

# SISTER PAGES

ISSUE 3

WINTER 2006

## New Beginnings!

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Sisters, this past year has been one of many continued challenges and trauma for Communities of Color in this country and around the world. As we look at the anti-sexual assault movement, there have been many changes for Sisters in the movement. Some Sisters have left their organizations to continue the work elsewhere or to spend more quality time with their families; while others are considering creating more crucial spaces and organizations for Communities of Color to address sexual assault. For SCESA, working on VAWA reauthorization has certainly taught us that we have a long road to travel to ensure equality and justice for Communities of Color. Through it all the spirit of resilience and perseverance as Peoples of Color has remained with us, encouraging us to celebrate the joys in our lives even as we acknowledge the sorrows.

As we embark on 2006, as well as the Lunar Year of the Dog, let's remind each other that a new year is a time for rebirth, revision, and recommitment. Our struggles continue, but our spirits are full.

Thank you for all that you do!

*The National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault (SCESA) is a Women of Color-led nonprofit committed to ensuring that systems-wide policies and social change initiatives related to sexual assault are informed by critical input and direction of Women of Color.*

## **Violence Against Women Act 2005 How does it address Communities of Color?**

*“It’s time for ethnic community sexual assault and domestic violence advocates to work under a cultural specific organization that can fully represent and appreciate the work that they are doing. It is time to end the tokenism programs within mainstream agencies who provide services for the underserved..... It is time for you to give ethnic communities the funds to serve their own communities with cultural specific staffing and cultural understanding.”* -Statement made by a Hmong victim advocate to legislators

On January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was signed into law. The signing of what is being called “VAWA 2005 “ or “VAWA 3”, represents a significant shift in addressing violence against women in Communities of Color. In the original VAWA (1994), Congress intended for all communities to have a fair chance of addressing these crimes. Yet, this directive has fallen short when addressing Communities of Color. Unfortunately, our communities have not received an equitable share of the services funded or monies provided by VAWA grants.

While some states and agencies have implemented critical programs to respond to the needs of Communities of Color, others have simply struggled, creating programs that are not culturally relevant or appropriate. Many criminal justice and victim services programs are unable to adequately respond to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking and stalking from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Yet many cultural programs who receive referrals are often not able to adequately share in the victim services dollars even though they will be receiving more clients.

Furthermore, many culturally specific organizations lack the resources to effectively address the impact of culture on the occurrence, response and prevention of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking and stalking within their own communities. Many of these organizations are small community based programs that are often competing for the same funds with larger agencies that may have more grant writing resources.

Needless to say, our communities face unique challenges to addressing domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking and stalking. To truly meet these needs, we must give Communities of Color the opportunity to develop culturally appropriate and relevant messages and services, in their own language, for their own community.

It was with this knowledge that over the last year and half, SCESA worked with other national Communities of Color anti-violence groups and the National Taskforce to End Violence Against Women to create a more culturally specific and responsive VAWA. In this newsletter you will learn about the Communities of Color provisions and the intent of these provisions.

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### **Key Highlights that are relevant for Communities of Color**

The “cultural specific” language throughout VAWA is specifically to address the needs of Communities of Color. It is an intentional attempt to recognize that the complexities of addressing violence against women within cultural communities are vast and cannot be addressed by simply translating materials or cultural competency trainings.

The following are the key provisions that will have the most direct impact on our communities. As mentioned above, these provisions include more clearly defined resources for Communities of Color through the creation of culturally specific program areas. It is the intent of all of these provisions to:

- Focus on the needs of Communities of Color;
- Recognize and provide resources for culturally specific Communities of Color-led organizations and;
- Ensure the inclusion of culturally specific strategies that are critical to ending violence against Women of Color.

*The “cultural specific” language throughout VAWA is specifically to address the needs of Communities of Color.*

#### **I. Definitions**

One of the most critical pieces of VAWA 2005 is the inclusion of definitions that broaden services and further expand “who” is eligible to access federal funding to provide victim services. The definitions of “linguistically and culturally-specific services” and “community-based organizations” are important for Communities of Color:

a. ***Linguistically and Culturally Specific Services***—this definition is to ensure that services are culturally relevant and provided in the most appropriate language for the specific community. A key intent is to ensure that mainstream programs that have a goal of serving underserved populations must ensure that they offer full linguistic access and culturally specific services. For example, if you have translated a brochure, you should be able to provide services in that same language.

b. ***Community-based Organization***—this definition is specifically intended to broaden “who” is eligible to access federal funds to address violence against women. As we know, there are many community based organizations committed to violence against women work that have not been able to access VAWA funding. For example, there are some culturally specific agencies whose primary mission is to address immigrant issues for their community or the lack of services for youths of color. These agencies realizing the need have established a domestic violence or dating violence program. Such agencies were not viewed as service providers because their primary work was not seen as falling within the scope of violence against women. This definition will allow these agencies to be eligible to access VAWA funds for their violence against women program.

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## **2. New programs**

**a. *Grants to Enhance Culturally and Linguistically Specific Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking*** - The intent of this program is to provide resources for community based organizations that are specifically for Communities of Color to work directly with their own communities to develop or maintain outreach and victims services addressing violence against women. This new grant program would provide funding to those culturally specific agencies that are already addressing violence against women to expand or maintain their services; and for those culturally specific agencies whose primary mission may be to address immigrant issues, youth violence prevention, etc. to develop a violence against women program in partnership with an agency who has a demonstrated expertise in addressing violence against women. Only culturally specific community based organizations are eligible to apply. The program is authorized for 5 years (2007-2011).

**b. *Grants to Culturally Specific Programs Addressing Sexual Assault*** -

This grant program is part of the new Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) and is intended to provide monies to culturally specific community based organizations for the development and maintenance of culturally relevant and appropriate outreach, awareness and victim services aimed at addressing sexual assault in Communities of Color. The program is authorized for 5 years (2007-2011).

**c. *Grants for Outreach to Underserved Populations*** – This grant program provides funding to groups from underserved, Tribal, or immigrant communities who have experience conducting public awareness campaigns addressing violence against women (or can partner with an agency that has such experience) to implement public education and awareness initiatives focused on reaching underserved communities and immigrants. This funding is also open to government agencies that can partner with the above groups.

***It is important to note that these new programs for culturally specific organizations described above, do not preclude culturally specific organizations from applying for any of the other funding streams in VAWA.***

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### **3. Enhancements to programs that already existed in VAWA**

a. ***Abuse of Women in Later Life and the Abuse of Women with Disability*** - Language was included in these grant programs that allow funding to be used for ensuring that services are culturally and linguistically relevant to the needs of Communities of Color within these populations. The intent is to ensure that service providers working with these specific populations also develop services for People of Color with disabilities and Elders of Color to receive culturally relevant services.

b. ***STOP Grant Improvements*** - Amendments were made to this existing program that focus State efforts on underserved populations by: emphasizing requirement to address the needs of underserved communities in the State plan; emphasizing the need to fund linguistically and culturally specific services; and requiring that funds to address underserved populations are equitably distributed among those populations.

Culturally Specific Community-based Organizations Set-aside—this amendment requires that a portion of the victim services money in the STOP formula be distributed to culturally specific community-based organizations providing services that respond to violence against women.

c. ***The United States Territories*** (Guam, American Samoa, Northern Mariana, the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico) will receive equitable coalition set-aside monies and other funding similar to coalitions in the states for their efforts to address issues of violence.

These key provisions as well as others throughout VAWA 2005 represent the work of many Advocates of Color from across the country who envisioned a paradigm shift that would broaden core services and expand the eligibility of who can provide services. These remedies recognize community driven, culturally specific strategies and a more comprehensive response to ending violence against ALL women.

For a summary on the entire VAWA 2005 check out our website!

*If you are a **culturally specific organization** and would like to find out more about how to access these provisions send us an email at [sistersl@sisterslead.org](mailto:sistersl@sisterslead.org). Also, check out the “Upcoming SCESA Events” section of this newsletter to find information about an upcoming teleconference to answer your questions related to the provisions discussed in this article. There are a number of national organizations (including SCESA) that are working together to provide general technical assistance for culturally specific organizations.*

## From a cultural perspective.....

*In each issue of Sister Pages, we will spotlight a culturally specific organization. We hope this will support the work many of you are doing in the community and build networking opportunities. Please feel free to let us know of such programs/organizations in your communities by emailing us at [sistersl@sisterslead.org](mailto:sistersl@sisterslead.org).*

SCESA recently spoke to Dayanara Marte, Executive Director of Casa Atabex Ache for this issue.

**Casa Atabex Ache: House of Womyn's Power** is a culturally specific organization based in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx in New York. The fundamental philosophy of Casa Atabex Ache (Casa) is best described by looking at the roots of their name: **Casa** is a Spanish word for Home. **Atabex** is one of the 5 names for the Earth Mother from the indigenous people of Puerto Rico, the Tainos, **Ache** is rooted from West Africa, this term is said to evoke the divine power.

### SCESA- How did Casa get started?

**Dayanara-** Casa was founded in 1994 by Emily Lopez, Marta Morales, and Haydee Morales. These Puerto Rican Sisters were inspired by their experience in working for community organizations that perpetuated the same ills it attempted to improve. These founding Sisters were very well connected to movements already organizing leadership around education, health, housing and other social political issues, and so it was a natural transition to developing Casa. Their approach in cultivating Casa incorporated the emotional, spiritual, physical, and intellectual development of womyn using a holistic model to create change. The founder's were linked to the Health Revolutionary Action Movement, which was a coalition made up of women from the Young Lords Party and the Black Panther Party to look at health issues in our communities. Also, the Latin Women's Collective which organized women in the Bronx as community leaders in the areas of health, education and employment. In the 1980s, the founders were involved in the First World Women of Color Healing Circle. These Circles utilized ancient healing techniques to work with community organizers who were in deep emotional and physical pain and burning out fast while trying to do grassroots work. The Circles called for participants to take these techniques back to heal their communities. Given the repression that our community suffered during the late 1970s and 1980s we lost many activists to imprisonment, the social ills of oppression such as alcoholism, drugs, and estrangement from self and community. This surge of urgency was the water to flourish the seed that had been planted in the hearts and minds of the founders.

### SCESA- How did CASA decide to work on sexual assault issues?

**Dayanara-** About 7 years ago we received funding from the Ford Foundation looking at reproductive health. During this time we basically re-defined reproductive health with our community to include violence against women and the impact of internalized oppression on our everyday life, such as drug abuse, eating disorders and self-mutilization. We broaden the definition to understand where the fear of women having to take care of themselves and each other comes from.

Based on our legacy, we developed a healing model which is not rooted in any religious or one spiritual belief, but uses earth based and traditional remedies from Asia, Indigenous communities, Latin America and Africa to support our communities in healing. We also support young and adult womyn in doing self-care and self-gynecological exams as an alternative to the healthcare system and a way to reclaim their bodies.

It was out of doing this work that we developed retreats for Young and Adult Womyn of Color as safe spaces to heal from abuse and neglect and its affect on our reproductive health. After several years of listening to Young Womyn of Color telling the same story of child sexual abuse or other types of spiritual/physical and emotional violence over generations, such as our own history of trauma with slavery; we realized that we needed to heal and rebuild our communities by releasing the pain of these experiences. These retreats are intense, sacred spaces; they allow us to look at how sisters see themselves.

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*"We basically re-defined reproductive health with our community to include violence against women and the impact of internalized oppression on our everyday life, such as drug abuse, eating disorders and self-mutilization".*

A Prayer for Victims of Violence and Anti-Violence Workers  
---Wen Shing Tai---

*This is a prayer from a mother to her daughter who works with women survivors of violence. Her mother recites it every night before sleeping to give her daughter strength so that she can share with other women.*

Dear Lord,

We thank you with all our heart.

Thank you for your abundant grace, love and mercy.

Thank you for being "our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble".

Thank you for loving everyone in the world, preparing a safe haven for victims of violence when they are abused and helpless.

Thank you for motivating a group of anti-violence workers, who, with much love and patience,

devote themselves to protecting the victims,

caring them in accordance with their individual needs.

Please heal the bodies, minds and spirits of the victims.

Please comfort, uphold and support them and let their family rejoice in your light with no more darkness.

We know "your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path".

And we believe "with man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Although you have not promised a world that we deem ideal,

you have promised that "those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy",

"according to your faith will it be done to you" and that "ask and you will receive".

We pray that your Holy Spirit comfort the victims all the time, providing them with peace, joy and hope.

We also pray that you endow the anti-violence workers with wisdom and strength, always guide and watch over them,

and let the workers be the blessings of the victims through your amazing grace.

Amen.

## VAWA 2005: Addressing the Needs of Sexual Assault

During this reauthorization, SCESA also worked with national sexual assault advocacy organizations to ensure that VAWA 2005 would be more inclusive of sexual assault. The following are provisions pertaining to sexual assault services:

### Reauthorization and Technical Amendments

VAWA 2005 reauthorized all existing programs for five years (fiscal years 2007 through 2011) including the STOP grants (state formula grants, focused on services, training of officers and prosecutors), Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies, and Legal Assistance for Victims of Violence grants.

Technical amendments to STOP grants impact sexual violence survivors. Specifically, after a three year grace period, states and local jurisdictions will only be eligible for STOP funding if their laws, policies and practices do not allow sexual assault victims to be asked or required to take a polygraph test as a condition of proceeding with an investigation. Moreover, in order for agencies to use STOP grant funding, forensic examination must be free to victims and agencies are prohibited from requiring victims to seek reimbursement from her insurance company. They are also prohibited from requiring victims to seek prosecution. Hopefully, in the future, we'll be able to get these same restrictions placed on victim compensation funding.

Another important reauthorization for addressing sexual violence and stalking is the re-named Rural Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Child Abuse Enforcement Assistance program. In addition to broadening the purpose areas to include sexual violence and stalking, a minimum of 25% of funds appropriated each year are earmarked for sexual assault services. This earmark will increase to a 40% minimum when annual appropriations reach \$55 million. Other technical amendments to the program expand the definition of rural to include rural areas in addition to rural states so that rural parts of otherwise non-rural states will have access to this funding.

The Rape Prevention and Education program was reauthorized for five years at \$80 million per year. A minimum of \$1.5 million will be allocated to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center annually.

### New Program for Sexual Assault Services

There has never been a federal funding stream dedicated entirely to the provision of direct services for victims of sexual violence. In response, sexual assault advocates, state coalitions, service providers, allied organizations and victims themselves worked tirelessly over the last two years collecting information from the field and looking at models within the domestic violence community to fashion their own program which became known as the Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) in VAWA 2005.

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There has never been a federal funding stream dedicated entirely to the provision of direct services for victims of sexual violence—until VAWA 2005.

*SASP Continued from page 8*

In addition to providing funds to victim service providers in States, Tribes and Territories, SASP provides resources for Tribes as well as State, and Territorial sexual assault coalitions.

Grants can be used for general intervention and advocacy, including accompaniment through medical, criminal justice, and social support systems, support services, and related assistance. SASP funds can also be used to provide training and technical assistance relating to sexual assault for various organizations, including governments, law enforcement, courts, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and professionals working in legal services, social services, and health care. Further, in recognition of the importance of supporting the leadership of cultural communities in addressing sexual assault within their community, SASP authorizes grants for culturally specific organizations to provide intervention and related assistance for victims. The program is authorized for 5 years (2007-2011).

*Casa Continued from page 6*

Many of us have been raped or sexually assaulted, experiencing vaginal trauma at such young ages, leaving many of us feeling powerless. We often say to Sisters that our power lies in our ability to reclaim our most sacred self “our vagina”, anything less shifts our sense of safety. These retreats go past the guilt, isolation, individualism and break down barriers to finding our innate power as Women of Color.

**SCESA- Given all that Casa has done over the years, what are you most proud of?**

**Dayanara-** Casa is so proud of being one of the founders of Sister Song. This gave us an opportunity to go to Vieques, Puerto Rico, California, Cuba and most recently Chiapas, Mexico relating the work we do here in the South Bronx to the World. As a result we produced two publications on reproductive health: Women of Color Reproductive Health Agenda and another looking at Latinas and reproductive health. In the upcoming months please look out for our documentary on Child Sexual Abuse, a young women’s perspective, and a publication and video of Viva Las Mujeres—Womyn of Color on their Journey of Healing & Liberation.

**SCESA- What are some of the challenges that Casa has faced?**

**Dayanara-** Casa lives in a pre-dominantly Latina and African-American community, where the issue of spirituality versus religion is a barrier for many. Since much of the work is about using natural remedies and looking at spirituality many people in our community make assumptions about who we are. Our communities also don’t see their challenges as something they need to “heal” from. Casa is not a service organization and so the community does not understand us. For example, if a Sister comes to our office looking for pain relief for a headache- we say, “OK, what’s the story in your head that’s causing it to hurt?” Our communities have been so entrenched with service delivery institutions that they are not satisfied with learning how to care for themselves- what they know are quick fixes.

Casa also has the challenge of being led by young womyn, and so it is difficult to be heard. Also, as young college educated sisters, we always have to step outside of ourselves to see the privileges that we come with. And, of course, like many other organizations we struggle with keeping our space. Funding is always a challenge especially because we are not service driven and spirituality/empowerment [which are at the core of our work] are often times not seen by funders as a form of community organizing, violence prevention or social change work.

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Casa was a Union Square Award winner in 1999 and has been supported by the New York Women’s Foundation for 5 years. They provide holistic alternative health & political educational programs, peer counseling sessions and referrals, develop women as community leaders by addressing their needs in a safe and culturally centered space. To learn more about Casa’s rich history and programs please visit- [www.casaatabexache.org](http://www.casaatabexache.org).

## To The Girls I love

By Hanalei Ramos

sometimes, we pick scabs  
and are surprised they still bleed,  
spouting oceans of crushed  
pomegranate and shame.

we forget until we  
hear that voice, thick as paste down our throats  
whispering hot breath on  
young necks.

i want him to taste the  
color of this pain; plant  
needles in his lower lip like  
the lies breathing, rooted in  
our chests; plunge revenge  
into his forehead because  
our mothers accused us of  
being liars or pretended to  
be blind. cleaving hearts.  
leaving our palms empty. Loathing  
every beautiful summer day  
ruined by his thrust. Love,  
survival is more important  
than innocence. I am here to  
remind you, the shriveled part  
of you that hides, how beautiful  
it is and you are, despite these  
memories. despite this loss.

watching every  
sunset and sunrise is a  
testimony to your struggle.

let us beat down  
those spoiled summer  
suns with our smiles, for to  
laugh is to live and love again.  
and again, we shall be whole

*Hanalei Ramos is a community organizer, student, and artist from Jersey City, New Jersey. With Stephen Bor and Hang Le, she co-founded the Project 101 Artists Collective (currently inactive) which aimed to create momentum between artistic disciplines for artists of color. Aside from organizing, Hanalei is currently teaching a writing series to women in the Jersey City area through the Women's Project, a non-profit organization committed to enhancing the self-determination, financial independence and mental health of women in Hudson County by providing free services, resources, and workshops. With the Women's Project, she is also facilitating support groups for women mourning varied losses, and applies art therapy methods to their healing processes. Hanalei is also working toward degrees in secondary education, English, and English as a second language. She also likes goldfish crackers, Anais Nin and applause.*

## Upcoming SCESA Events

SCESA announces two Upcoming Teleconferences:

### 1. **“Envisioning Your Own Thang: Tips, Tools and Tactics to Starting Your Own Organization”**

Have you thought about starting your own organization? Figured that you could do what you're doing for your own community and do it better? Scared of what financial and personal challenges there are to starting your own organization?

Well Sister, you are not alone! After SCESA's 2005 Leadership Institute, many Women of Color have approached us with these same questions. So, in the spirit of Sisterhood and following our philosophy of the importance of Sharing Circles, SCESA will be hosting a Sharing Circle on “Envisioning Your Own Thang: Tips, Tools and Tactics to Starting Your Own Organization”. This Sharing Circle will be in the form of a national teleconference in which Women of Color who have started organizations and women who are interested in starting their own, will be able to dialogue, ask questions, share successes, failures, and potential roadblocks and strategies to starting an organization. Topics will also include what your personal financial picture should look like before taking the risk.

We will be conducting the same call on 2 different dates/times so that folks in various time zones will have an opportunity to participate.

**When:** Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> - 6:30pm – 8:00pm Eastern Standard Time  
and repeated on  
Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> - 6:30pm – 8:00pm Pacific Standard Time

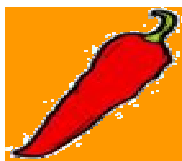
Participation on the call is free of charge. However, you will need to dial a regular long distance number to access the call. Registration is required. Please visit [www.sisterslead.org](http://www.sisterslead.org) to download registration materials.

### 2. **“VAWA 2005: What Culturally Specific Organizations Should Know”**

SCESA is currently working with other national Communities of Color organizations to host a national call for culturally specific organizations to find out more information about the provisions related to Communities of Color in the new Violence Against Women Act (VAWA 2005). This teleconference is for folks who may or may not currently receive VAWA funds. This will be an opportunity for culturally specific organizations to not only learn more about the provisions but also ask detailed questions of how the provisions will directly impact them. We will also discuss potential technical assistance and resources to accessing the various funding streams outlined in the provisions. This call is for Culturally Specific Organizations only.

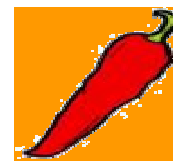
**When:** Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> - 2:00pm – 4:00pm Eastern Standard Time  
and repeated on  
Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup> - 11:00am – 1:00pm Eastern Standard Time

Registration is required. Please visit [www.sisterslead.org](http://www.sisterslead.org) to download registration materials.



# Pepper Pot

Events, jobs, announcements, etc.



- The **Lunar New Year** is also known as Chinese New Year and the Spring Festival. It is regarded as a major holiday in many parts of Asia. Lunar New Year is celebrated internationally in China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Cambodia and in many Asian communities all around the world.

It is a two week celebration that begins on the first day of the Lunar calendar (typically in late January/mid February) and ends on the full moon 15 days later. It celebrates the family, the earth coming back to life and the start of a new beginning and possibilities.

This year is the year of the Dog. Astrologists believe that everything and everyone is interconnected through energy flows. All of us are influenced by the interactions of the divine forces at the time of our birth. By analyzing the cosmic interactions at the time of our birth, fortune tellers can forecast events years in advance.

So what will the Year of the Dog bring you? To find out go to

[http://findyourfate.com/chineseastro/animal\\_sign.htm](http://findyourfate.com/chineseastro/animal_sign.htm)

- The Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF) has **job openings** for the positions of [Deputy Director for Policy & Programs](#), [Policy Analyst](#), [Development Associate](#), and [Community Organizing Program Coordinator](#). Details of each position are available by clicking on the appropriate URLs. For more information, contact:  
APIAHF  
ATTN: Human Resources  
450 Sutter Street, Suite 600  
San Francisco, CA 94108  
Ph: 415-954-9988  
E-Mail: [spadua@apiahf.org](mailto:spadua@apiahf.org)

- The Black Church and Domestic Violence Institute's Wellspring Clergywomen's Alliance has prepared a place for you to partake of an entire weekend of some of the most innovative, faith based training offered at the eighth annual **This Far By Faith Institute, February 17-19, 2006**.

For more information, contact:

The Black Church and Domestic Violence Institute  
(770) 909-0715 ph.  
(770) 907-4069 fax

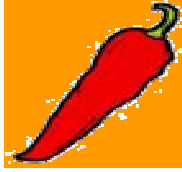
- Women's Educational Media has a **job opening** for Resource Development Director. To learn more about Women's Educational Media, please visit: [www.womedia.org](http://www.womedia.org)

To apply for the position, please send a substantive cover letter, resume, salary history and relevant writing sample to: [jobs@womedia.org](mailto:jobs@womedia.org)

- **V-Day Harlem is back!**

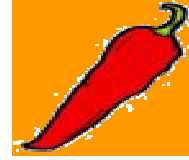
Girls Educational & Mentoring Services (GEMS), the only non-profit organization in New York State to provide services to young women and girls ages 12-21 who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and violence is proud to present a benefit production of Eve Ensler's award winning play "The Vagina Monologues" at the world famous Apollo Theater. On Monday, March 27, 2006 at 7:00pm more than 1,500 people will join GEMS at 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street and participate in this historic event. Celebrity cast members include: Kerry Washington (Ray, Mr. & Mrs. Smith, Save the Last Dance), Alysia Reiner (Sideways), Angie Martinez (HOT 97), Toni Senecal (Entertainment reporter WB11), Nina Sky, and many more. Proceeds from the event will go to support GEMS programs and the worldwide campaign to end violence against women.

Tickets are \$60, \$100 and \$250 and on sale now. Early Bird Special - Tickets purchased before February 10<sup>th</sup> will be discounted by 10%. To order your tickets today please fill out and fax back the attached form. For more information about GEMS and V-Day Harlem 2006 please go to <http://www.gems-girls.org/V-dayHarlem2006.html>.



## Pepper Pot

Events, jobs, announcements, etc.



- The National Network to End Domestic Violence Fund, in partnership with the Allstate Foundation, is launching the **Education and Job Training Assistance Fund** offering scholarships to survivors of domestic violence. For every click on the purple ribbon on NNEDV's website, the Allstate Foundation will contribute \$1 to the Education and Job Training Assistance Fund. Please visit their website and click on the purple ribbon to help increase opportunities for domestic violence survivors. <http://www.nnedv.org/>. Please share this information with a friend!
- **Clothed and in Our Right Minds: Black Women, Mental Health and Faith**  
Bennett College for Women, Greensboro, NC  
April 8, 2006  
Featured Participants Include:  
Johnnetta B. Cole  
Bebe Moore Campbell  
  
For years black women have thanked God for being "clothed and in our right minds." How does God help black women to "be in their right minds?" And what happens when they are not?  
The Africana Women's Studies and Womanist Religious Studies Programs at Bennett College for Women are hosting a one-day summit to discuss the ways in which black women maintain mental health, experience mental illness, and how their faith impacts it all. This summit brings together faith community leaders, lay people, students, faculty, staff, social activists and mental health practitioners in a public dialogue.
- Community Director— **job opening**  
Office of Residential Life, Dartmouth College  
Hanover, New Hampshire  
Seeking student centered, innovative professional to be a part of our evolutionary residential program. Emphasis on student interaction and learning. Work with dynamic student body in a liberal arts setting. Lead residential community with a 13-18 student staff, 1 Graduate Advisor & 300-500 residents. Must have commitment to exploring and demonstrating personal and departmental integrity, creativity, collaboration, initiative, multicultural education and (con't top of next section)
- professionalism. Works 1/4 of time in another student affairs office. Serves in on call system. 12 month, live-in position. Compensation includes: Furnished apartment. Meal plan. Professional development \$\$\$. Starting salary \$28K. Master's degree in student development, higher education administration or related field strongly preferred. Start date: July 11, 2006. Questions or submissions: [deborah.golder@dartmouth.edu](mailto:deborah.golder@dartmouth.edu) -or- 603.646.1491
- New Book- [Knowing What We Know: African American Women's Experiences of Violence and Violation](#) by Gail Garfield

### Description:

In recent years there has been an attempt by activists, service providers, and feminists to think about violence against women in more inclusive ways. In *Knowing What We Know*, activist and sociologist Gail Garfield argues that this effort has not gone far enough and that in order to understand violence, we must take the lived experiences of African American women seriously. Bringing together a series of life-history interviews with nine women, this unique study urges a departure from established approaches that position women as victims of exclusively male violence. Instead, Garfield explores what happens when women's ability to make decisions and act upon those choices comes into conflict with cultural and social constraints. Chapters explore how women experience racialized or class-based violence, how these forms of violence are related to gendered violence, and what these violations mean to a woman's sense of identity. By showing how women maintain, sustain, and in some instances regain their sense of human worth as a result of their experiences of violation, Garfield complicates the existing dialogue on violence against women in new and important ways. This book will be of interest to scholars in the fields of women's studies and African American studies as well as policy-makers and activists.

### About the Author:

Gail Garfield is an adjunct professor of sociology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York.

# How can you get involved?

## Yet another form to fill out.....

As a national advocacy organization, it is important that we constantly examine and update our ways of communicating with our community. Having said this, over the next few months, SCESA will be updating our database and listservs as well as refining our website. One of the steps to doing this is making sure we have accurate information about folks.

Soooo, **attached to this newsletter is a Contact Form, we ask that you take a few minutes to fill it out and email or mail it back to us** (our contact information is below). We appreciate your support of SCESA's work and want to make sure we can let you know what we are doing!!!!

We invite you to submit events, announcements, job openings, etc. for our "Pepper Pot".

Please e-mail your information to [tek@sisterslead.org](mailto:tek@sisterslead.org).

We reserve the right to edit to fit space limitations. We cannot guarantee that all submissions will get posted but will try our best!

Calling All Writers, Poets and Doodlers!!!!!!

Like to write poetry? Have an interesting article to share? We are always looking for folks to contribute to our newsletter. so send us an email with your thoughts or ideas to [tek@sisterslead.org](mailto:tek@sisterslead.org)

Back issues of our e-newsletters can be found at [www.sisterslead.org](http://www.sisterslead.org)



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