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www.MovingToEndSexualAssault.org
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Moving to End Sexual Assault (MESA) Receives Funding to Support Underserved Populations

MESA Awarded Extraordinary Victims of Crime Act Grant

Boulder, CO – Moving to End Sexual Assault (MESA) has received a 1-year grant from the Office for Victims Programs (OVP) for \$33,299 to support survivors from populations that are traditionally underserved. This grant is out of the office of the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). The OVP offers funding specifically for victims to have resources in physical and emotional recovery from the trauma of sex assault. MESA has been awarded the funding to conduct support groups for sexual assault survivors who identify as LGBTQIA, older individuals, and people who have immigrated to the United States.

MESA has recognized the need for additional support to serve these populations based on current evidence that these groups often experience sexual assault at disproportionately high rates. Estimates indicate that 1 in 10 older adults have experienced some form of elder abuse, with only 1 in 14 cases being reported to authorities (National Council on Aging). For LGBTQIA+ individuals, the National Survey specifically found that 44% of lesbians and 61% of bisexual women experience sexual violence by an intimate partner, compared to 35% of heterosexual women. A 2015 US Transgender Survey found that 47% of transgender people are sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetime (Human Rights Campaign). The last target population for this project, immigrants to the US, are often more vulnerable to sexual assault and experience more barriers in accessing victim assistance services (National Sexual Violence Resource Center). Immigrants face an increased risk of sexual assault due to factors like lack of familiarity with legal rights in a new country, potential for learning misinformation about the US legal system, lack of access to providers, and language barriers.

Group therapy will provide a space for individuals to process their sexual trauma, explore various coping strategies, and strengthen capacity for resiliency. Support groups also assist people in feeling less isolated in their experience of sexual trauma. Each group will run for 12 weeks. Visit www.MovingToEndSexualAssault.org for more information about these groups.

Resources are available for survivors of sexual assault by calling the MESA Hotline at 303.443.7300. MESA's hotline advocates are available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.