



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF BAYONNE

630 AVENUE C • BAYONNE, NEW JERSEY 07002-3898
TEL. (201) 858-6010 • FAX (201) 436-2413

JAMES DAVIS, *MAYOR*



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For immediate release:

Bayonne City Council Approves Grants for Two Groups That Help Victims of Domestic Violence

At its November meeting, the Bayonne City Council approved grant awards to two non-profit organizations that help victims of domestic violence. Women Rising of Hudson County and Sarah's Daughters Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation will each receive a grant of \$12,500. Speaking at the Council meeting, Municipal Services Director Suzanne Cavanaugh described the two organizations as "phenomenal support groups." She cited the groups' "depth of commitment" to helping those who have experienced domestic violence.

Addressing the City Council, Margaret Abrams of Women Rising discussed her organization's domestic violence volunteer resource team, which has worked in Bayonne since 2001. Women Rising operates a domestic violence telephone hotline. The group operates a shelter for adults and children. Women Rising has three support groups for speakers of different languages, English, Spanish, and Arabic. Women Rising provides education in Hudson County high schools on the issue of domestic violence. Ms. Abrams thanked the Council for approving the grant. She said the group would be educating the community and would be offering confidential help to victims. Ms. Abrams advised the audience that anyone who hears screams, cries, or the breaking of objects should call the police.

Women Rising was known in the 20th century as the YWCA of Hudson County.

Representing Sarah's Daughters, Pastor Bertha Reels thanked the Council for approving the funds that will help the group to continue its work. She traced her own involvement in the cause back to her teenage years when she was abused by a man. Rev. Bertha reported that the abuse caused her to leave school. According to Pastor Bertha, it is very important that domestic violence education is brought into the school system. She said that abuse needs to be explained to the students, and that domestic violence "is everywhere." Pastor Bertha pointed out that abuse can be physical, verbal, financial, or sexual, and that it involves "controlling another individual." Sarah's Daughters will have discussions at schools and in the community, Pastor Bertha said. The organization will sponsor workshops, and will invite the police and public officials to participate. She thanked the volunteers who work for Sarah's Daughters. Concluding with a message to victims of domestic abuse, Pastor Bertha said, "Yes, you can rise above this."

The City of Bayonne will provide the grants to Women Rising and Sarah's Daughters from \$25,000 in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Domestic Violence Grant Program.