

WINTER 2020

# THE WOARRIOR WORD

The WOAR Quarterly Newsletter



## WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*A Message from the  
Executive Director*

*Direct Services Scoop*

*Education  
Enlightenment*

*VOICES of a  
#WOARRIOR*

**NEWS**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### WATCH OUT FOR OUR #WOARRIOR MOVEMENT!

*Monique Howard, EdD, MPH*  
WOAR Executive Director

Welcome to WOAR's winter newsletter! Although unseasonably warm, this winter has been a great one for WOAR as we continue to work toward eliminating sexual violence in Philadelphia.

We tip toed into late fall, early winter working on WOAR's new three year Strategic Plan 2020-2023. We are excited and working cooperatively with the board & staff integrated team that works diligently on goals and action steps that align with the mission of our organization. Watch out for our #WOARRIOR Movement!

One of the values that we are happy to address is our commitment to generational diversity and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) work that impact both the organization and the client-base.

In September 2019, we held our annual board meeting that was well attended by staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, partners and our constituency. This public gathering was WOAR's opportunity to showcase its organizational accomplishments and achievements. We are excited about what we have done and what is yet to come.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## WATCH OUT FOR OUR #WOARRIOR MOVEMENT

Monique Howard, EdD MPH  
WOAR Executive Director

*continued...*

Finally, we are so excited about working with Perfection Events, Valerie Gay, and Tracy Davidson to create Sing Out Loud: Singing for Survival. A community chorale comprised of Philly's finest who will sing their hearts out in support of WOAR's mission. Come join us in song or spirit on April 22, 2020 at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University from 6-8pm.

Tickets are on sale now: [http://bit.ly/SOL\\_2020](http://bit.ly/SOL_2020).



## DIRECT SERVICES SCOOP

### TRAUMA HEALING THROUGH YOGA

By Rachel Copen, MS, CPRP, LPC  
Director of Counseling Services

WOAR has offered trauma therapy groups for many years, including one group that showcases Yoga as a form of healing from sexual violence. This group has consistently been well attended and received. Recently, more research has provided evidence that Yoga can be an effective form of healing trauma and through the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape's support, WOAR has strengthened its yoga program. In the last two years, four therapists have completed the Trauma Processing Yoga Group (TPYG) training.

TPYG is a promising practice curriculum created by a clinician, Amy Battersby, MS, LMHC, CTSC, and a yoga instructor, Elizabeth Butler, RYT. This practice uses the intersection of research, mindfulness, and Yoga to address healing from sexual violence. The group aims to reduce traumatic stress symptoms through movement; routine; social connections; consistent, kind, compassionate, soothing words; and expression. By following these five tenants, neurological, physiological, and emotional changes that result from adverse experiences begin to alter.

# DIRECT SERVICES SCOOP

## HEALING THROUGH EMPOWERMENT

By Rachel Copen, MS, CPRP, LPC  
Director of Counseling Services

*continued...*

At the beginning of 2019, WOAR's resident Yoga Instructor and Therapist, Emily Cox, left WOAR to pursue other professional endeavors. However, knowing how vital this form of healing is to our clients, we maintained our commitment to offering TPYG and searched for funding opportunities to add a Yoga Instructor to WOAR or to collaborate with other agencies.

In November of 2019, WOAR was awarded funds from the van Ameringen Foundation allowing us to offer TPYG groups to survivors once again. Currently, we are looking for Yoga Instructors willing to work with us as well as finalizing a decision on new staff applicants. WOAR is grateful to the van Ameringen Foundation for helping us continue this work, and for the agency, partnerships committed survivor healing.

TPYG© is a copyrighted group created in Rhode Island by Amy Battersby, MS, LMHC, CTSC, and Elizabeth Butler, RYT, who trained staff at WOAR.



**If you or anyone in your network is  
interested in learning more about TPYG  
or instructing Yoga for WOAR  
please email Rachel at [info@woar.org](mailto:info@woar.org).**

# DIRECT SERVICES SCOOP

## SENATE BILL 60: PROTECTING VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

By Olga Rodriguez, MSW, MPA  
Human Trafficking Project Coordinator

On February 5, 2020, Governor Wolf signed Senate Bill 60 into law. This bill aims to protect victims of human trafficking by elevating a human trafficking offense to a first-degree felony, increase fines and prison

times, and change the age limits of a child in the current statute to include anyone under age 18 instead of age 16. The bill also allocates 50% of the fines collected under the Safe Harbor bill to the Sexually Exploited



# DIRECT SERVICES SCOOP

## SENATE BILL 60: PROTECTING VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

By Olga Rodriguez  
WOAR Counselor

*continued...*

Children Fund and the Prevention of Human Trafficking Restricted Account.

The signing of Senate Bill 60 means that the State of Pennsylvania is taking crucial measures to ensure that victims of sex trafficking have a voice. The bill also acknowledges the horrendous crimes committed against victims of sex trafficking and underscores the responsibility that we all have in ending human trafficking. More importantly, this law recognizes human trafficking as a crime for which the victims are not the ones that have to pay.

Click [here](#) complete details regarding the signing of Senate Bill 60.

For information about how you can help support WOAR's fight against human trafficking and sexual violence or our Sex Trafficking Advocacy Response Team please visit <https://www.woar.org/counseling/>.

If you or someone you know has been affected by sexual violence, please call our 24-hour hotline at 215-985-3333.

# EDUCATION ENLIGHTENMENT

## MARSY'S LAW FOR PA: THE FIGHT CONTINUES

By LaQuisha Anthony  
WOAR Education & Training Specialist

On November 5, 2019, over 1.7 million Pennsylvanians voted to pass Marsy's Law. My testimony, along with many other survivors, in front of the Pennsylvania Senate helped in the passing of Marsy's Law. I want to share what I learned about Marsy's Law and the impact it has on crime victims.

In the state of Pennsylvania, victims of crimes have been fighting for co-equal rights as the accused and convicted.



Supporters of Marsy's Law held signs in protest during the ACLU's press conference announcing its lawsuit. (Katie Meyer/WITF)

# EDUCATION ENLIGHTENMENT

## MARSY' LAW FOR PA: THE FIGHT CONTINUES

By LaQuisha Anthony

WOAR Education & Training Specialist

*continued...*

Marsy's Law elevates the statutory and common law rights afforded to crime victims in Pennsylvania to include:

- Receive information about their rights and available services
- Receive notification of proceeding and significant developments in criminal cases
- Receive timely notification of proceedings and significant developments in the criminal case
- Receive timely notifications of changes to the offender's custodial status
- Be present at all court proceedings
- Before a plea agreement is finalized, provide input to the prosecution
- Provide a victim impact statement at a plea, sentencing proceeding, or any other process that may result in the offender's release
- Restitution

Many have argued that Marsy's Law will infringe upon the rights of the accused and that the PA Crime Victims' rights bill is enough. While survivors feel The Pennsylvania Crime Victims Bill of Rights is a good policy, it is important to note that if a victim's rights are violated, it does not provide legal recourse for crime victims. This imbalance causes victims to feel as if their rights are not as essential as the accused.

In October 2019, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit to pull Marsy's Law from the ballot on Nov. 5 as a voter referendum. The ACLU claims that Marsy's Law would affect too many parts of the state constitution which presents a violation of laws governing statewide polls. However, Marsy's Law remained on the November ballot giving voters a choice to vote yay or nay. At this time, Marsy's Law will not go into effect until the Supreme court renders a decision.

Jennifer Riley, State Director for Marsy's Law for Pennsylvania, released the following statement regarding Judge Ellen Ceisler's ruling on the request for Preliminary Injunction related to the Crime Victims' Rights Amendment: "The ACLU's untimely attempt to invalidate the ballot initiative for Marsy's Law represents an overwhelming disservice to both survivors and voters across Pennsylvania, many of whom have already cast their votes on the Crime Victims' Rights Amendment. "We are dismayed by the decision of the Commonwealth Court to grant the injunction request. We maintain our position that the proposed amendment for Marsy's Law satisfies the single-subject rule and remain confident that the court will ultimately rule in favor of certifying the election results."

# EDUCATION ENLIGHTENMENT

## MARSY' LAW FOR PA: THE FIGHT CONTINUES

By LaQuisha Anthony

WOAR Education & Training Specialist

*continued...*

Marsy's Law does not diminish the rights of the accused and the convicted. It gives a victim a voice during the criminal justice process, not a veto. No provision of Marsy's Law infringes upon any right held by a defendant under the US Constitution. The defendant retains all due process rights guaranteed under the US Constitution.

Marsy's Law allows a victim to be more than just a piece of evidence in the criminal justice system.

Marsy's Law aims to elevate the rights of crime victims into the state's constitution, which would ensure that victims have rights that are equal to the accused and convicted.

We need to make sure that victims can come forward and seek justice while also feeling that they are protected and well-informed about the process.

[Click here for information about Marsy's Law for Pennsylvania.](#)

## VOICES OF A WOARRIOR

### MEET WOAR'S NEWEST #WOARRIORS

Arthi Selvan (she/her) is an Education and Training Specialist at WOAR. She is a recent graduate from Temple University with a Bachelor's of Science in Chemistry and Teaching. She has her teaching certificate in secondary education chemistry and general science.

She has expertise in leading classrooms and creating after-school programs for kids of all ages. She is most excited to empower the youth of Philadelphia to help to end sexual violence in this city.



**Fun Fact:** Arthi enjoys naming her pets after the things she loves the most, like her cat Potato, her rabbit Decaf, and her dog Biscuit.

# VOICES OF A WOARRIOR

## MEET WOAR'S NEWEST #WOARRIORS

*continued...*

Joey Brodsky is an Education and Training Specialist at WOAR - Philadelphia Center Against Sexual Violence. Previously, Joey worked as an organizer and educator informed by the grassroots movement for justice and liberation. He is excited to move with folks towards the world we need.

**Fun Fact: Joey enjoys logic puzzles and film photography.**



Michael Ticzon (he/him) is the new Director of Development & Community Engagement at WOAR. In his role, he will increase fundraising, streamline communications, and build strategic partnerships in Philadelphia.

He is a South Jersey native returning home to the city he loves and has close to 8 years of nonprofit experience. His previous organizations were in the health and arts sectors with \$2-\$4mil operating budgets where he managed event logistics, database administration, and annual fund activities.

Michael holds a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the Catholic University of America and is a Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE).



**Fun Fact: Michael can play the flute (at least pretends to) like his idol, Lizzo.**



## SUPPORT DURING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

In the effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the WOAR office is closed from March 16- 30, 2020. In an effort to provide crisis services to victims of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and sexual assault the 24-HR hotline is still available along with the addition of chat & text.

**HOTLINE:** Survivors currently receiving services will continue receiving services remotely, either online or by phone. We encourage survivors who are looking to begin services to contact our hotline at 215-985-3333 and our Crisis Advocates will explore your individual needs with you. Hotline, text, and chat are running as usual! You can still reach our hotline for support by phone 24/7 at 215-985-3333 and online at [www.woar.org](http://www.woar.org).

**MEDICAL ADVOCACY:** In consultation with the Department of Public Health, we are suspending our PSARC accompaniment services until further notice. Survivors at PSARC will have the opportunity to connect with an advocate over the phone. Please remember that evidence collection can only happen within five days (5) of an assault. For survivors with questions about the sexual assault exam and evidence collection, you can contact our hotline 215-985-3333 or visit [www.woar.org](http://www.woar.org) for more information.

As we make our way through this situation, we want to express that we must do this in unity. Regardless of any one person's level of risk, it is up to all of us to take steps to stop the virus from traveling through our communities to reduce the likelihood that the virus will find its way to those who are most vulnerable. It is also important to not allow harmful stereotypes and racist messages to go unchecked. Dehumanizing people is at the root of sexual violence and it's part of our work to push back against oppression in all its forms.

In addition, we want to acknowledge that it is often people already dealing with many challenges and barriers who face the greatest risk in times like this. Our communities are only as strong as our most vulnerable. Our communities will be stronger if we each follow advice like washing our hands, working from home, staying home when we are sick if we cannot work from home, and coughing into tissues or our elbows.

If you have any questions about WOAR services during this time, please call our office line at 215-985-3315.



**SERVICE UPDATE REGARDING COVID-19**  
**WOAR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FROM**  
**MARCH 16 TO MARCH 30, 2020**

