

# The Sojourner Truth

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE FRIENDS OF SOJOURNER

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## Sojourner's Board of Directors

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## 2020 Annual Summary

2020 was a more than challenging year! Many of us were overcome with sadness and frustration by so many life-changing events. We faced injustice and unrest in our communities, adapted to shut-downs and slow downs, and dealt with changes in social service, health care and criminal justice systems. With the safety and well-being of our employees and clients utmost on our minds, we complied with protocols in response to COVID that required us to change staff schedules, reduce the number of residents in the shelter and offer revised services to support those living in unsafe situations. We adapted safely and quickly to meet victim's safety needs and found new ways to provide the comprehensive services for which we are well-known. Maya Angelou said, *"I can be changed by what happens to me, but I cannot be reduced by it"*. We at Sojourner were not!

**The innovation and determination of our staff during this stressful time was amazing. We continued to provide programs and services which include:**

- A 24/7 Crisis/Help Line
- Emergency Shelter
- Community Legal Advocacy Department
- Community Outreach, Training and Education Department
- Community Involvement Department

**Despite the pandemic, Sojourner was able to:**

- respond to over 2,400 callers on Sojourner's Crisis/Help Line
- offer shelter and advocacy services to 213 women and children
- provide legal advocacy for 917 adults increasing the safety of 291 children
- benefit from 3,600 volunteered hours and generous community in-kind support
- provide 140 outreach presentations and trainings reaching 4,000 attendees

2020 will live in our memories as a difficult and fearful time, however, we hope we will also remember the courage, kindness, resilience and creativity that also rose to the surface during these times. Nowhere was that more evident than among our staff.

On behalf of the board and staff, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the foundations, community groups, individual supporters, businesses and partners who generously gave of their time and resources to support our work and partner with us to achieve greater safety and stability for so many. We are so grateful.

Sincerely,  
George Singer, Board Chair

Helen Chargo, Executive Director



- Advocates for victim safety;
- Supports the transition from victim to survivor;
- Educates for the prevention and elimination of domestic violence.

# Thank You to All Our 2020 Donors

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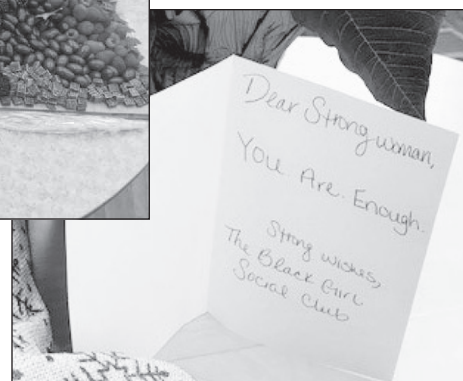
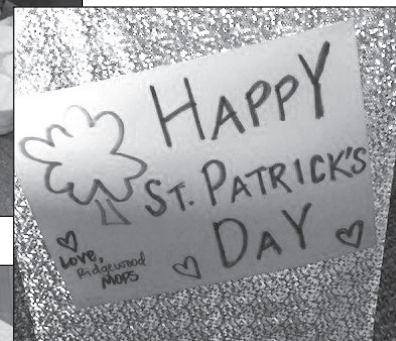
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## Grateful for a Supportive Community

While the heart of our work remains the same, this past year has brought many changes to the ways in which we deliver services. In particular, we feel the absence of our crisis line, childcare, meal prep, and other on-site volunteers deeply and look forward to their (hopefully) imminent return. What hasn't changed is our gratitude and appreciation for the many ways the community uplifts Sojourner's work.

We've had pizza nights sponsored by local church groups; high school volunteer clubs run donation drives; organizations host off-site volunteer days to create welcome bags for children; businesses rally their employees to purchase items off our Amazon wish list; a local florist and charcuterie board maker collaborate to donate treats and flowers for Valentine's Day and checks arrive in the mail with notes saying "we know this year has been hard for many people and we are thinking about Sojourner's staff and clients." This small sample of the support we have received is representative of the generosity and thoughtfulness of the volunteers and donors who help make our work possible. Thank you for your creativity and investment!







P.O. Box 272, Hopkins, MN 55343

952-933-7433

24-Hour Crisis Line: 952-933-7422

[www.sojournerproject.org](http://www.sojournerproject.org)

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## How Technology Impacts Victims

Advancements in technology have had both positive and negative effects on victims of domestic and sexual violence. Not long ago, it was the victim's word against the word of the abuser. Often times, victims did not have witnesses or proof of the abuse that occurred in their homes. The advancement of cell phones and tablets have made it much easier for victims to get help and show proof of the abuse. Cell phones can quickly call 911 without an abuser knowing; victims can text for help; abusers can be recorded during violent episodes; and victims can easily take photos of their injuries. Abusers can be and are arrested for interrupting or preventing a 911 call, because it is a crime. In addition, the cell phones and tablets help victims connect more easily with supportive resources such as advocates, support groups, shelters, legal assistance, etc.

On the flip side, technology can also cause problems for victims. Applications created for parents to monitor their teens are used by abusers to further stalk and control their partners. Abusers secretly put these tracking applications on a victim's cell phone or other devices to watch their movements and listen to or read their communications. Many abusers use texts, emails, and other messaging to convey threats, intimidate and control



their victim. Some secretly take sexually explicit videos and photos and threaten to post them on social media to coerce victims to stay in a relationship or to prevent them from reporting assaults. There are many applications, through Whatsapp and Google, for example, that abusers use to create new phone numbers and accounts to harass and stalk victims with calls, texts and messages.

Sojourner advocates warn victims/survivors of the danger of using their cell phones, computers and other devices if their abuser has had access to them. They also help clients assess what steps to take to ensure their safety including purchasing new devices or having a trained technician check for and remove harmful applications.

# Intervention Volunteers

Declared an essential service last Spring, Sojourner had to quickly adapt and like many other organizations and businesses, become accustomed to the new "normal" in order to keep operating and providing quality and crucial services to our clients and the community. To keep our staff, residents and volunteers safe and healthy we made the difficult call to "pause" volunteer activity. We are a small organization and rely greatly on our volunteer help so this decision was not easy.

Although onsite individual and group volunteer activities were put on hold, Intervention volunteers continued to provide support to victims. Intervention volunteers contact and follow up with victims as quickly as possible on weekends when Sojourner's police partners call the crisis line and report a domestic violence or sexual assault incident. This provides victims with a prompt response to deal with their safety issues and allows advocates to have a weekend and well deserved

"I felt a responsibility and a calling to support the women and children in our community who were suffering domestic abuse. Being a small part of what Sojourner does has been a humbling and rewarding experience and one I am so incredibly grateful to be a part of."  
- Stacey



"I am deeply honored to work with survivors of violence and abuse to provide hope, safety and support. It is my pleasure to serve on weekends with the incredible team at Sojourner Project."  
- Deb



"I volunteer with Sojourner because of the solidarity I feel toward our clients. Domestic violence affects every community, regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic status, or educational background. This isn't "other people's" problem, this is OUR problem."  
- Sarah



"This work is very meaningful to me because not only am I able to guide people into a safer situation, I'm able to help them think beyond where they are now and show them life won't always be like this. I think it's important to give back to the community, step outside your comfort zone, and think about the bigger picture."  
- Whitney

break from work. Throughout this pandemic, our long-time Intervention volunteers remained actively involved. We were able to develop a virtual training and on-board additional volunteers to provide timely intervention support. Due to adjusted schedules, safety guidelines and social distancing, their

volunteered support this past year has been critical to the provision of our services. We are so grateful for our Intervention volunteers! We miss all of our volunteers and are anxiously awaiting the time when it is safe for their return. Check out what some of our Intervention Volunteers had to say about volunteering with Sojourner!

## 2020 Financial Report

### 2020 Statement of Functional Expenses

Shelter	\$715,527
Community Services	\$317,991
Education & Outreach	\$65,429
Administration	\$95,203
Fundraising & Marketing	\$37,497
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,231,647</b>

### 2020 Balance Sheet

#### ASSETS

Current Assets	\$1,810,335
Fixed Assets	\$3,236,979
Accumulated Depreciation	-\$1,415,671
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$3,631,643</b>

#### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Current Liabilities	\$32,820
Long Term Liabilities	\$795,007
Total Liabilities	\$827,827
Equity	\$2,803,816
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>\$3,631,343</b>

### 2020 Income & Expense Statement

#### INCOME

<b>GRANT/CONTRACT REVENUE</b>	
Contracts	\$1,059,023
Foundations	\$178,069
Contributions	\$148,250
Other	\$93,551
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,478,893</b>

#### EXPENSES

Occupancy & Business Expense	\$109,050
Program Expense	\$1,008,588
Depreciation	\$107,348
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,231,647</b>
<b>Total 2020 Profit or Loss</b>	<b>\$164,492</b>