



*Women's
Resource
Center*


We are your safe place.

2022-2023
Annual
Impact
Report

Executive Director's Message



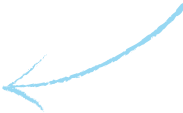
Peg Ruddy



I am honored to serve as the Executive Director of the Women's Resource Center—a multi-faceted social change agency providing 24-hours crisis response, counseling and advocacy, emergency safe housing, transitional housing, economic justice, prevention programs, and civil legal assistance in Lackawanna and Susquehanna Counties. WRC has served over 66,000 women, men and children over the past 47 years.

WRC's dedicated staff work tirelessly each and every day to respond to the urgent needs of victims of domestic and sexual violence, teen dating violence, human trafficking and stalking. In the face of limited resources, systemic frustrations, and increasing demands, the staff does incredible transformative work. I am proud to work with them each day. I want to acknowledge the retirement of Carol Shoener, Sharon Perrotti, and Sam DeFazio. Their impact on our work is and will continue to be immeasurable. We wish them well in their future endeavors.

I want to acknowledge and express my sincere appreciation to the Women's Resource Center's Board of Directors and the WRC Association for their gifts of time and talents. The impact of their work is immeasurable, from working to build our endowment fund to organizing fundraising events to strategically planning for our future, and thoughtfully deliberating and setting agency policy. I am privileged to work with everyone affiliated with WRC.



“WRC helped me get an apartment but in order to leave there the landlord said my cat needed to be neutered and up to date on vaccinations. I didn't have the money to cover the cost of the surgery. I spoke with my advocate and they paid for the procedure. If it weren't for this program we would have had to rehome our family cat. Thank you WRC!”

WRC Program Participant

Board President's Message



Brian Rose

This past year has been another full of success stories to celebrate the great work the Women's Resource Center continues to provide to our community.

Perhaps the biggest news to celebrate is WRC's Prevention Education Programs won 2023's National Purple Ribbon Award. We are so proud of our staff, the students who participated in the programs, and the schools who have made a commitment to partner with WRC to prevent dating and sexual violence and to promote healthy relationships! We served ten area school districts and six private schools.

The Women's Resource Medical Advocacy Program (MAP) continues to expand our presence in Lackawanna and Susquehanna counties. Medical advocacy includes the healthcare-based identification of domestic violence, sexual assault, & human trafficking victims within the healthcare setting.

We are also so grateful to everyone who helped make our return to a pre-pandemic-sized annual Great Chef's event the sold-out success it was.

I would like to thank the dedicated staff of the Women's Resource Center who continue to assist victims of domestic violence year after year. The staff, led by Executive Director, Peg Ruddy, continue their work of advocacy, education, and social change in our community.

Thank you to the Board of Directors, the Association, and of course, the dedicated staff and many volunteers that help us succeed.

About WRC

Our primary purpose at the Women's Resource Center is to protect families from the immediate danger stemming from domestic and sexual violence and to break the inter-generational cycle of abuse. All of our programs are designed with this purpose in mind. We help survivors to have safe, healthy relationships and how to remain safe.



Our services are available to all survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault



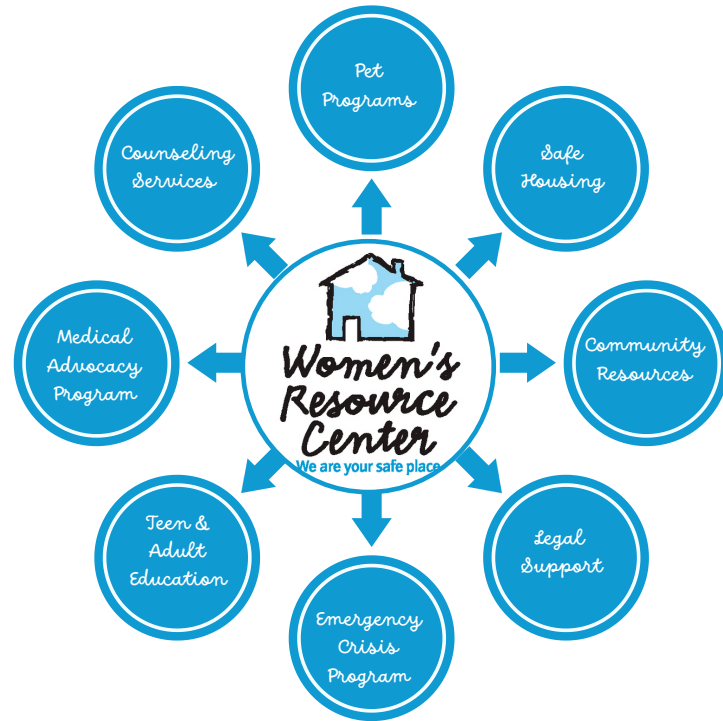
Trained advocates answer our English and Spanish hotline 24 hours a day, seven days a week



We offer emergency shelter, counseling, legal support and advocacy, and in some cases, legal representation.



WRC community educators offer programs to raise awareness, and to prevent domestic and sexual violence.



LAST YEAR ALONE, WRC
1,726 CASES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

we **8,939 CALLS**

403 CASES OF SEXUAL ASSAULT



Counseling Services

WRC offers trauma informed supportive counseling for our adult and child survivors of domestic and sexual abuse. We provide connections to supportive community resources and help survivors create a personal Safety Plan. Individual counseling is available and our advocates help survivors engage in solution-focused strategies to achieve their self-determined goals and objectives. All our services are available in all languages. WRC provides counseling for child victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Our Survivors Support Groups focus on mindfulness, emotions, relationships, coping, support from peers, and skill-building.



Safe Housing

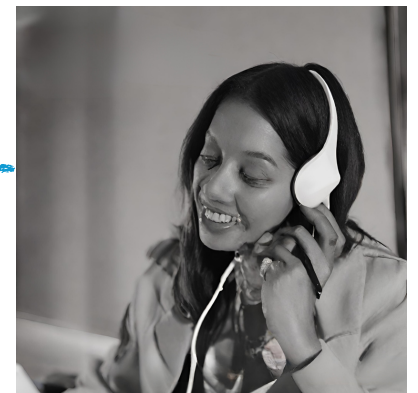
The Women's Resource Center is a safe place and employs a "housing first model." This means providing emergency safe housing for those women, children, and men who must flee their homes to be safe. Longer term housing options are available to assist survivors to secure a life free from violence and oppression. From emergency housing, participants are provided transitional or rapid re-housing, and are given financial assistance for a security deposit, rent, utilities, furnishings, food, and funds for transportation. Advocates continue to work closely with them to find employment and eventually a permanent, affordable home of their own.



WRC provided emergency safe housing for 100 adults and 94 children. The Safe Nights program provided 22,412 nights of safe shelter to 41 families fleeing from domestic and/or sexual violence.

Emergency Crisis Program

The hotline serves as a point of access for crisis counseling, safety planning, resources, referrals, and intake to the Women's Resource Center's Safe House for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Available 24/7, our Advocates provide one-on-one assistance and address rape, child sexual abuse, incest, stalking, human trafficking, economic abuse, teen dating violence, emotional and verbal abuse, physical assault, and threats of harm.



This past year, more than 8,939 calls are received on the WRC crisis hotline.

Barbara J. Hart Justice Center

The Barbara J. Hart Justice Center is a vital hub where WRC leverages the collective expertise of committed attorneys and advocates to offer legal aid to program participants. The center specializes in various areas of representation, encompassing legal consultations, Protection from Abuse (PFA) and Sexual Violence Protection Orders (SVPO), child custody, child support, spousal support, divorce, housing matters, consumer debt, and immigration issues. Additionally, the center actively engages in providing education and training to fellow attorneys and professionals.



Juliana Petro
Legal Director

The biggest accomplishment this year was the Appeal that the Justice Center won in front of the Superior Court. The Justice Center was successful in bringing an appeal before the Pennsylvania Superior Court, which resulted in a published opinion. The case can be found at: Carrero v. Lopez, 2023 Pa. Super. 140 (July 28, 2023). The ruling overturned the trial court's decision to deny the Justice Center client's Petition for Relocation and clarified the law surrounding custody relocations. The hope is that this decision will help other primary custodians obtain favorable decisions in the future that allow them to live their lives free from abuse.

BARBARA J. HART JUSTICE CENTER

A project of the Women's Resource Center

“

“I must say that having them as my biggest support team has changed my life and the life of my children forever. Without them I wouldn't have been able to navigate such opposition. I am truly thankful for everything they have done for me and my family.”

”

*Quote from Barbara J. Hart Justice Center
Program Participant:*

Success By The Numbers

- 143 individual survivors represented
- Justice Center represented in 218 legal matters
- This includes:
 - 35 Divorces
 - 65 Custody matters
 - 72 PFA matters
 - 24 Support matters



Susquehanna County Office News

WRC's Susquehanna County office answered over 2,000 crisis hotline calls and provided services to 301 survivors of domestic violence and 133 survivors of sexual violence during the 2022-2023 fiscal year. We were able to add an additional Rural Economic and Housing Advocate position this year, bringing the number of full-time staff at the Montrose office to six.

WRC's Safe Housing Program in Susquehanna County continues to grow with the addition of Rapid Rehousing DV Bonus funds granted to PCADV for victim services providers in HUD's Eastern CoC Region. During the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the Susquehanna County office was able to house 14 survivors and 31 children using rapid rehousing and transitional housing funds.

However, the lack of safe and affordable housing inventory continues to be a significant barrier in our rural community; while WRC has housing funding to support survivors who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, housing identification and move-in can take many months and leaves survivors and their children in the position of remaining with the abuser, doubled up with friends or family or living in emergency shelter for long periods of time.

Collaboration with Trehab's SWCT and a grant from the Community Foundation has allowed survivors working with WRC to access SWCT's transportation services to emergent court and county agency related appointments. WRC advocates have worked closely with survivors to explain the process for enrolling in SWCT's transportation program so that they may be able to schedule rides on their own on a non-emergent basis. WRC's Susquehanna County office has also begun a partnership with Supporting Area Families Everyday (SAFE), to help bring their programming, which includes monitored custody exchanges, supervised visitation and parenting classes, to our community. A grand opening of their New Milford location is scheduled to occur in the fall of 2023.

The Susquehanna County team prioritizes outreach and community partnerships and has participated in many community based activities over the past year, including the Blueberry Festival, National Night Out, Career Day at Elk Lake and two Susquehanna County Health and Wellness events organized by Sabrina Hannon



Teen & Young Adult Educational Programs



WRC is committed to educating local youth and teens about healthy relationships to help them understand how to prevent dating violence and sexual assault. WRC provides in-school educational programming to students in grades 6-12 in the school districts across Lackawanna and Susquehanna counties. All programs are evidence based and focus on building skills to form Healthy Relationships—skills like communication, calming, how to help a friend, and how to identify healthy vs unhealthy or abusive relationships. Currently we have two full time educators in Lackawanna County, and one full time Counselor Advocate in Susquehanna County to provide these services in schools. Additionally, WRC advocates go into the schools to work confidentially with individual young victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse.

Safe Dates for grades 8-12 was held in the following school districts this year: Abington Heights High School, Lakeland Jr/Sr High School, Mid Valley High School, North Pocono Middle School, Old Forge High School, Scranton and West Scranton High Schools, All Saint's Academy, LaSalle Academy, Nativity Miguel School, OLP, St Mary's, St Paul's. The Healthy Teen Relationships (HTRP) Program for grades 6-7 was held in the following school districts this year: Abington Heights Middle School, Lakeland Jr/Sr High School, North Pocono Middle School, Valley View Middle School, All Saint's Academy, LaSalle Academy, Nativity Miguel School, OLP, St Mary's, St Paul's.

Summer of 2023 WRC was thrilled to be part of 3 summer camps at the YMCA, Project Hope at Camp Kelly, and Camp Archbald. The camps ranged from 3rd grade to high school aged students.

WRC's Prevention Education Programs won 2023's National Purple Ribbon Award for Outstanding Youth Initiative. We are so proud of our staff, the students who participated in the programs, and the schools who have made a commitment to partner with WRC to prevent dating and sexual violence and to promote healthy relationships!

CLOTHES DON'T CAUSE
SEXUAL ASSAULT



Medical Advocacy Program

The Women's Resource's Medical Advocacy Program (MAP) continues to expand our presence in Lackawanna and Susquehanna counties. Medical Advocacy includes the healthcare-based identification of domestic violence, sexual assault & human trafficking victims within the healthcare setting. WRC establishes relationships with health care systems to better serve patients and healthcare professionals alike. Trainings provided by our MAP team are at no cost and cover a variety of issues related to Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Human Trafficking. MAP has provided training to 300+ Medical Professionals in various fields this year alone. Through support from the AllOne Foundation, WRC has been able to collaborate with VIP, the domestic and sexual assault crisis program serving Wayne & Pike Counties. Together our programs held the first annual Medical Advocacy Conference: Practice Partnership & Prevention, where speakers and attendees traveled from across the state to attend. There was even a visit during the conference break from the Compassionate Canines!



Our MAP program, in partnership with the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine designed a Human Trafficking Screening Tool for medical settings. This screening tool was also approved by NEPA Task Force Against Human Trafficking.

Pet Program



Since the conception of WRC's Protecting Pets Against Domestic Violence program, WRC has partnered with the NEPA Animal Welfare Collaborative, increasing resources for survivors of domestic violence and their pets. Working together with the Collaborative, survivor's pets have benefitted from no-cost rabies vaccine and microchip clinics, spay/neuter opportunities, and gaining access to the NEPA Rescue Veterinary Clinic. WRC has also supplied several pets with food, crates, pet carriers, bowls, litter pans, cat litter, and pet beds throughout the year.

Over the last year, WRC has expanded our community outreach including tabling at animal-centered events such as the first ever NEPA Pet Expo and the NEPA Animal Welfare Adoption Expo. Connecting with animal rescues and welfare organizations has allowed WRC to broaden our scope, promoting not only our pet program, but all of WRC's programs and services.

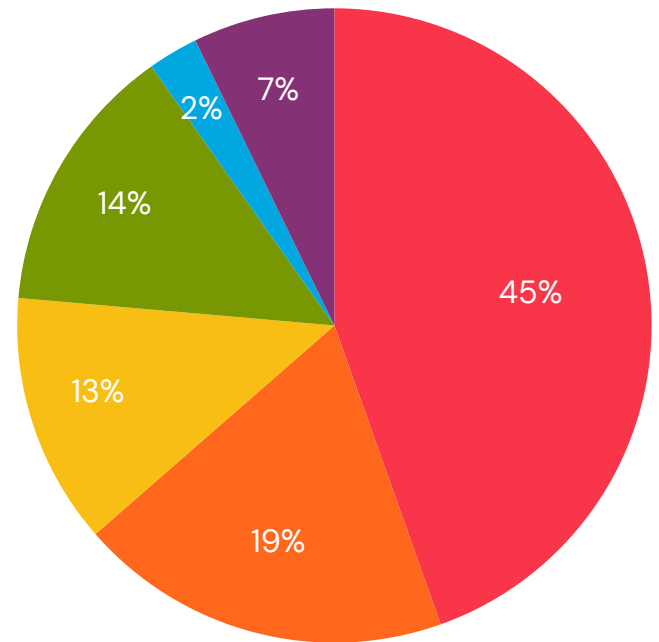
Throughout the 2022-23 fiscal year, WRC's Protecting Pets Against Domestic Violence program has assisted 9 dogs, 2 cats, and 2 guinea pigs. Services have included safe placement and animal rescue networking, veterinary appointments for vaccines, spay/neuter surgeries, emergency help, bloodwork, and wellness visits.

Safe house accommodations were secured for 8 dogs and 1 cat, keeping survivor's pets free from harm, and bonded together with their families who were fleeing abusive situations.

Financials

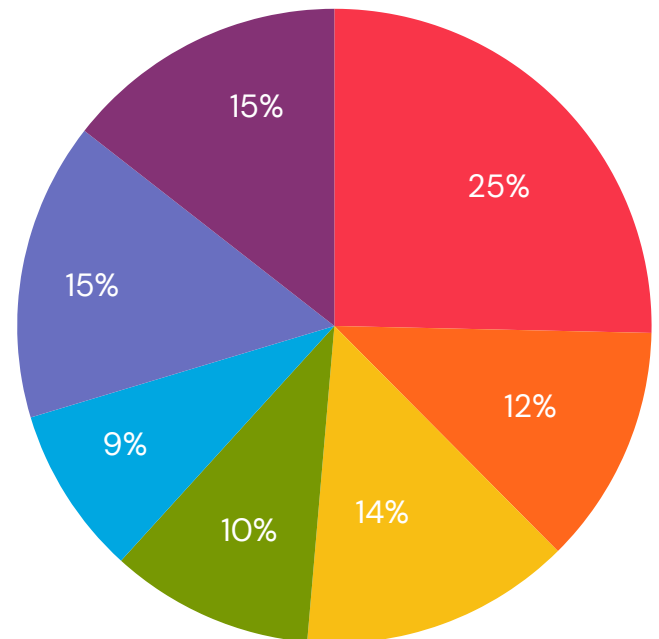
Revenue

■ Federal Grants	\$1,780,646
■ State Grants	\$798,056
■ Foundation Support	\$537,687
■ Donations and Contributions	\$580,565
■ Special Fundraising Events	\$107,351
■ Local Grants	\$303,351
Total	\$4,026,250



Expenses

■ Lackawanna Co. Crisis Program	\$1,074,589
■ Susquehanra Co. Crisis Program	\$517,553
■ Justice Center	\$585,485
■ Education	\$439,656
■ Safe Housing Program	\$364,697
■ Economic Advocacy Project	\$644,697
■ Administrative/Fundraising	\$612,510
Total	\$4,239,187



Santa's Snippers

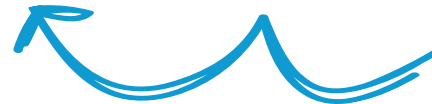
Santa's Snippers, a heartwarming hair-cut-a-thon organized by the WRC Association, proved to be a resounding success, raising an impressive \$8,826. This event not only showcased the festive spirit of giving but also provided dozens of free haircuts for community members in need. With a commitment to supporting the community, Santa's Snippers brought joy and a fresh look to those facing challenges, demonstrating the power of compassion and community involvement.



NEPA Gives



WRC extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who generously supported NEPA Gives on June 2nd and June 3rd. This collective effort within the community resulted in raising over \$1.5 million for more than 200 local non-profits. We express deep gratitude to individual donors, businesses, and foundations that played a pivotal role in championing our cause. WRC achieved an impressive milestone by raising \$23,445 from 87 donors. Notably, the Hawk Family Foundation provided a dollar-for-dollar match, up to \$7,500, amplifying the impact of these contributions. Additionally, WRC received valuable monetary donations, courtesy of the Scranton Area Foundation and the Moses Taylor Foundation.



WRC Association Fundraising Events

Great Chefs



Due to overwhelming demand, this year's Great Chefs made a highly anticipated return with the theme "Dessert Edition: Twice as Sweet!" For over three decades, the Great Chefs event has been a staple, bringing together the finest restaurants and bakeries in the area to showcase their specialties—all in support of the Women's Resource Center. Held at the Scranton Cultural Center on May 11th, the evening was a delightful mix of delicious food, enticing raffles, music, and, of course, delectable dessert tastings.

A total of \$44,372 was raised, contributing to the WRC Safe Nights of Shelter program.



WRC Benefit Golf Tournament

September brought a fantastic day on the links at Pine Hills Golf Club. Erie Materials and Simplex Industries collaborated to organize a WRC benefit golf tournament. The Honorary Chairman for the event was Kurt Aaron from WNEP TV 16, accompanied by the guest star Ranger. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all our sponsors and golfers whose generous contributions helped us raise \$34,802



50/50 Raffle

March brought a delightful 50/50 Raffle hosted at Russell's restaurant in Scranton by the WRC Association. Priced at \$100 per ticket, the raffle successfully raised \$10,000. The funds were evenly split, with the fortunate winner receiving \$5,000, and WRC retaining an equivalent \$5,000.



Staff by Department



ADMINISTRATION:

Margaret Ruddy, Executive Director
Karen Connors, Fiscal Director
Brianna Bednash, Assistant Fiscal Director
Amy Everetts, Director of Development
Peggy Gutowski, Operations Coordinator
Sharon Perrotti, Payroll and Benefits Coordinator
Rosalie Serafin, Fiscal Clerk
Jennifer Kearney, Fiscal Coordinator
Janice Mecca, Fiscal Coordinator
Colleen Gedrich, Data Entry Clerk
Sam DeFazio, Maintenance and Safety Instructor
Stacey Andrews, Maintenance
Jason Thiel, Maintenance
Vanessa Pinto, Admin Relief

SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY STAFF:

Tiffany Benedict, Susquehanna County Program Manager
Andrew Granick, Counselor Advocate, Teen
Melinda Baldwin, Rural Economic & Housing Advocate
Nichole Jesse, Rural Economic & Housing Advocate
Cole Nolan, Rural Counselor, Housing Advocate
Sarah Watson, Rural Counselor, Housing Advocate
Rachel Mercuri, Legal Advocate, Susq. Co.

JUSTICE CENTER STAFF:

Juliana Petro, Legal Director
Denise Burgos, Legal Assistant
DeAnne Greene, Staff Attorney
Rachael Litchman, Staff Attorney
Renee Pilch, Staff Attorney
Nina Menichelli, Staff Attorney
Melissa Reuter, Staff Attorney
Joanna Bryn Smith, Staff Attorney

CRISIS & ADVOCACY SERVICES:

Anna M. Faramelli, MNM, Director of Advocacy and Services
Lori Iannetta, Lackawanna County Program Manager
Phyllis Brown, Program Assistant
Judy Copeland, Senior Counselor Advocate
Christa Capwell, Counselor Advocate
Shelley Doyle, Counselor Advocate
Mary Clare Mecca, Counselor Advocate
Alexa Menichelli, Counselor Advocate
Nuris Perdomo, Counselor Advocate, Teen
Nilda Perez, Crisis Intervention Advocate
Olivia Miller, Jesuit Volunteer Corps Advocate
Madeline Broderick-King, Jesuit Volunteer Corp Advocate
Narcy Alvarenga Morazan, Counselor Advocate Weekend
Melissa Conrad, Emergency Response Advocate
Jailyn Guzman, Emergency Response Advocate

ECONOMIC & HOUSING SERVICES:

Carol Shoener, Economic Advocacy Director
Tessa Wright, Economic & Housing Manager
Evelyn Gibson, Legal Advocate, Lack Co.
Ganessa Hans, Legal Advocate, Lack Co.
Rachel Ingalls, Legal Advocate, Lack Co.
Ana Rodriguez, Legal Advocate, Lack Co.
Julia Smith, Legal Advocate, Lack Co.
Callie Anderson, Economic & Housing Advocate
Sabrina Barnes, Economic & Housing Advocate
Yelsy Ferreras-Sanchez, Counselor Advocate Weekend
Shadahah Peaten, Economic & Housing Advocate (Safe Housing)
Hilda Rodriguez, Economic & Housing Advocate
Taryn Kennedy, Economic & Housing Advocate
McKenzie Ogden, Economic & Housing Advocate

EDUCATION:

Nancy Perri, Grants & Education Programs Director
Sarah Dawgert, Education Manager
Devin Breese, Youth Educator
Sabrina Hannon, Medical Advocacy Program Coordinator
Patty McLain, Teen Educator



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Claudia B. Naismith

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Jaime Ryan, CPA

Elizabeth Schneider, Esq.

Alycia Schwartz, CPA

Shubhra Shetty, M.D.

Kirsten Smith

Sheilia Stallman

Maria Valvano

Kim Wylam

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Mark DeStefano

Kate Eary

Trish Fisher

Pat Fricchione Jr.

Kerri Greco

Linda Hansen

Maggie Hawk

Terri Hinton



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Maureen Guzzi Vice President

Linda Hansen, Treasurer

Peggy Gutowski, Secretary

Leah Gianacopoulos

Autumn Granza

Kerri Holland Greco

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Maura Mohanco

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Colleen Pettinato

Gina Pitoniak

Sally Preate

Leigh Renfer

Elaine Shepard

Tara T. Smith

Allison M. Uhrin, CPA

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Marilyn Alspaugh

Maria Muchal Berta

Maura Boland

Carol Chisdak



Community Partners

The Women's Resource Center is a private non-profit organization funded in part by individual donations, business and corporate contributions, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, United Way of Lackawanna County and Wayne Counties, United Way of Susquehanna County, Lackawanna County, Lackawanna/Susquehanna Behavioral Health/Intellectual Disabilities/Early Intervention Program, Office of Economic and Community Development of Scranton, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Justice/Office of Violence Against Women, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Pennsylvania State Food, and special project grants.





Women's Resource Center

We are your safe place.

www.wrcnepa.org

LACKAWANNA COUNTY

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instagram.com/wrcnepa

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