



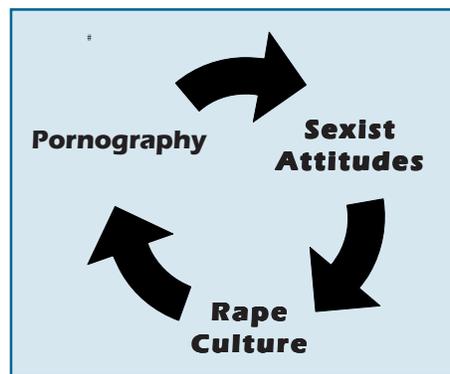
## Pornography and the Rape Culture, In Brief

By Matt Ezzell

Many of us in the rape crisis movement think about the harmful consequences of pornography because we've seen that harm first-hand. We either are, or we've worked with, the women for whom pornography is part of their abuse. Although there is disagreement among those who consider themselves feminists about the connection between pornography and the rape culture, I will outline the basic points in the argument against pornography:

Pornography is harmful. It may be offensive to some and not to others, but it is part of a system that creates social, political, and bodily harm. It is no secret that the pornography industry, a \$56 billion worldwide industry, is churning out material designed to facilitate men's masturbation and sexual pleasure. The subtitle of Playboy magazine makes this clear. Women are presented as "Entertainment for Men."

In the world of pornography, all women want sex all the time, and if a woman doesn't want sex she can be "talked into it" with a little force.



When men look at images or videos of women to facilitate their sexual gratification, those women become mirrors for the men's desire. This is sexual objectification. It dehumanizes the real women who are used in the production of pornography, and it reinforces the dehumanization of all other women.

Those in the industry make the link between women in the images and the real women in men's lives clear: "College girls are girls-next-door, and Playboy's readers always like seeing the girl next door. Of course you want to see a gorgeous supermodel, but at the same time you want to see someone beautiful you could be sitting next to in math class."<sup>1</sup> Every woman, in other words, is subjected to the pornographic gaze.

When a group of people is systematically dehumanized, it is easier to commit acts of violence against them.

Does this mean pornography causes rape? No. If pornography were eradicated tomorrow, rapes would still happen. However, in a world in which we are inundated with images of women to be "had," of women as sexual objects, as things, as body parts, and with constructions of masculine sexuality tied to aggression, violence, and control, it is more likely that acts of sexual violence will be perpetrated against women by men. Pornography does not cause rape, but it is a part of the rape culture.

This is not about being "anti-sex" or prudish. In fact, it is quite the opposite. These questions are crucial to address if we are serious not only about dismantling the rape culture, but also in building and promoting a healthy sexuality. Pornographic and patriarchal sex is about what we do to other human beings, as opposed to what we experience with them. Feminists who are anti-pornography are calling for no less than a humane sexuality.

For more full analyses and discussion of these issues, I would recommend the following as resources:

Jensen, Robert. (2007). *Getting Off: Pornography and the End of Masculinity*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

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## From the Director

As you read through the fall edition of our newsletter you will notice a lot of new changes at the Center. This summer OCRCC started an in-house counseling program and a Latino/a outreach program. I began work as the new Executive Director and we hired several new staff. All this change has been exciting and challenging. One of the things we are constantly reminded of at the Center is the fact that there is always more work for the agency to accomplish.

Although I am a new Executive Director with the Center, I am not new to the work of OCRCC. Before going to graduate school to get my masters in public administration, I spent six and a half years at the OCRCC. I was the first staff member to work in the Center's Hillsborough Office, which is now almost ten years old. Throughout my time at the Center, I presented educational programs in the local schools, answered the 24-hour crisis line, met with community leaders to make our services more accessible, and even posted flyers in the porta johns of a local rodeo. I have really enjoyed returning to the Center and to working to end sexual violence. This is an issue I feel passionate about and an agency I am proud to be a part of.

One of the things I am constantly reminded of is how important the community is to the work that we do. We could not accomplish our mission without the support of our volunteers, donors and community members. I hope to get the chance to see many of you at upcoming events like our Annual Holiday Auction. I thank you for all that you do to support the Center and look forward to working with you in the future.

In peace, Christina Riordan



*Center staff left to right: Shamecca Bryant, Krista Howell, May Mitchell, Carolina Alzuru, Krista Park Berry, Christina Riordan, Michelle Johnson, Jessica Clark, Camila Irwin, and Sage Keene. Staff not pictured: Alexis Kralic, Stacey Rader, Kelly Cadilla and Tricia McGovern.*



The 20th annual holiday auction benefit for the OCRCC will be held on Sunday, December 2, 2007 at the historic Carolina Inn. It is our pleasure to have the melodic jazz stylings of Chapel Hill-based group Equinox, as well as Senator Ellie Kinnaird as our honorary host for the evening.

The reception and silent auction will kick-off at five o'clock with a live auction to follow. The evening will wrap up with a delicious assortment of desserts. The table with the highest bid receives the first dessert selection.

The annual holiday auction is the Center's primary fundraising effort. This year we aim to raise \$80k. We depend on donations from the community to support our mission to stop sexual violence and its impact through support, education, and advocacy. With your support, the annual holiday auction will continue to be a resounding success.

Tickets are now available for our 20th annual holiday auction. The cost is \$50 per person or \$500 to host a table for 10. If you would like to attend the auction, make a donation or volunteer, please contact: Shamecca Bryant, Development Director at (919) 968-4647 or [shamecca@ocrcc.org](mailto:shamecca@ocrcc.org).

# Center Expands Services to Reach New Populations

By Michelle Johnson, Associate Director

The Orange County Rape Crisis Center is embarking on two exciting new initiatives. In 2007, the Center was awarded a \$200,000 grant from the Governor's Crime Commission for use over two years to enhance the services we offer to survivors of sexual violence. In July 2007, we added a full-time Latina/o Services Coordinator (LSC) and a therapy program in an effort to offer more comprehensive services to survivors of sexual violence.

For several years the Center has examined how our services could be more accessible to the diverse populations in our community. In particular, we have focused on how to improve our services to the growing Latino/a population.

We are excited to announce that Carolina Alzuru is our new LSC. In addition to her Administrative Services Coordinator tasks, Carolina has spent much of her first year at the Center translating our brochures into Spanish, making community contacts with organizations that serve the Latino/a

Community, speaking on local radio shows about OCRCC services, and reaching out to the Latino/a community.

As Carolina shifts into her new role she is focusing on outreach in the community in the hopes of increasing the number of Latino/a clients accessing our services.

"This is a really exciting opportunity to do something that we haven't been able to do before, but have wanted to do for a long time. It's giving us the chance to continue to work towards our mission and actualizing our vision to end sexual violence and all forms of oppression by reaching out to new communities," Carolina said.

Initial steps include recruiting bilingual volunteers to work on our crisis line and developing a group of community leaders to focus on our client outreach to the Latino/a clients.

OCRCC has been offering 24-hour crisis line support for decades. We also have a

strong support group program and conducted seven support groups over the last fiscal year. We are excited that our organization is adding a therapy component to our client services program. For the next two year, we will be offering therapy provided by Michelle Johnson, LCSW and two social work interns. We hope to offer therapy in our Hillsborough and Chapel Hill offices.

Clients will be eligible for an assessment to find out about appropriate options including: short term therapy at OCRCC, longer term therapy in the community, or participation in a Center support group. After the first year of the program we will evaluate our program in preparation for year two.

Changes are abound at OCRCC. Keep your eyes and ears open for more information about these programs. Updates on these and other Center initiatives can be found on the agency's website: [www.occcc.org](http://www.occcc.org)



Left to right: Wendy Lindberg (NCCU Law Student), Barbara Lagemann (NCCU Law Student and former Crisis Response Coordinator), Margaret Barrett (former Executive Director), James Martin of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of NC, and Heather Luden of Population Connection.

## Women's Advocacy Day

OCRCC's former Executive Director Margaret Barrett joined other advocates from across North Carolina for Women's Advocacy Day on May 22, 2007. This event, coordinated by North Carolina Women United and numerous other organizations, was an opportunity to educate members of the North Carolina General Assembly about the legislative issues important to women.

One of the major initiatives being presented included a Compassionate Care Bill to ensure that Emergency Contraception is available to all sexual assault survivors in hospital emergency rooms. Although this is a service routinely provided at the Emergency Department of UNC Hospitals in Orange County, this service is not routinely provided at all hospitals throughout the state.

# Day of Truthtelling Gives Community a Voice

By May Mitchell, Rape Prevention Education Coordinator

An estimated 250 people participated in The Day of Truth Telling held on April 27th, 2007. According to the planning committee, this was a day for people to call for the end to all forms of sexual violence. “The vision for the day was to create healing, loving, transformative spaces where we can celebrate and honor each person’s humanity and the power of community.”

The Day of Truth Telling was planned by Black Workers for Justice, Freedom Road Socialist Organization/Organización Socialista del Camino para la Libertad, Independent Voices, Men Against Rape Culture (MARC), North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NCCASA), Raleigh Fight Imperialism—Stand Together (FIST), SpiritHouse, Southerners On New Ground (SONG), and Ubuntu. OCRCC was one of the many sponsors for this event.

The marchers began at E.K. Powe Elementary School on Ninth Street, accompanied by a percussion group. The



Monika Johnson-Hostler, Executive Director of the North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Violence (pictured left), speaks at the event. Photo provided by NCCASA.

march stopped in front of 610 N. Buchanan Blvd., the house where the Duke men’s Lacrosse players held the party that resulted in the infamous rape case.

Alexis Pauline Grumbs from UBUNTU and SpiritHouse read an open letter called, “Wishful Thinking.” (This letter is included on the next page) In the letter she addressed the black women of the University and spoke about the pain that survivors of sexual violence experience. From Buchanan

Blvd., the march continued to the Durham County Courthouse for a rally. Several individuals shared stories about their own experience of being a survivor of sexual violence and described how the criminal justice system has failed survivors of sexual violence, especially people of color.

The speeches encouraged participants to continue speaking out and fighting the rape culture that surrounds us. The final

destination was W.D. Hill Recreation center located in a predominantly poor African-American neighborhood deeply affected by the racism, sexism, and classism of the Duke Lacrosse case. The march route through this neighborhood aimed to show support in the fight against oppression.

For more information about the event and how you can help you can visit the Day of Truth Telling website at <http://truthtelling.communityserver.com>

## continued from page 1

Jensen, Robert. (July, 2004). “Pornography and Sexual Violence.”

<http://feministantipornographymovement.org>

VAWnet, a project of the National Resources Center on Domestic Violence.

Whisnant, Rebecca & Christine Stark (eds). (2004). “Not for Sale: Feminists Resisting Prostitution and Pornography.” North Melbourne, Australia: Spinifex.

<sup>1</sup>Theresa Hennessey, Playboy spokesperson, quoted in The Daily Tar Heel, April 1, 2004, “Playboy shoot makes waves,” by Linda Shen.



## Weaver Street Market After Hours Fundraiser

OCRCC was the *Community Spotlight* on Thursday, July 19th at Weaver Street Market’s *After hours* event. Staff and volunteers served food to community members in an effort to raise funds to support OCRCC programming. Thanks to Weaver Street Market for their continued support of OCRCC’s efforts.

# “wishful thinking” or “what i’m waiting to find in our email boxes”

This open letter was read during the Day of Truthtelling on April 27, 2007.

*Editor's note: Some formatting changes were made to this piece. These changes were for formatting purposes only and were not meant to compromise the authors' intended message. We apologize for this inconvenience.*

(with Mendi and Keith Obadike—[www.blacknetart.com](http://www.blacknetart.com)— in mind) dedicated to the black women at Duke and North Carolina Central Universities and you

1. you wake up each day as new as anyone there is no reason to assume you would be supernaturally strong. there is no reason to test your strength through daily disrespect and neglect. you don't need to be strong. everyone supports you.

2. if you say ouch we believe that you are hurt. we wait to hear how we can help to mend your pain.

3. you have chosen to be at a school, at a workplace, in a community that knows that you are priceless that would never sacrifice your spirit that knows it needs your brilliance to be whole

4. your very skin is sacred and everything beyond it is a miracle that we revere

5. we mourn any violence that has ever been enacted against you. we will do what it takes to make sure that it doesn't happen again. to anyone.

6. when you speak we listen. we are so glad that you are here, of all places.

7. other women even strangers reach out to you when you seem afraid and they stay until peace comes

8. the sun reminds everyone how much they love you.

9. people are interested in what you are wearing simply because it tells

them what paintings to make.

10. everyone has always told you you can stay a child until you are ready to move on

11. if you run across the street naked at midnight no one will think you are asking for anything.

12. you do so many things because it feels good to move. you have nothing to prove to anyone.

13. white people cannot harm you. they do not want to. they do not do it by accident.

14. your smile makes people glad to be alive

15. your body is not a symbol of anything

16. everyone respects your work and makes sure you are safe while doing it

17. at any moment you might relive the joy of being embraced

18. no one will lie to you, scream at you or demand anything.

19. when you change your mind, people will remember to change theirs.

20. your children are safe no one will use them against you.

21. the university is a place where you are reflected and embraced. anyone who forgets how miraculous you are need only open their eyes.

22. the universe conspires to lift you up.

23. on the news everynight people who look like you and the people you love are applauded for their contribution to society.

24. the place where knowledge is has no walls.

25. you are rewarded for the work you do to keep it all together.

26. every song i've ever heard on the radio is in praise of you.

27. the way you speak is exactly right for wherever you happen to be.

28. there is no continent anywhere where life counts as nothing.

29. there is no innocence that needs your guilt to prove it.

30. there is no house in your neighborhood where you still hear screams every time you go past.

31. no news camera waits to amplify your pain.

32. nobody wonders whether you will make it. everybody believes in you

33. when you have a child no one finds it tragic. no map records it as an instance of blight.

34. no one hopes you will give up on your neighborhood so they can buy it up cheap.

35. everyone asks you your name. no one calls you out of it.

36. someone is thinking highly of you right now.

37. being around you makes people want to be their kindest, most generous selves.

38. there is no law anywhere that depends on your silence.

39. nobody bases their privilege on their ability to desecrate you.

40. everyone will believe anything you say because they have been telling you the truth all along.

41. school is a place, like every other place. no one here is out to get you.

42. worldwide, girls who look like you are known for having great ideas.

43. 3 in 3 women will fall in love with themselves during their lifetime.

44. every minute in North Carolina a woman embraces another woman.

45. you know 8 people who will help you move to a new place if you need to.

46. when you speak loudly everyone is happy because they wondered what you were thinking about.

47. people give you gifts and truly expect nothing in return.

48. no one thinks you are over reacting.

49. everyone believes that you should have all the resources that you need, because by being yourself you make the world so much brighter.

50. any creases on your face are from laughter.

51. no one, anywhere, is locked in a cage.

52. you are completely used to knowing what you want. following your dream is as easy as walking.

53. you are more than enough.

54. everyone is waiting to see what great thing you'll do next.

55. every institution wants to know what you think, so they can find out what they should really be doing, or shut down.

56. strangers send you love letters thanking you for speaking your mind.

57. you wake up new as anyone.

- Alexis Pauline Gumbs  
April 2007

## Re-Finding My Identity: A Secondary Survivor's Story

Over the years I found myself trying to help my spouse find assistance in overcoming the issues of a primary survivor. I searched for therapists in order to find one that she might feel comfortable enough to open up to, only to find out the therapist had no strategies to help. I read articles and asked questions to professionals in hopes maybe I could provide some amateur insights. Over time I was pulled into the vacuum and lost my own identity.

I began the secondary survivors group thinking that maybe I would come away with some insight on how to help my loved one through her "low spot." You know, those times when something triggers

an emotional spiral. It could be a smell, a particular sound, or maybe something visual. I came away with a better understanding of my loved one and myself.

The assembled group was a diverse one. This diversity allowed us to gain insight to the issue of secondary survivor from many different perspectives. Secondary survivors can include a spouse, a daughter, a son, or a mother, to name a few.

The issues associated with sexual abuse are so strong that all those individuals around the primary survivor are sucked in, like a vacuum, to a problem they may not even be aware of. As a spouse of a primary survivor this happened to me. It was not until we

were married for approximately 10 years before my spouse was able to reveal her "secret." Armed with knowledge I was finally able to figure out why she behaved the way she did, her reluctance to drive too far from this area, her lack of trust (even in me), her disdain for family events, etc.

With each passing meeting I found myself counting the days to the next meeting. The ability to "bounce" things off my peers and the insightful input from the facilitators began to make me realize that I had been pulled in so deep that I had lost my own identity. I am grateful for this opportunity and how it has impacted me. I look forward to attending another secondary survivors group.

## The Inheritance of Incest

"There's a group for secondary survivors at the Orange County Rape Crisis Center," a friend told me, after I described some of my experiences as the daughter of an incest survivor. "You might want to sign up."

I had never referred to myself as a secondary survivor, so I was grateful for both the phrase and the opportunity to meet with other people who are related to survivors of sexual violence. As someone who grew up with a mother who experienced the devastating psychological impact of incest, I have lived with an array of identity-shaping issues myself, including secrecy, healthy body image struggles, suppression of feelings, fear of sexuality and maintaining appropriate boundaries in relationships. But for many years I did not connect my issues with my mother's issues; she is the survivor, after all, not me.

Thanks to the OCRCC, I now understand that survivorship does not stop with the

first generation. Incest—and all forms of sexual violence—affects the lives of the people who are closely related to victims as well. The term "secondary survivor" validates our experience, and our need for support.

OCRCC provides a safe, confidential space for secondary survivors of all kinds of

sexual abuse to step out of secrecy, reflect on their own patterns of behavior and gain the confidence it takes to keep the cycle of sexual violence from repeating itself. If someone you live with is a direct survivor, then let me pass along some advice and suggest that you sign up for the secondary survivor support group at OCRCC.

### Upcoming Support Groups

We anticipate offering three support groups this winter:

- Rape/Sexual Assault
- Secondary Survivors
- Childhood Sexual Assault

The groups will begin in mid-January and will run for 8-10 weeks. Participation in OCRCC support groups requires a pre-screening; deadline for winter groups screening is January 2nd. Please contact Sage at (919) 968-4647 x 3002.

For more information about the Center's Support Group program, please visit the agency's website at [www.ocrcc.org](http://www.ocrcc.org)

# Center Offers Horticultural Therapy Support Group

By Christene Tashjian

In September 2006, horticultural therapist Christene Tashjian was awarded a grant from the Carolinas Chapter of the American Horticultural Therapy Association to plan and implement a horticultural therapy (HT) support group in collaboration with the Center. Since fall of 2005, Christene has worked with Margaret Barrett and other OCRCC staff in hopes of conducting such a project. In April, Christene began co-facilitating her dream project with longtime Center volunteer Amy E.

HT is the use of plants and plant-based materials to help people reconnect with nature to achieve goals related to their physical, mental, or emotional well-being.

The pilot project focuses on using HT to improve the general well-being of support group participants, female primary survivors of sexual assault. An HT activity is conducted weekly to introduce a topic or as a means of summarizing a topic. The

HT activity comprises half of the two-hour weekly meeting.

During the first meeting of the group, participants introduced themselves by choosing a houseplant and sharing their reason for picking the plant. One person chose a winged begonia, stating that, like the stalks of the plant that went in different directions, she too felt “out there” emotionally even if she didn’t want to be.

One of the most powerful sessions addressed the topic of grief and loss. A grieving ceremony was held whereby each person wrote about losses they felt as a result of their assault(s) on a white tag. Then, the tags were hung on a flower stem, sharing (or not) what was written on the tag with the group.



Group participants gather around their cactus bowls during one of the HT support sessions.

The HT support group has received tremendous support from the local community. Amy secured flower donations from vendors at the Carrboro Farmer’s Market. The flowers graced the center of the group table or were used in activities.

Local herbalist Suki Roth contributed to the group through weekly donations of her herb tea blends. Participants enjoyed cold tea and took home an individual tea bag of the weekly mixture. Additionally, Suki donated the use of her Herb Haven in Hillsborough for the last group meeting.

The owners of Green Hope Farm in New Hampshire donated flower essences used to address sexual assault, abandonment and abuse, grief and loss. The essences were available for participants’ use each week.

Thanks to everyone who made donations to the HT support group; especially the owners of Peregrine Farm, Perry-winkle Farm, Eco Farm, local herbalist Suki Roth, and Green Hope Farm.

## Thank you...

The support group program was thrilled to be able to offer the first ever horticultural therapy group this spring. Christene Tashjian, a certified horticultural therapist, approached the Center in 2005 and developed a curriculum to offer a group focused on using plants and nature as a tool for healing. Amy E., a long-time volunteer served as the co-facilitator for the group.

Amy and Christene worked together to offer this unique opportunity to survivors of sexual violence. They put time, talent and energy into their work with clients in this group. Christene brought her horticultural therapy knowledge, practice, and experience. Amy contributed her connection with local farmers and previous experience working with survivors in educational programs.

They both gave the gift of the earth, nature, and healing to all of the clients that they came in contact with through this group. Amy and Christene are two volunteers who make our work possible. I honor them for their contributions, what they give, and who they are.

~Michelle Johnson, Associate Director

# Beacon Program Expansion Increases Services for Children

By Michelle Bertuglia-Haley, former Crisis Response Coordinator

The Beacon Program provides comprehensive coordinated care to survivors of family violence and it strives to end the generational cycle of violence. Specifically, it serves victims of domestic violence, the elderly and children. The program achieves this by providing evaluations, counseling and referrals to health care providers and community agencies for its patients.

“More than 100,000 child abuse cases are reported to authorities in North Carolina regarding physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect,” said, Tricia Heafner the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Coordinator for UNC Emergency Department.

The services provided benefit Orange County because, as a resource, it not only provides direct patient care, but also a team of individuals dedicated to ongoing training and education, said Dr. Molly Curtin Berkoff with the Child Medical Evaluation

Program Department of Pediatrics at UNC.

Recently the Beacon Program expanded services to include the Child Evaluation Clinic. This clinic provides comprehensive evaluations for children with a suspicion for abuse and/or neglect. The children are interviewed by a clinic social worker from the UNC Program on Childhood Trauma and Maltreatment. Interviews are video-taped, which decreases the number of times the child has to tell his/her story.

Researchers believe ultimately this can help the child's long-term healing process. Physical exams are performed by a member of the Child Protection team and a summary of the report is made and sent to the appropriate referral agency.

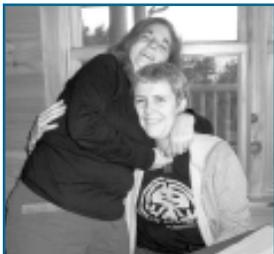
“It is important to remember children make up 25 percent of our population but 100 percent of our future. We as individuals,

communities and as a society have an obligation to protect children,” Heafner said.

“We are fortunate in Orange County to have a resource such as the Beacon program within UNC Hospitals,” said Margaret Barrett, former Executive Director of the OCRCC. “In the future, I hope that the Rape Crisis Center can increase its collaboration with the Beacon program in order to provide a more coordinated response to child and adult survivors of sexual violence.”

The clinic is currently open one half day a week. Appointments are made through the Beacon Program and providers prefer law enforcement agencies to schedule the appointment. The Orange County Rape Crisis Center's trained companion volunteers can be present to provide support for non-offending adult family members during and after the medical and forensic exams.

By Allison H., Summer Intern



Noreen relaxing in the mountains with her partner Tamara

Noreen Fagan was always disturbed by the accounts of sexual abuse she heard about in her home country Zambia, where poverty played a large role in the prevalence of sexual violence.

Soon after moving to Chapel Hill in 2000, Noreen drove past a building with a sign that said “Rape Crisis Center.” She was so relieved and glad to know that support existed for survivors and their allies; she enrolled in the fall 2001 Companion training class.

In the past six years, Noreen has served many roles at the center: Companion, Support Group Facilitator, Board of Directors member, and Diversity Committee member. Margaret

## Devoted Volunteer

Barrett, former Executive Director, describes Noreen as “intelligent, sensitive, inclusive, articulate, supportive, and possessing a wonderful sense of humor that helps all of us to get through the difficult times that are inevitable in our line of work.” Since becoming a Companion, Noreen has generously used her volunteer experience to mentor newer volunteers.

Former Crisis Response Coordinator Michelle Bertuglia-Haley says, “Noreen is a tremendous asset to our organization because of her versatility in service. In her work as a Companion, she is always willing to help in a bind despite all the other things she has going on. I truly respect her level of dedication.” Noreen's dedication to survivors led her to train as a Support Group Facilitator.

In 2006, Noreen joined the Board of Directors and Diversity Committee. She says her passion for working on the Board is to extend

volunteer services to help the staff. “The greatest part about volunteering at the Center is working with warm, brilliant people,” Noreen emphasized. As a crisis volunteer, she has made many trips to the hospital. “Sometimes it seems like a nightmare, but there is always support. You can always turn around and talk to someone.”

Noreen is currently a student in the School of Journalism at UNC, where her focus is multimedia design. She plans to finish in spring 2008, and wants to use her multimedia skills to improve health communication, especially in developing countries.

Noreen lives with her partner Tamara, two sons Sebastian and Addison, and their Dalmatian Freya. With all her hard work, she still manages to find time for her favorite activities: biking and running in the park. Thank you Noreen, for all your inspirational service!!

# Center Brings Speaker to Address Violence Against Women in South Asian Community

By Dipa B., former Social Work Intern

Violence—in any form—against women has been receiving increasing attention from policymakers, social scientists and social workers over the past two decades. However, although there is general agreement that such violence is a social problem, little attention has been paid to addressing the problem among ethnic minorities. As a result, their troubles remain invisible, myths and stereotypes are perpetuated, and a vicious cycle of violence continues unabated.

It was with the hope of understanding the abuse, its effect on immigrant women and the responsibilities that a mainstream social organization needs to shoulder to mitigate the problem that the Orange County Rape Crisis Center invited Dr. Margaret Abraham, noted South Asian women's activist, author and professor, to deliver a lecture at Chapman Hall, UNC, on April 19. The event was co-sponsored by the Campus Y, the Carolina Women's Center and the Family Violence Prevention Center of Orange County.

Dr. Abraham is a professor of sociology at New York's Hofstra University, and has been involved in research and activism in the field of violence against women in the South Asian immigrant community for more than a decade. Her work has been profiled and quoted in the NY Times,

Chicago Tribune and Newsday. Her book, *Speaking the Un-speakable: Marital Violence Among South Asian Immigrants in the United States* won the American Sociological Association Section on Asian and Asian America Outstanding Book Award in 2002.

The OCRCC has long been eager to do more outreach with the local South Asian community, and the session with Dr. Abraham helped lift the shroud of silence that surrounds violence against women in that community. Dr. Abraham spoke at length about strategies to build community partnerships and other key aspects to addressing such violence.

The picture Dr. Abraham painted was nuanced—not only did it provide an overview of the community and its presence in the US, but also an insider's view of the extent of the problem, its causes and manifestations. The lecture presented the



Michelle Bertuglia-Haley (former Crisis Response Coordinator), Margaret Barrett (former Executive Director), Michelle Johnson (Associate Director), Margaret Abraham, Dipa B. (former Social Work Intern), and Chimi Boyd (former Associate Director of the Carolina Women's Center and OCRCC Diversity Committee Member).

many realities that hinder resolution of such violence and made the audience aware of legal and institutional roadblocks for victims' rehabilitation. The interactive session with Dr. Abraham was well attended and provided a platform for an insightful discussion on immigrant realities in the United States, the response of domestic violence and sexual violence organizations to South Asian survivors, and the tools available to improve services.

## Looking to get involved? Volunteer!

If you are interested in volunteering with the Center, our Winter/Spring training for Community Educators and Companions begins mid-February. For more information and to download an application, please visit our website at [www.occcc.org](http://www.occcc.org) or call the Center at (919) 968-4647.



**Sunday, Dec. 2nd**  
**Save the Date!**

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Without the financial support of our community the important work we do would not be possible. While the lists below may appear to be a long recitation of names, they actually represent the life blood of our agency. We are deeply appreciative of the trust our donors place in us to use their money wisely. Listed below are those who have given financial or in-kind donations to the Center from February 1, 2007 to August 31, 2007.

We make every effort to maintain the accuracy of this list, however, oversights are possible. If you notice an error or absence of a name that should be on the list, please notify us and we will make the corrections in the winter newsletter. Again, thank you for all of your support.

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Return form to: OCRCC, PO Box 4722, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-4722

If you have questions, contact Shamecca Bryant at shamecca@ocrcc.org or (919) 968-4647.

## 2007 Annual General Meeting Report



Dr. Timothy Tyson

The Orange County Rape Crisis Center held its 2007 Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, September 11, 2007 at the Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. This year's event featured a special presentation by Dr. Tim Tyson, author of the award-winning book *Blood Done Sign My Name*, and vocalist Mary D. Williams. The meeting also included the presentation of three awards to community members who have contributed to the center's mission to stop sexual violence.



Melinda Manning (left) and Chimi Boyd

Chimi Boyd, former Assistant Director for the Carolina Women's Center, and Melinda Manning, Assistant Dean of Students, received the Mary Ann Chapp Award for Individual Community Service for their years of work on sexual violence issues at the UNC-Chapel Hill and their establishment of the HAVEN (Helping to Advocate for Violence Ending Now) program on campus.

UBUNTU, a Durham-based, survivor-led organization for women of color who have experienced sexual violence, were awarded the Mary Ann Chapp Award for Organizational Community Service for helping to break the silence about sexual and racist violence.

Heather Benjamin, a former OCRCC Board Member, received the Margaret Henderson Award for Service and Self-Care for her work as Chair of the OCRCC Personnel Committee, where she worked to improve insurance benefits and establish a retirement plan for the agency's paid staff.

### Orange County Rape Crisis Center

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