

Safe Passage's Monthly news & updates

November 2022



November is the month of giving back and reflecting on the things that we're most grateful for. It's human nature for individuals to focus on the 'bad', even when we have a lot of 'good' going around. Even throughout chaos and a pandemic, Safe Passage staff and management continue to reflect on some of the things that they're grateful for.

Here's what some of our staff and management have to say about what they're grateful for about Safe Passage:

I am grateful for the friendships I have made and the wonderful clients I have been able to help.

- Hannah, Legal Advocate

I am grateful for Safe Passage because it reaches so many people who are in need and supports people through very difficult times in their lives. I am also grateful for Safe Passage because the agency also cares about its employees, their families and truly listens and cares about what employees have to say.

- Kelsey, Legal Advocate

I'm grateful that Safe Passage gives me the opportunity to work with survivors. It is a privilege to work with my amazing clients. I am also incredibly grateful for

I am grateful to be able to help the people who, I feel, deserve the most help—survivors of domestic and sexual violence. And I am grateful to be able to support and guide staff to best help our clients.

- Melissa, Clinical Director

Why I'm grateful for Safe Passage:

- Because I have the opportunity to impact lives of survivors of domestic violence and contribute to a healthier society
- Because my co-workers and supervisor are always there to support me
- Because the agency supports my professional growth allowing me to benefit for the top trainings in

my colleagues.
- Rebecca, Domestic Violence Program Manager

I am grateful for the experiences I've learned from Safe Passage, the most amazing people I have worked with and mostly for the day after day opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others!
- Christie, Development Director

trauma
- Erika, DV Adult Counselor

See how we *Break the Silence*



Our first vigil of the month took place in our agency's hometown, Dekalb. There were many speakers- Judge Buick, Rick Amato, Chief Byrd, Jeff Keicher, Jennifer Yochem, and Pastor Mack- who all spoke against abuse but also uplifted the individuals who are still undergoing the shadows of it. Since the COVID-19 Pandemic hit its peak, this was the first in-person domestic violence vigil that really broke the silence. Many individuals from the community, the campus, as well as other supporting agencies attended our vigil.



Towards the end of the month, Safe Passage hosted a second vigil located in Sandwich. This vigil was held at the Sandwich Public Library. Some of our Dekalb vigil speakers, like Judge Buick and Rick Amato, attended and spoke a second time. We also had new speakers, like Detective Jen of Sandwich PD, who shared her story and some insight of domestic violence within the LGBTQIA+ community. At Safe Passage, we understand that interpersonal violence happens everywhere. Our surrounding cities, like Sandwich and Somonauk, need the readily available resources and exposure of our agency, just as much as Dekalb or Sycamore.

What do the butterflies mean and how do they resonate with our theme?

Breaking the Silence

with Safe Passage

In recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Safe Passage is "Breaking the Silence" this October. This means that our agency is focusing on having the hard conversation that so many of us try to avoid: the abuse that some of us endure. Domestic violence likes to hide in plain sight; by speaking up, even if it's not for ourselves, we're breaking down this idea that domestic abuse is normal or that it doesn't happen in our community.

With our theme, we've used butterflies to symbolize a survivor's journey through transformation and growth. The beauty of this is that not all paths are the same- what one survivor's journey looks like may not look like another survivor's. At Safe Passage, we had some of our clients create their journey in the form of a butterfly. The butterflies hanging are all representations of a survivor and their unique path to healing.



More photos from DVAM:



Marcy Buick, DeKalb County Judge



*Mary-Ellen Shaid,
Executive Director of Safe Passage*



Chief David Byrd, Dekalb's Police Chief



Jennifer Marcellis, Detective of Sandwich PD



Jeff Keicher, Republican Representative



Rick Amato, State's Attorney



Jennifer Yochem, formerly from the Housing Authority of DeKalb County



Sandwich Display of client's butterfly artwork

Safe Passage Display - Sycamore Public Library

For the entire month of October, Safe Passage was able to have a display dedicated to showcase our agency. We decided to showcase the butterflies that clients had created as well as some facts regarding to domestic violence within the community.



Thank you, Sycamore Public Library, for allowing us to have a display this month!

Leadership Highlight – Ashley



Thank you, Ashley, for all that you do- your work doesn't go unnoticed or unappreciated!

Ashley

"
I graduated with my bachelor's in English and Applied Psychology in 2018, and I'll be graduating with my Master of Social Work degree this December. I've been at Safe Passage for 4 years, most of that time working in shelter and briefly in long-term. I became the Abuse Intervention Services Program Manager in May of this year. I've chosen to stay at Safe Passage because I think we're an innovative agency that is always looking to improve services. I appreciate how our agency takes a holistic approach to ending interpersonal violence by working with victim/survivors, offenders, and the community. In my (very little) free time, I like to read, spend time with my cats, and go hiking. My favorite book and movie is The Great Gatsby, but my favorite overall genre of books/movies is horror or thrillers.
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Stay Connected



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