

FORGE Awarded New 3-Year Federal Grant

FORGE, a 17-year-old transgender and SOFFA (Significant Others, Friends, Family and Allies) organization headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is pleased to announce it has been awarded a new 3-year grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).

The goal of the new \$547,811 grant is to increase the number of OVW-funded agencies that can provide culturally competent services to transgender victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence through the provision of technical assistance and training. The project, which runs from October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2014, has three objectives. Objective 1 is to increase the number of OVW-funded agency personnel who have had basic training on transgender survivor issues. This "101" training will be offered via quarterly webinars, workshops at key professional or field conferences, and a FORGE-run transgender-specific conference for providers. Objective 2 is to increase the number of OVW-funded agency personnel who have had advanced training in providing culturally competent services to transgender survivors. These trainings will be offered through 8 webinars annually, workshops at key professional or field conferences, and the FORGE-run conference. The latter conference will also advance the field by hosting facilitated work groups to produce consensus policies or best practices on selected topics. Finally, objective 3 is to increase the number of OVW-funded agencies who know where to access (and then do access) technical assistance related to transgender survivors. Outreach will be done through the dissemination of monthly tip sheets, three mailings each year, social media, advertisements in selected conference program books, and conference vendor tables. FORGE anticipates providing training to more than 1,000 victim services professionals per year, and individualized technical assistance to 150 annually.

This new award represents an expansion of FORGE's previous federally-funded anti-violence projects, one grant which focuses on providing training and technical assistance to professionals serving transgender sexual assault providers, and the other provides direct services to transgender sexual assault survivors. Although still in progress, both current projects have received many positive reviews. Eleven publications for victim services professionals are currently under review by the Office for Victims of Crime, and four demonstration sites have been selected to develop sexual assault provider/transgender community coalitions to identify and address barriers keeping transgender sexual assault survivors from accessing services. Under its earlier OVW grant, FORGE has just begun offering online Writing to Heal courses providing support, information, and tools directly to transgender sexual assault survivors. In addition, self-help guides are being developed for transgender survivors and loved ones.

For more information on any of our services, publications, or projects, please consult our website at www.forge-forward.org.