

Have Justice–Will Travel

Ending the Generational Cycle of Violence



NEWS

FALL 2008

Mentoring and Volunteering

Two Key Components of the HJWT Model



(Top Row L-R) Vermont Law Students Susan Hackler, Kimberly Purdue, Catherine Donnelly, and Elizabeth Bradley. Georgetown University Student Nyresa Cama. (Bottom Row L-R) Lyndon State College Student Erica Thompson. Dartmouth College Students Anne Sosin and Kayla Sherman-Presser. Connecticut College Student Jessica Loeffler. Community Volunteer Sandy Elliott, and Wheaton College Student Katibeth Pratt.

Since its inception, Have Justice—Will Travel (HJWT) has seen mentoring as an essential component of its model for clients as well as for staff. Wynona's legal mentoring began at the South Royalton Legal Clinic, the teaching and practicing clinic at Vermont Law School (VLS) in 1997.

From this experience she learned

how essential mentoring is especially for students who want to leave law school and begin interviewing and counseling clients immediately. Law schools today do an excellent job teaching the theory of law, but it is also important to learn the practical application of law, especially where client's lives may be at stake.

The collage of photos above is a sample

of the students who have volunteered over the last ten years at HJWT. Wynona, Kate Kennedy, Robin Goodrum, Brandy Todd, and other staff members have mentored them. Through the sharing of knowledge, demonstrating skills, and the telling of stories HJWT staff have provided positive role models for students, some who are now practicing lawyers and have gone on...

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From the Founder



HJWT Executive Director
and Founder Wynona I. Ward

This has been a particularly difficult year for those of us working to stop the generational cycle of abuse in rural families. I was easily transported back into my own childhood and back into the child sexual abuse case involving my family this past summer when a local twelve-year old girl was raped and murdered by her uncle.

Although this was a time for triggering old traumas, it was an extreme relief to see victim advocates, task force members, teachers, doctors, nurses, mental health counselors, attorneys, law enforcement, legislators, government officials, and those from the religious community all come together to ask why, and more importantly, to ask what can be done to prevent this from happening to innocent children in the future. Everyone from everywhere was finally realizing that much more must be done to stop child sexual abuse. I wanted to shout hallelujah from the mountaintops! Have Justice—Will Travel (HJWT) has participated in several community and legislative forums about child sexual abuse and will remain active as the Vermont Senate Judiciary Committee proposes new laws to help victims and hold abusers accountable for their actions.

In other news on the development front, I have been working to bring in sustainable funds for HJWT to continue its important work in Vermont. All the HJWT staff was featured on the PBS NOW show with David Brancaccio in March. Shown nationally, this program brought in significant donations (over \$15,000) from

across the country. It can be seen at www.pbs.org.

In addition, the www.havejustice-willtravel.org website now has added two links to our home page. The first link is to a book published in 2008, [Your America: Democracy's Local Heroes](#), that features a chapter on HJWT. Written by Jason Maloney, this book “explores the paths to success of a remarkable group of people” who appeared on NOW to tell their stories. Maloney writes, “How do you become empowered if you grow up in poverty, if you have an inadequate education, if you have a job that barely supports you? Wynona Ward was able to overcome all that and achieve amazing things. She built on what would have destroyed most people . . .”

The second link comes graciously from Margot Dilmaghani, a highly talented classical musician and an ardent supporter of women's issues who recently released a new CD, *Wings Classical Piano Solos*, with HJWT as the beneficiary. It consists of great classical piano works, including Romantic composers and wonderful women composers. HJWT receives 100% of the purchase price because the costs of producing the CD were completely underwritten. HJWT is extremely grateful to have already received over \$2,600 from the proceeds.

A television crew from California for Direct TV was recently in Vermont to film a program about HJWT that will be featured on their “Hometown Heroes” program next spring. Equal Justice Works (EJW), an organization that helps strengthen public interest law school programs, included me in their alumni video. EJW gave me fellowship funds, which were used to help found HJWT ten years ago.

It was the EJW gathering that brought me to Washington, D. C. in October where I stayed at Nancy Harter's home in the Cleveland Park area. My week was filled with donor meetings, with an informational visit at the US Department of Justice Violence Against Women Office (VAWO), and with conversations with the staff of Vermont Senators Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders as well as stopping by Vermont

Congressman Peter Welch's office. We discussed the upcoming grant cycle and how HJWT can best manage the changes made which may endanger the funding HJWT has received from the VAWA since 2001.

I was also fortunate to speak with Congresswoman Donna Edwards' staff. Recently elected from the 4th District of Maryland, Congresswoman Edwards was the co-founder and first executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. She was involved in helping to pass the 1994 Violence Against Women Act and continues to support much needed funding under VAWA.

Ending on a fun note, during late October JohnnieMae Doyle, my assistant and I traveled to Burlington, Vermont where we were provided with free tickets to the theatrical production “Menopause The Musical Out Loud.” The musical “includes 25 re-lyricized tunes from the '60s and '70s that pokes fun at things such as hot flashes, memory loss, mood swings, wrinkles, night sweats and eating binges. The show's intended message is that menopause is a passage, but it should no longer be *The Silent Passage*. It is a stage in every woman's life that is perfectly normal.” This hilarious celebration of women and the change has entertained audiences across the country in more than 200 cities plus internationally in twelve countries. My photo is on the cover of the November-December 2008 issue of me* Magazine which is handed out before every performance. HJWT is the feature article, “Real Women Making a Difference.” I would highly recommend the show when it comes to your area.

This year has been one of growth for HJWT and for many of the women we serve. I want to thank everyone connected to HJWT, whether they are contributors of dollars, services, goods, foundations, grants, volunteers, staff, clients and their children. You all contribute greatly to our mission to stop the generational cycle of abuse in rural America.

Wynona

From Surviving Domestic Violence to Surviving College By Kate Kennedy



Kate Kennedy is the senior staff attorney at HJWT.

In 2001 a mother of five called Have Justice-Will Travel (HJWT) for legal assistance. Through telephone consultation she represented herself in a custody matter as well as her request for a protective order against her abusive boyfriend and father of her youngest two children. This was the third of such orders she had received since 1997 from the Vermont Family Court for this boyfriend or her prior abusive first husband.

In 2004 she called back as she had returned to the relationship and needed protection again. This time he was threatening that he would falsely report to the State that she abuses the children and would lose them all if she left him.

In 2006 HJWT entered their notice of appearance on behalf of this woman as

she was yet again requesting protection from the family court. The abuser would be released from incarceration and had been writing threatening, controlling, and abusive letters from jail to both her and the children. The Family Court Judge ruled that, ‘the present testimony establishes that the incidents of violence have been chronic, spanning the years. . . [there is a] cycle of chronic deep seeded domestic violence. . . the cycle of the relationship [is one in which] the defendant has proven to have capable control over the plaintiff to seek vacation of the orders. . . [the letters show] his efforts to engage psychological and emotional abuse directly as well as through the children.’”

It is now September 2008 and her order for protection has been renewed on two occasions. The defendant is currently awaiting trial on a felony violation of that order. The children have visits with their father, but the exchanges are supervised. This survival has led this woman to finish high school and attend college.

This mother of five children, spanning from ages 8 to 17 started a high school diploma program in 2007. She had not completed the tenth grade when she was a teenager and in one year finished high school. In Spring 2008 she received her high school diploma.

Over the summer she took her college placement tests and has entered a State of Vermont non-degree college grant program

for a semester to get reacquainted with the rigors of taking classes. Her goal is to begin the post secondary education program so she can finish her college degree as soon as possible. What does she want to do? Maybe work with children who have lived in homes where they experience domestic violence.

Congratulations to her for keeping herself and her children safe and for showing them it is never too late to get an education, to better your life, and to give back to the community.

The above story is one of three current clients I have enrolled in a high school diploma or G.E.D. program headed to college. All left high school and entered relationships with domestic violence. One has four children, in her mid-thirties, and studying to go back to high school.

Another has recently divorced her husband who is currently serving a sentence for sexually abusing their daughter. She has worked her entire life in the health care field and wants to go to nursing school to support her three minor children. All of these stories are life stories of survival and now the ultimate in placing their newly found self-esteem on the line in going back to the books and doing homework with their children around the kitchen table.

Have Justice–Will Travel, Inc.

is a nonprofit organization that operates exclusively on grants, fellowships, and private contributions. If you wish to make a tax-deductible donation, you can use your credit card on our Web site, www.havejusticewilltravel.org,

or please make your check payable to:

Have Justice–Will Travel, Inc.

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A Thank You to HJWT Volunteer Board of Directors from Wynona I. Ward.



Nancy G. Harter
Secretary, HJWT
Board of Directors

The HJWT Board of Directors is a volunteer board with its longest serving member being Nancy Harter who I first met in the summer of 1999 in Washington, D.C. at a Vermont Law School (VLS)

alumni gathering. Since that time Nancy has had a significant, long-term, beneficial effect on my life and on the growth of Have Justice Will Travel (HJWT). Through her mentorship she has offered insight, perspective, and wisdom that has been especially useful to the development of HJWT.

When I first started serving clients after graduating from VLS it was with the idea of serving victims in central Vermont. Nancy said this is a wonderful, successful model and asked why not serve women and children in rural areas all over Vermont and throughout the country? As I had started HJWT at my kitchen table, Nancy and I then sat at her kitchen table on her farm in Vermont and began planning the formal HJWT model.

Nancy then became a member of the Board and its secretary. HJWT has benefited greatly from Nancy's previous work with non-profits and the many Boards she has been a member of over years living in Washington D.C., Vermont, and Columbia, Missouri. She has provided me with networking and connections to many individuals and worked with me and HJWT in the areas of long range, strategic planning, and development/fundraising. Nancy was the catalyst behind the HJWT Women In Transition Life Skills and Mentoring Group, which is based on the principals of Bowen's Family System Theory. Also HJWT has used Bowen's System theory, which is now used in Organizational Systems Theory, in founding and sustaining this non-profit.

The HJWT Board also includes Holly B. Field, Harold E. Ward, and Amy Phillippo. Peter L. Miller was a Board member until he resigned this last year because of a



HJWT Board of Directors at a recent meeting held at the HJWT Office in Vershire.
On left Brandy Todd, a HJWT paralegal sits beside Peter Miller.
On the right Holly Field, Nancy Harter and Harold Ward

career move. Amy Phillippo, Esq. has taken Peter's position on the Board. Amy established the first HJWT branch office in Southern Vermont in 2001. This included finding and organizing office space and implementing excellent relationships with all the agencies she worked with in both Brattleboro and Bennington, Vermont. Amy's years of experience working with clients and her knowledge of family law contributes valuable information for other board members.

In addition to being on the HJWT Board, Holly is the Co-Director of the NH-VT Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, which provides community service opportunities and support to medical and legal students. Holly also volunteers as a patient advocate at the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and co-teaches a course for medical students there. Holly's mentorship of me has included connecting me with speaking engagements, helping me write speeches, and teaching me how to be a mentor.

As I graduated from Vermont Law School, Peter wrote various articles about HJWT for local newspapers, was instrumental in producing a video of me, and arranged for reporters to cover events and write stories. HJWT has been nationally featured in articles in the Boston

Sunday Globe, Woman's Day, Ms., People, Good Housekeeping, and on the cover of the American Bar Association magazine because of Peter's work. All articles, radio programs, and television shows have brought in considerable donations for HJWT, which allows us to serve more and more clients.

Harold, my husband, has volunteered in many and varied ways for HJWT from being a board member, bookkeeper, and receptionist; to being a grounds keeper of the Vershire office and Brownington property/office, maintenance person, and coordinator of transportation, safety, and social services for HJWT clients. Harold has given hundreds of hours to deliver furniture, clothing, and food for needy clients. He often accompanies staff attorneys and clients to court for safety purposes.

I am extremely thankful to all the HJWT Board members for their dedication and loyalty to HJWT. The volunteer hours given by Nancy, Holly, Peter, Harold and now Amy, has made it possible for HJWT to become and continue to be a viable nonprofit organization. Without them, there would be no HJWT.

The Meaning of True Courage

by Carolyn Alderman



Carolyn Alderman and her daughter Emerson

After reading an article in the Fall 2007 *Have Justice-Will Travel* (HJWT) newsletter about a HJWT client who had been severely beaten by her husband (he sat on her stomach when she was eight months pregnant), I knew I had to be involved with the amazing organization that would seek justice for the victim of such a horrific attack.

As a third year law student at Vermont Law School, I chose to study the law precisely because I firmly believe that the

law is a place where those who need protection can seek and receive it. In order to fulfill my mission to be involved with HJWT, I proceeded to harass Wynona Ward, the founder of HJWT, by email over the next couple months (I would not be deterred) until I was fortunate enough to receive a position as legal intern for the summer of 2008.

I was not disappointed. What I discovered at HJWT was a close-knit family of courageous individuals who devote themselves to aiding victims of the most horrendous types of physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse. These victims come to HJWT terrified, alone, and powerless, and HJWT takes them under their wing and becomes their legal advocate, often times for years, until their cases are settled. I very quickly became immersed in this environment of trauma and hope, often waking in the middle of the night to think about clients. Working on cases that involved children was especially difficult.

Of course, during my summer at HJWT, I learned many practical legal skills such as how to draft motions and orders for the court, how to identify legal issues

as part of initial client intake interviews, and how the county courthouse operates, skills that will serve me well in my career as an attorney. But HJWT taught me something far more significant: HJWT taught me that in this world filled with so much heart-wrenching tragedy, there are angels among us who use their lives in service of others by tirelessly fighting for those who are incapable of fighting for themselves. HJWT taught me that in the face of unspeakable acts, there are courageous individuals like Wynona, Kate, Brandy, Robin, and Johnnie who are willing to help victims of those unspeakable acts escape and transcend their situations. Above all else, when I think back on my summer, I realize that HJWT taught me the meaning of true courage.

The mission of *Have Justice-Will Travel, Inc. (HJWT)* is to end the generational cycle of abuse in rural families by bridging the legal, cultural, geographical, psychological, and economic gaps that exist for victims of domestic abuse. *HJWT* provides legal and supportive services for battered, low-income women and their children. Wynona I. Ward, Esq., the founder and director of *HJWT*, created an innovative, mobile, multi-service program that **assists victims of domestic abuse through the legal process, from the initial interview and relief from abuse order through self-sufficiency and independence**. This holistic multi-service approach to assisting rural victims often is the key to women first escaping the abuse and then moving forward to improving the quality of their lives and their children's lives. Since 1998, *HJWT* has been serving women in the State of Vermont and is expanding to assist women who live in rural areas throughout the United States.

Mentoring and Volunteering, continued from page 1

to serve and work in their communities in Vermont and other states.

VLS students Susan Hackler, Kimberly Purdue, Catherine Donnelly and Elizabeth Bradley all contributed significantly to HJWT by building our database of legal research materials, working to change family law procedures in Vermont, and by developing a replication manual for the HJWT model.

Dartmouth College students Nyresa Cama and Kayla Sherman-Presser learned what it is like to live in a rural area and were instrumental in working with children who were clients of HJWT. Anne Sosin, also from Dartmouth, helped develop the

original curriculum for the HJWT Women in Transition Life Skills and Mentoring Group.

Vermont residents Erica Thompson, Jessica Leoffler, Sandy Elliott, and Katibeth Pratt learned about the dynamics of family violence while at HJWT. Their careers now span the fields of early education, nursing, and serving the elderly. They take with them into those fields the realization that domestic abuse affects families in all walks of life. They now have a foundation on which to spread the mission of HJWT--stopping the generational cycle of abuse in rural America.

Brattleboro Office News

Nicole Briggs, the HJWT attorney and Peggy Prince the paralegal/client services coordinator in Windham County have helped many women and children during the past year. One 25-year old mother received help with a Relief From Abuse Order when the father of her two children was charged with killing their two-month old daughter by shaking her. The father is currently incarcerated awaiting trial on 2nd degree murder charges. The mother had just given birth to their second child and she wanted the protective order to include the newborn so the father cannot have any contact with him.

HJWT will continue to help this family with their legal needs as they arise in family court. Should this family need other types of services, HJWT will work to either directly provide those that are in

the HJWT model, or will work with the family to assist them in obtaining what they need from other providers in their community including the Women's Crisis Center. The goal of HJWT is to ensure that women and children who have been abused are able to receive what they need to become independent, self sufficient and able to cope on their own.

The Town of Brattleboro Select Board has appointed Nicole to the Brattleboro Community Justice Center's Community Advisory Board. The Justice Center is a partnership between the Town and the Vermont Department of Corrections. The Justice Center allows for citizens to peacefully resolve conflict using restorative justice principles. The Community Advisory Board provides feedback and input for the Justice Center,

and assists in clarifying issues of concern in the community. Nicole will bring a strong voice for victims of domestic violence to the Community Advisory Board.

Peggy completed the Vermont Victims Assistance Academy training and also attended a training in Phoenix Arizona in June that addressed Sexual Assault in the context of Domestic Violence in Rural Communities.

In July, Nicole attended the National Institute for Trial Advocacy's Public Interest Trial Skills Program in Colorado. This conference was a week-long intensive, interactive training, which focused on trial skills. Once she returned to Vermont, Nicole conducted an informative peer-training for the other HJWT attorneys.

Bennington Office News

A lot has changed since the last update for the Bennington County office of HJWT. Jessica McManus has moved into part-time private practice after four years with HJWT. HJWT's new Bennington staff attorney, John Lamson has been an important part of the newly created Integrated Domestic Violence Docket in Bennington County. This pilot project for the State of Vermont began to hear first offense domestic assault cases, which are normally handled by the criminal court in September 2007. The theory behind this unique approach is "one family—one judge."

The court works to stop domestic violence at its beginning stages rather than wait until it escalates and becomes more lethal. Deferred sentences are offered in some cases where an offender wishes to own his behavior and make changes. There is an extensive list of "domestic violence conditions" that a probationer may use to address warning signs or potentially harmful behavior. HJWT provides legal information and in some cases representation for victims. Creative solutions like this new court are in harmony with HJWT's model for a holistic style of



Nicole Briggs, Staff Attorney, Windham County and John Lamson, Staff Attorney Bennington County



Nicole, Wynona, John, and Kate at the Vermont Supreme Court

abuse prevention.

HJWT has provided trainings to new advocates from Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE), the local victims assistance organization. Both John and Kathy Carrier, the Bennington County paralegal/client services coordinator, attended a training in Phoenix, AZ sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice's Violence Against Women Office entitled, "Sexual Assault in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence in Rural Communities." The training was very informative and the attendees from HJWT were able to provide the rest of the staff with some of the most current research and techniques concerning Intimate Partner Sexual Violence.

John and Kathy are planning a HJWT Women in Transition Life Skills and Mentoring Group to run in the Bennington area in the spring. This mentoring group helps women turn the skills they used to survive the abuse into skills to improve their lives. For more information on Women in Transition please see our website at www.havejusticewilltravel.org.

News from the Northeast Kingdom and LEAP



Robin Goodrum Coordinator of the HJWT Legal Empowerment Assistance Program

During the past year, due to the continued support of the Schultz-Blackwell Trust, Wynona served as the HJWT attorney in the Northeast Kingdom (NEK) area of Vermont. She worked on a variety of cases, not only in Vermont Family Court, but also in Superior and Probate Court including relief from abuse, relief from stalking, guardianship of minor children, guardianship of vulnerable adults, divorce, parentage, parental rights and responsibilities, parent child contact, and child support.

Wynona has made significant contacts at the local high schools and has received a number of referrals from guidance counselors and principals at these schools. Near the end of the school year, Wynona represented a 17 year-old girl who had been abused and was being stalked by a 17 year-old boyfriend with whom she had tried to terminate the relationship. Although Wynona was not surprised to find out that teenage alcohol parties contributed to the abuse and stalking, she was amazed when the young man testified in court about the significant amount of alcohol he generally consumed, bragging about it as if it was a badge of honor. When the court granted the stalking order, the judge indicated to the parents that their son had a serious drinking problem and encouraged them to get him substance abuse counseling.

Legal Intern Robin Goodrum has been working with Wynona to bring the Legal Empowerment Assistance Program (LEAP) into the counties of the NEK area. Funded by the Vermont Bar Association, LEAP allows HJWT to offer long-term services on a consulting basis to those *pro se* litigants who benefit from ongoing contact with HJWT during their legal case, but for whom

we cannot provide attorney services.

In addition to expanding LEAP into the NEK area, both Robin and Brandy Todd, the paralegal/client services coordinator who now works in our Randolph office with Kate Kennedy, have been providing LEAP services to counties in Vermont where HJWT does not have offices. This includes the counties of Grand Isle, Franklin, Addison, and Rutland.

In addition to the offices we have in Vershire, Randolph, Brownington, Bennington, and Brattleboro, the HJWT Strategic Plan provides for adding two offices in Western Vermont and also plans for adding two full time attorneys in the NEK area. HJWT has grown significantly in ten years from one attorney working out of her kitchen to having five offices and five attorneys. We have helped over 10,000 women and children, yet we have much more to do.

HJWT's mission (see www.havejusticewilltravel.org) is to serve those women and children who have no resources and no support system. Most of the women served have only the bare minimum amount of food, clothing, and shelter to survive from day to day. They have no support system of any kind, nuclear or extended family, church, or community. When physical, mental, emotional and sexual abuse is added to their lives living can seem to be insurmountable, to say nothing about providing a good family life for their children.

HJWT is a non-profit. Money to sustain the organization comes from writing proposals to government and private foundations for grants, and from the generosity of individuals in Vermont, across the US and sometimes from overseas. Without individual contributions HJWT would be unable to provide many of the services it is able to give this literally desperate population. They deserve a chance to survive and survive in a way that will benefit not only them but benefit the communities in which they live. Once these women become independent and strong they go on to fulfill the mission of HJWT--stopping the generational cycle of abuse. If you can contribute to HJWT, that would help more women and children attain a decent living and life.

Have Justice– Will Travel, Inc.

Legal Services

Representation in court for:
Relief from Abuse hearings
Child support needs
Divorce and Parentage issues
Custody and Visitation hearings

Social Services

Safety planning/Shelter referrals
Financial advice/Creditor Plans
Assess financial needs of family
Referral for continued education
Referral for driver's license
Agency referrals/Support services
Assist/Obtain subsidized housing

In-home consultations

Transportation to:

Court hearings
Social Service appointments
Supervised visits
Doctor's appointments
Women's group

National toll free phone line

Women in Transition

Women's Mentoring Group
Life skills mentoring
Job and Parenting skills
Child Care Ideas/Assistance
Psychological support
Education about Violence

Supervised Visitation

Referrals for Supervised Visits
Exchanges
Parenting classes
Counseling Arrangements



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CBS Television show CSI: Crime Scene Investigation supports Have Justice—Will Travel, Inc.

THIS JACKET COULD BE YOURS!

Visit E-Bay and bid on this beautiful brown suede jacket worn and autographed by lead actor William Petersen to benefit HJWT.

Co-Producer of C.S.I. Phil Conserva made the donation possible and proceeds will help support his little sister's, Attorney Kathryn Conserva Kennedy, Esq., newly opened HJWT Office in Randolph, VT.

“ . . . we must fight to bring domestic violence out of the darkness of isolation and into the light of justice . . . ”

President-Elect Barack Obama

