Erica Engler ²



RSAC Open House!

View more pictures from
our Open House on our
website [HERE!](#)

We had over 100 people in attendance
and can't thank everyone enough!



Moving Forward Donors* Thank you to...



**The Home Depot
Foundation**



**Northwest Bank
Rockford**

Donations

Adriana Londono	Joyce Yocum
Julia Valdez	Blake Heinzeroth
Cassi Paslick	Beth Balentyne
Michele Green	Becky Winstead
Liz Breckelbalm	Nothing Bundt Cakes
Carole Rose	Brittney Fry & Justin Laud
Sue Theden & Sandy Falconer	Maureen Mostacci
Lynn & Sherry Engler	Mary Buzzell
	Valerie Johnson
	Anonymous Donors



**Jan & Brad
Benedict**



**YWCA Northern
Illinois**



**Christina Valdez
& Joel Zirkle**



**LAURA BATES, RSAC
VOLUNTEER ADVOCATE**

VOLUNTEER FEATURE



Scan here with your camera to learn
more about volunteering!

When I first became a medical advocate for Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling, I came across it by accident. Originally I was looking for an opportunity to become a volunteer advocate for survivors of domestic abuse working a crisis line as I have previous experience as a certified advocate while living in Oak Park, Illinois. This included providing emotional support, resources, safety planning and more.

As I was looking for opportunities similar in Rockford, I came across RSAC. Honestly I was nervous as I did not know what I was getting into because as a medical advocate it is more hands on as you are on call over night to answer any phone call to go to the hospital if there is a survivor of sexual assault. Fortunately RSAC provides a very thorough and informational training to prepare the advocates. Along with that, RSAC provides any emotional support to the advocates if you find yourself struggling with a phone call, hospital visit or even vicarious trauma. I am grateful to have benefitted from their support myself.

Of course, I would not be interested in investing my time if I did not believe in this cause. Unfortunately sexual assault is much more common than many people believe. I found myself overwhelmed with what is going on in the world and felt that serving my community is one thing that I can control. I am very grateful for the recent awareness in sexual assault and with the Me Too movement. But for me, awareness only feels to be a part of the solution, and I believe it's important, at least for myself, to take it one step further and into action.

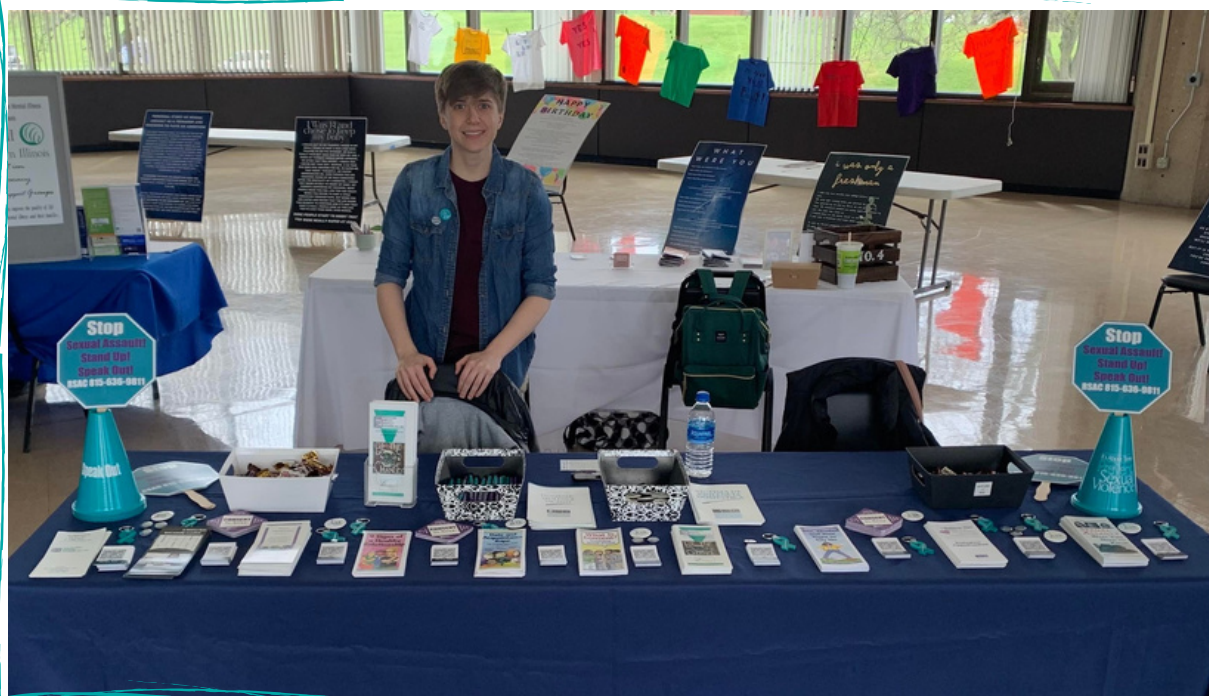
I have been very blessed to be a part of such an amazing organization that provides so many resources to victims, both women and men. Every hospital visit and call has been unique. And I will forever be grateful to the survivors who have let me be there and hold space for them while they may be going through what would be the hardest day of their life. I will not forget any single experience I have had when I have received a phone call to the hospital. And I thank RSAC for letting me be a part of such an amazing organization that has done so much for my community.

PREVENTION

RSAC staff
(Morgan Carlson,
Courtney White
& Deb Gates) at
The Community
Health Fair with
Representative
Maurice West at
Rosecrance on
Main Street.



Click [HERE](#) to learn more about our Prevention Program
and how we can help your school, business or organization!



Morgan
Carlson,
Preventionist
at Rockford
University for
Denim Day.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

SEPTEMBER 2022

WATCH FOR UPDATES!



We invite you to join us in person & virtual as we light up our town to commemorate survivors, past & present. Shine a light of hope for a community that is safe, healthy, and united against sexual violence.

RASING HOPE WITH RSAC

OCTOBER 1
THRU NOVEMBER 30

Join Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling (RSAC) staff as we raffle off many amazing items! All donations go to helping survivors in our 3 county service area.

Click [HERE](#) to join the Facebook Group!



Visit our [website](#) to view pictures and info from our previous events!



RED FLAGS OF RELATIONSHIPS

BY MARILYN RAMIREZ, RSAC THERAPIST

1. Constantly messaging/texting/calling.
2. Spending a lot of money on you/Showering you in gifts.
3. Being suspicious of OR not trusting your friends/ Claiming they are not good for you.
4. Discussing the future too soon for you.
5. Commenting on how you look or giving preferences.
6. Every one of this person's exes are either bad or described with a derogatory name.
7. Opening up to you to manipulate your emotions.
8. If you're a single parent and they are trying to woo your child.
9. An obsession with their public image.
10. Alcohol or Substance Abuse.

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL ARTICLE](#)



Ogle County Domestic
Violence Help



Winnebago & Boone County
Domestic Violence Help



LGBT+



The LGBT+ community has seen a lot of progress through recent years. Less than a decade ago, in 2015, the US legalized gay marriage, and public support has increased exponentially. Anti-discrimination laws have been changed in many states to add sexual orientation and gender identity protections as well. Even with all of this progress, there are still a lot of misconceptions about the LGBT+ community. One group that is facing a lot of ignorance and discrimination in particular is the transgender community. Some of this comes from hate and blatant transphobia, but a lot of it is from lack of knowledge and education.

A portion of people believe that trans individuals should be restricted from areas that are predominantly used by women. They argue that we need to protect women from potential abuse, claiming that men will just dress up to gain access to these women's only spaces. Of course, we all want to protect people from abuse, so this point appeals to some individuals. However, this line of reasoning is incredibly harmful. Not only does it completely ignore trans men and non-binary people, but it positions trans women as men in disguise and dangerous predators. In reality the trans community is more at risk of physical and sexual assault than the average population. The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey found that 47% of transgender people are sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetime, with these numbers being even higher among people of color. These statistics are alarming on their own, but the many negative stereotypes surrounding LGBT+ people have further consequences.

They have a real, detrimental effect on survivors' ability to get help. According to a Galop study from May of 2022, "The vast majority of LGBT+ sexual violence survivors did not report to the police — only 12% had reported their most significant experience of sexual violence." With respondents saying they did not report due to "being worried that the police would discriminate against them because of their LGBT+ identity (25%), fearing that they would not be taken seriously (51%) and thinking that the police would not be able to do anything (56%)." All survivors need support and respect. Being transgender or any other member of the LGBT+ community does not change that. While we should all be proud of how far we have come, there is still a lot of work to do.

Stay educated, stand up for others, support each other. Remember each other's humanity even if you do not understand their identity. We can make the world a better, safer place for everyone.

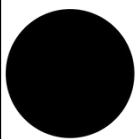
The legal advocate provides guidance and support for victims of sexual assault and abuse as they go through the legal system. As a victim of a violent crime in Illinois, they are entitled to advocacy services. The legal advocate also works closely with the State's Attorney's Office and is available to help with questions relating to court and provide emotional support.



More information on Legal Advocacy
Contact RSAC Legal Advocate at
RSAC Rockford Office*
815-636-9811

*Advocacy services available in Winnebago,
Boone & Ogle Counties

LEGAL ADVOCACY



Wheelchair Needed!

We realize the walk to RSAC's new office is longer and would like to accommodate those who wish to use a wheelchair.

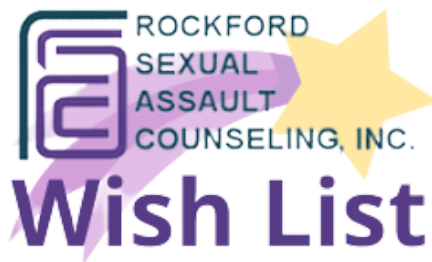
If you or someone you know is able to donate a wheelchair, preferably lightweight and foldable, please reach out to our RSAC office!

815-636-9811
Ask for Sarah or Erica

Thank You!

QUICK LINKS

[For Survivors](#)
[For Significant Others](#)
[Resources](#)
[Coping Skills](#)
[Donate to RSAC](#)
[Contact RSAC](#)



**Click here
to view our
Wish List!**



Rockford
Sexual
Assault
Counseling

5301 E. State Street
Suite 301
Rockford, IL 61108
(815)-636-9811
Fax: 815-636-9826

Boone County
860 Biester Dr.
Suite #205
Belvidere, IL 61008
(815) 544-6821

Ogle County
412 W. Washington
Oregon, IL 61061
(815) 732-0000



Donation from Rock Valley Credit Union