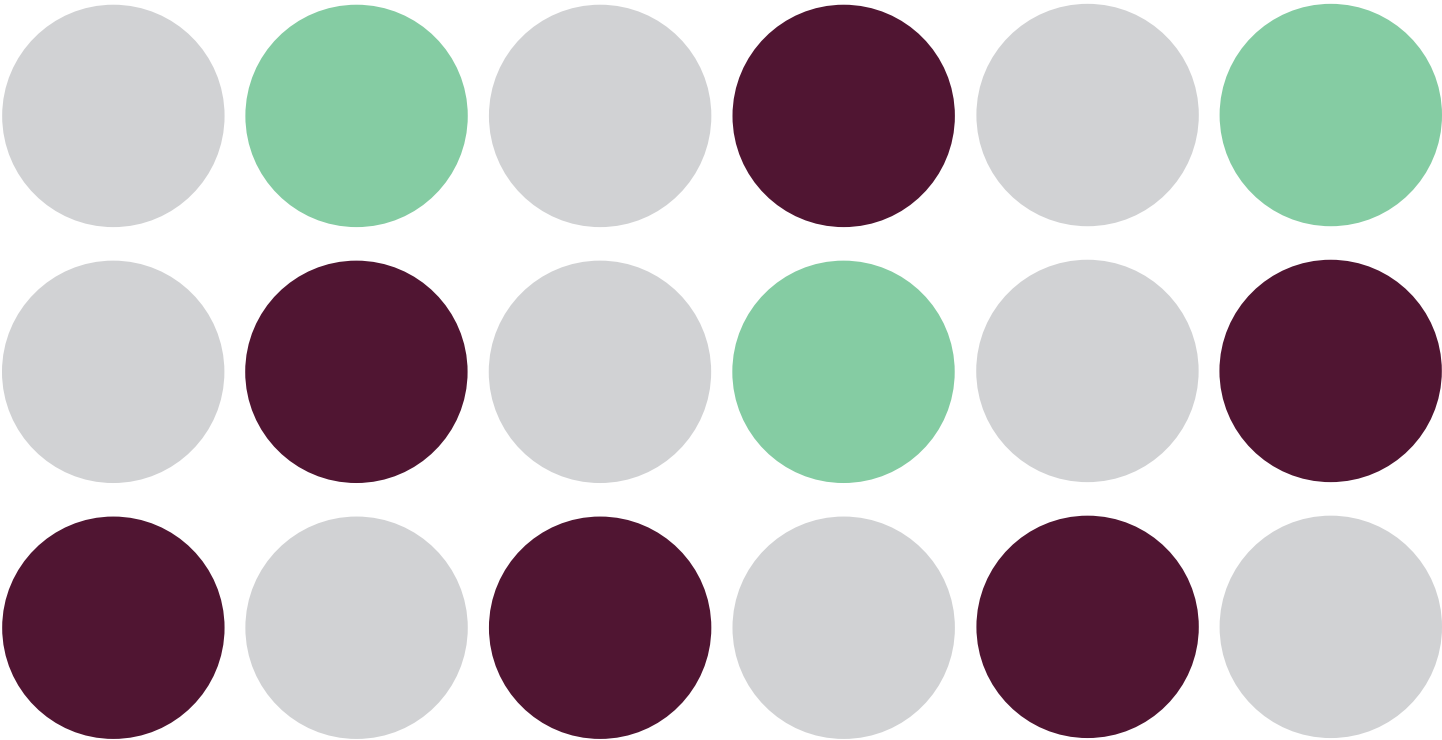


# 2015 Annual Report

**sace** sexual assault centre  
of edmonton



• 1 in 3 Women have been sexually assaulted • 1 in 6 Men have been sexually assaulted

Listen. Believe. Support. *We can all do something.*

# Mission

**The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (SACE)** exists to empower individuals affected by sexual abuse and assault and to empower communities so they can take action against sexual violence.

Our core beliefs

## We Believe...

- sexual violence is an abuse of power and trust;
- people can heal;
- individuals should be free to make their own life choices;
- each person should have the opportunity to learn and grow;
- in creating a safe environment by valuing diversity and respecting all people;
- inability to pay should not be a barrier to receiving service;
- in providing support and advocacy for people who have been affected by sexual violence;
- services must be accessible to children, adolescents and adults of all genders;
- communities must take action to protect vulnerable people and to become free from violence;
- offenders, not victims, must take responsibility for violence;
- teamwork is essential;
- volunteers are crucial to our agency and provide a link to the community.

## Message from the Board Chair

It is my honour and privilege to bring greetings from my Board Colleagues to the membership and the general public. I wish to thank our funders whose ongoing support is integral to the fabulous work of SACE: The United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, City of Edmonton Family and Community Support Services, Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, Alberta Human Services, Alberta Health, and the many donations from individuals, organizations and corporations. As always, our volunteers need to be acknowledged for the valuable contributions to the Agency, including my wonderful Board colleagues.

Our “It Takes Two” fundraiser in February was a fabulous success and showcased the resiliency, hope and strength of survivors of sexual violence. The funds raised at the event will be used to provide services and support to the many individuals who have been impacted by the crime of sexual assault/abuse. In June, SACE was proud to celebrate our 40th anniversary by hosting a drop-in event for current and former staff, volunteers and community partners. The event was very well attended and provided a great opportunity for everyone to connect.

We said good-bye to Karen Smith as she retired after 22 years at SACE, much of it as the Executive Director. Her dedication and hard work contributed tremendously to where the agency is today. In November, we welcomed Mary Jane James as the new Executive Director. Many will remember Mary Jane as the Assistant Executive Director for the past 7 years. Mary Jane has accepted the position with passion and excitement... welcome, Mary Jane.

### Susan Jamieson

*Board Chair*

## Treasurer's Report

SACE's financial goal each year is to use its available financial resources in the most efficient manner. SACE achieved that goal again in 2015. Operationally SACE was break even in 2015, and even showed a bottom line profit from its gala fundraising event, which will be used in the future where most needed.

SACE continues to remain in a financially stable position. This is due to the generous contributions of our funders, combined with the efficiency and dedication of the volunteers, staff and management of SACE.

SACE is extremely grateful for the financial support received from its core funders, the United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, City of Edmonton Family and Community Support Services, Alberta Human Services, Alberta Health, and Alberta Justice and Solicitor General.

Additional funding is provided to SACE from a number of other organizations and individuals. This funding provides supplementary support to our core services, and also presents opportunities for additional, unique service provision. SACE would also like to acknowledge the continued generous support and assistance received from our landlord, Allan Edie, of A.B. Edie Equities Inc.

The services SACE provides are essential to our community, and SACE is proud to continue to provide those services at an exceptionally high level.

### Ryan Schetzle

*Treasurer*

# Board of Directors

## Executive

Susan Jamieson, Chair  
Carlynn McAneeley, Vice Chair  
Ryan Schetzle, Treasurer  
Elaine Degrandpre, Secretary

## General Members

Karen Booth  
Allison Downey-Damato  
Gillian Evans  
Mary Frances Fitzgerald  
Namrata Gill  
Shawna Grimes  
Pat Harrish  
Amber Krasowski  
Devin Laforce  
Laura Lee  
JoAnn McCartney  
Kirsty Prasad  
John Ratcliff  
Denise Watson

“

***Loving ourselves through the process of owning our own story is the bravest thing we'll ever do.***

- BRENÉ BROWN -

”

# Staff

## Executive Director

Mary Jane James

## Counselling Services

Dr. Karen Dushinski (Director)  
Shristi Bali  
Morgan Bissegger  
Janelle Boisvert  
Jennifer Dodd  
Lisa Hardy  
Christy Hennig  
Terra Irvine  
Hala Kaiss  
Jessica Macumber  
Monika Penner  
Katie Poirier  
Majja Prakash  
Ruth Pullam  
Hanelle Sawa  
Lauren Wiles

## Community Engagement

Nikki Bernier (Director)  
Shannah Barros  
Kelly Bennett  
Sara Cameron  
Marion Desplenter  
Annette Klevgaard  
Chenai Mbanga  
Stephanie Olsen  
Meital Siva-Jain  
Chloe Song

**Financial Administrator:** Mélanie Brochu

## Message from the Executive Director



2015 was a year of change and celebration for SACE. Most notably, SACE celebrated its 40th anniversary of providing support for victims of sexual violence in our community. What started as a grassroots organization in 1975, with a handful of passionate and dedicated volunteers, has developed into an agency that has not only grown significantly in size and presence, but one that has proudly earned the reputation of being a “Centre of Excellence” in the areas of proven, trauma-informed sexual violence prevention and intervention in our City. Another important milestone and celebration was the retirement of Karen Smith, the “FACE OF SACE” for more than 22 years - more than half the life of the agency. Karen, one of the early pioneers in working to end sexual violence in our Province, has been a true leader, visionary, advocate and friend to everyone who has had the privilege of knowing her. Karen is greatly missed at SACE, but the impact and legacy that she left behind will not be forgotten.

2015 was also a year when stunning revelations and accusations surrounding the severity and prevalence of sexual violence in our society came to a head. In the last year, there have been more public, open, and vibrant discussions than ever before. The silence surrounding this issue is ending, and a new conversation is beginning: one that is, and should be, focused not on the behaviours of survivors, but rather on the inexcusable choices and behaviours of perpetrators. Indeed, we have come a long way, but we still have a long way to go. There is hope, and we can certainly rejoice in that.

Among the many initiatives, partnerships, and collaborations in which SACE was engaged over the last year, two of those in particular stand out. In February, we were proud to host our second annual fundraising gala, *It Takes Two*. The evening was enormously successful on every level, most importantly in elevating awareness of the prevalence of sexual violence in our community. In September, SACE joined with our allies and friends from the Alberta Association of Sexual Assault Services (AASAS) in unveiling the province-wide “I Believe You” campaign, a multi-layered public awareness initiative aimed at educating the public about how to respond to disclosures of sexual assault. Survivors of sexual assault are our neighbours, friends, colleagues, and family members. They live with us in our community, and their experiences impact all of us. How we respond speaks to who we are as human beings and as a society. In Canada, there are an estimated 24 sexual assaults per year for every thousand people over the age of 15, the vast majority of which go unreported. This is a staggering and unsettling statistic, and the unintended, but unquestionable, societal consequences are all-encompassing.

SACE could not do the work that we do, and reach out to the community as we are asked, if it were not for the generosity and commitment of our core funders, Alberta Human Services, Alberta Health, Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, and the City of Edmonton Family and Community Support Services. In 2014-2015, SACE was also granted funding for technology upgrades by the Edmonton Community Foundation. There are many other individuals, organizations and corporations who, consistently but quietly, demonstrate their financial support and belief in what we do. For this, we are deeply grateful.

I would like to thank our Board of Directors for their immeasurable support, guidance and commitment. As I reflect over the past year, I know without a doubt how incredibly blessed I am to be part of such a selfless and truly inspiring team of staff members and volunteers, all of whom bring light, hope and healing to the individuals who access our services every single day.

1 in 3 girls. 1 in 6 boys. We all know someone who has been impacted by sexual assault. My wish for 2016 is that we continue to impact, inform and lead the conversation surrounding sexual violence. That we change the way we think about it. The way we talk about. The way we DON'T talk about it. Together, we can be the change we want, and need, to see. Listen. Support. Believe. We can all do something.

**Mary Jane James**

*Executive Director*

# We Believe people can heal.

## Child and Adolescent Program • Counselling Services

In 2015, the Child and Adolescent Program consisted of five capable staff members: Monika Penner, Lauren Wiles, Morgan Bissegger, Hanelle Sawa, and Karen Dushinski. These counsellors provided over 1650 hours of individual counselling with children and teens ages 3 to 17. The Child and Adolescent Program received referrals for counselling from various doctors, psychologists, and community and governmental agencies including:

- Canadian Mental Health Association, Edmonton Region • Edmonton Catholic School Board
- Edmonton Public School Board • Edmonton Region Child & Family Services • Métis Child & Family Services
- Stollery Children's Hospital, Child and Adolescent Protection Centre • Zebra Child Protection Centre

Our counsellors continue to be considered experts in our field by those in the community looking for information and resources to better support children and their families. During 2015, our staff had over 2800 consultations with community members, parents and professionals.

## Adult Program • Counselling Services

The Adult Counselling Program at SACE offers group and individual counselling for individuals of all genders over the age of 18 who have been affected by sexual violence. Clients may attend individual counselling sessions, with the focus on stabilization and encouraging healthier coping mechanisms in their healing. Individual counselling may also be supplemented by the groups provided at SACE:

- ASHA I (Adults Surviving Historical Abuse) • ASHA II • Men's Group • SASS I (Sexual Assault Survivors Support)
- SASS II • Men's Process Group • Teen Girl's Group • INDIGO (Survivors Educational Program)

SACE continues to benefit from the hard work and expertise of the adult counselling team: Matilda Kamara, Christy Hennig, Maria Skriver, Katie Shorey, Maija Prakash, Ruth Pullam, Janelle Boisvert, and Hala Kaiss. Our adult counsellors logged over 4000 hours of client sessions, and consulted with over 5000 community members and agencies in 2015. In addition to our therapeutic role, SACE continues to provide support for individuals navigating the justice system.

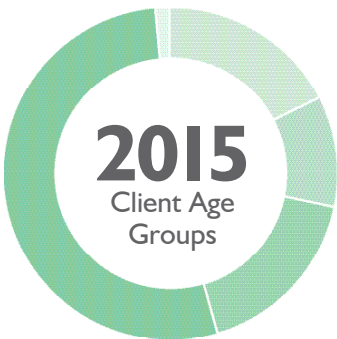
SACE has long been an important trauma training centre for the Edmonton area, and 2015 saw a continuation of that tradition. Our training has resulted in an increased capacity in the Edmonton community to respond to the issues of sexual violence. In 2015 SACE again acted in its integral role in the professional development of graduate students in Masters and Doctoral Programs in Counselling Psychology. These students learned to support survivors of sexual trauma through supervised hands-on individual and group therapy with SACE clients. In 2015, we provided placements for four students: Hala Kaiss, Jennifer Dodd, Janine Groeneveld and Lily Le. We thank them for their hard work and dedication to our clients.

As Director of Client Services, I am humbled by my colleagues and the dedication and passion they bring every day to their work with clients. I want to take this opportunity to thank them for the lessons they teach me. I am honoured to be a part of such an amazing group of professionals.

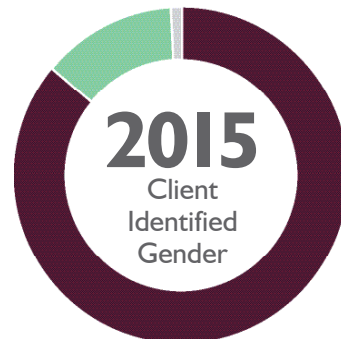
### **Dr. Karen Dushinski**

*Director of Client Services*

*It's the first time in my life I can remember feeling safe. Even now, when I'm having a hard time sometimes I just drive by SACE or sit in the parking lot to feel some safety in my day.*



- 17.5% Children (3-12)
- 10.8% Adolescents (13-17)
- 17.2% Young Adults (18-24)
- 53.1% Adults (25-64)
- 1.5% Seniors (65+)



- 86% Female
- 13% Male
- 1% Trans

*I think I am finally ready to stop and move on with my life! I would like to thank you for helping me get here, and always being my big support throughout these past 2 years. I am forever grateful for you, as you have helped me get out of the very dark place. Wish you happiness and to inspire more people, because you truly change lives and you should be proud of your job!*

# We Believe in Community Engagement

In October of 2015 the Public Education department officially joined with the Volunteer Services, Diversity, Communications, and pilot MOMentum programs to become the new Community Engagement Department of SACE. We are all excited about this restructure, as it has allowed our staff to work even more creatively and collaboratively, which has subsequently made our work within the community more impactful.

**Nikki Bernier**

*Director of Community Engagement*





## Volunteer Awards • Community Engagement



### **Rick Chalifoux / Jean Gauthier Memorial Volunteer of the Year Award**

*Presented to Rachel G*

This award is presented in memory of two SACE Volunteers who worked on the crisis lines, with training and with fundraising. Rick and Jean were partners and died within a few months of each other of HIV. Jean is the artist who did this beautiful painting.

Rachel has been volunteering with SACE for a number of years now. She is always willing to go the extra mile for us, volunteering for extra events, mentoring new volunteers going through training and at meetings, and is always looking for more ways to get involved with SACE. Thank you, Rachel, and congratulations.



### **Donna Leskie Memorial Community Builder Award**

*Presented to Kiera F*

This award is new this year and was donated in memory of Donna Leskie, a long-time volunteer with SACE, by her sisters Lorrie and Deborah.

This award is in recognition of a volunteer who extends their reach into the community. The winner of this award is Kiera, who eagerly and consistently volunteers for almost every volunteer booth and makes a special effort to foster community among her fellow volunteers.



### **Heather Huet Memorial Volunteer Award**

*Presented to Elaine S*

This award was donated by Susan Jamieson, president of our Board, in memory of her partner Heather, a volunteer manager at Catholic Social Services, who passed away of breast cancer.

This is the award for a volunteer who comes up with "creative" ideas or solutions to problems or is just plain "creative" in their assistance to SACE! This year, the recipient of this award is Elaine, who--in addition to her duties on the crisis line--spent over 130 hours copy editing and updating the volunteer training manual. Great work, Elaine! Thanks!

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## New for 2016: MOMentum • Community Engagement

In late 2015 SACE and St. Albert Community Information and Volunteer Centre (CIVC) Sidekicks Mentoring Program learned we had received funding in partnership to develop and implement the "MOMentum" program. Meetings were held over the last months of 2015 to prepare for the program to start in January of 2016. The meetings were held collaboratively with many stakeholders, and a vision was developed for how the program could best serve the targeted demographic of single-parenting moms and their children. SACE is proud to be partnering with Sidekicks in this unique, collaborative undertaking for 2016!

### **Jessica Macumber**

*MOMentum Coordinator*

# We Believe in providing accurate, research-supported sexual violence education.

## Public Education • Community Engagement

2015 was an exciting and exceptionally busy year for our Public Education team. We spent the majority of our time facilitating workshops and presentations on the topic of sexual violence to youth, adults, and professionals in the community. Our team prides itself on catering each individual session to meet the specific needs of participants, and feedback from these sessions is consistently positive. Each year, requests for our education services have continued to grow, and 2015 was no exception.

In 2015 the vast majority of participants we presented to were youth, a demographic that is often at an increased risk of experiencing sexual abuse. We also spoke to an increased number of new immigrants and persons with disabilities, which is important as these are two additional populations that are particularly vulnerable to experiencing sexual abuse. In 2015 public educators presented to 1280 professionals, which is significant as it allows us to extend our reach as an organization by providing training for community leaders working closely with survivors in various capacities. Lastly, our Public Education and Diversity teams partnered with the Elizabeth Fry Society to develop an education program for female inmates at the Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre. This pilot program was successful, and we have since been approached by a number of other correctional centres in Edmonton to set up similar programs in 2016.

To add to our roster of educational topics and formats, in January of 2015 three of our educators applied to become certified First Responder Facilitators with the Alberta Association of Sexual Assault Services (AASAS). This yearlong certification process saw our educators attend and facilitate a number of training sessions, while working closely with a mentor to hone their facilitation skills. All three of our educators will become fully certified in early 2016, at which time they will be able to facilitate the training throughout Alberta on behalf of SACE and AASAS.

In addition to facilitating presentations throughout Edmonton, Public Education travelled to a number of neighbouring communities to provide our services. In March, two of our educators were flown to Northern Alberta to speak to youth, parents, and professionals in remote communities. In December we were brought to Vancouver to participate in a national roundtable conversation with sexual violence educators from across Canada. We also spoke at a convening of the Edmonton Catholic School Board about the importance of consent education in schools. Lastly, in 2015 the SACE Public Education Program was contacted by the Army General for Western Canada, and facilitated information sessions for staff at the military base.

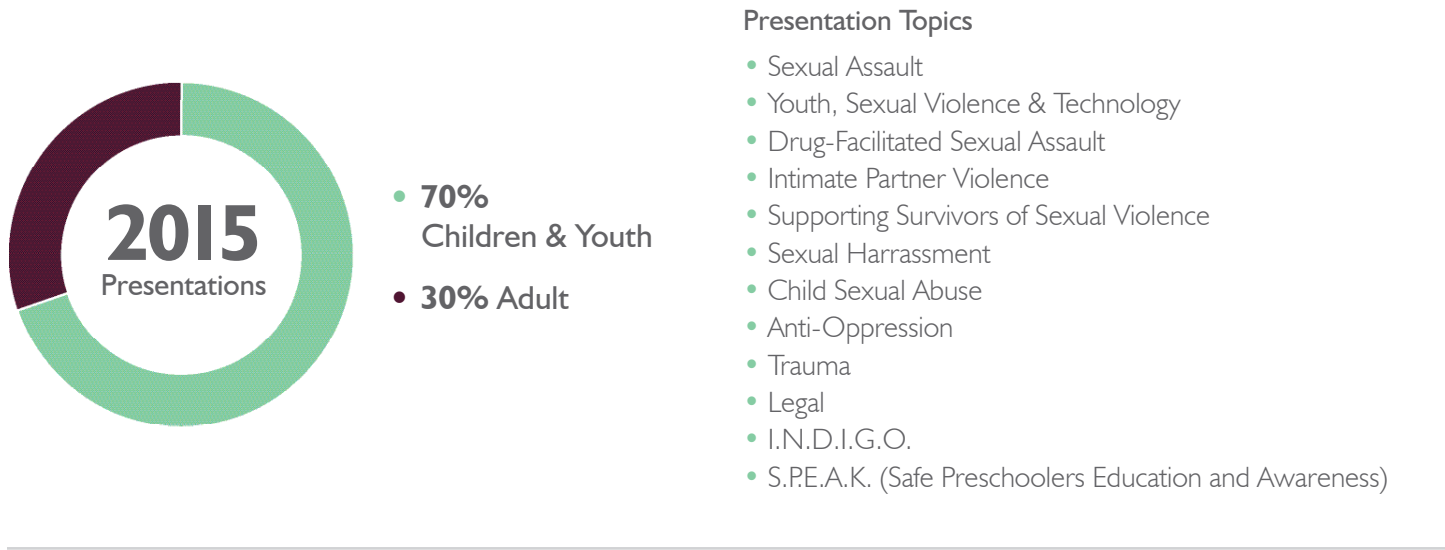
Beyond tailored information delivery, SACE offers consultation for organizations wanting to address the issue of sexual violence and better support those impacted by it. In the fall and winter educators worked extensively with Grant MacEwan and Concordia Universities as they developed campus-wide initiatives to address sexual violence. The support offered by our team included reviewing policies and practices for responding to instances of abuse, consulting on awareness-raising projects, and training students and faculty. We also represented the AASAS “I Believe You” campaign at a number of postsecondary campuses.

In the summer of 2015 the Edmonton Transit System (ETS) contacted our team seeking assistance with a new anti-sexual violence campaign. Our team designed an information session to address the specific roles of management, peace officers, and operators. In addition to facilitating ongoing training, we are helping their staff develop internal procedures for responding to incidences of sexual abuse. We are also assisting them in the development of a new public education campaign aimed at offering support to survivors.

Finally, as longtime members of the Sexual Assault Voices of Edmonton (SAVE) committee our team was once again instrumental in the creation and launch of their third poster campaign, released in the fall of 2015. The “Without Consent, It’s Not Sent” campaign focuses on the issue of sexual violence and technology among youth, a topic our team has spent the past two years researching and educating the community on. This issue has been of major concern in schools throughout Edmonton, and in 2015 was our second most-requested presentation topic.

### Nikki Bernier

Director of Community Engagement



- “The presenters were enthusiastic, knowledgeable & friendly. Loved them.
- “My sister is 16 and I want to teach her what I learned & explain that she deserves better than to be treated that way.
- “I learned that coping with flashbacks and healing is a journey not a destination. -INDIGO
- “You made me feel really safe in the discussion. Usually I get very uncomfortable with these things. Thank you!

# We Believe in valuing diversity & respecting all people.

## Diversity Outreach Program • Community Engagement

The Diversity Outreach Program (DOP) is responsible for reaching out and building relationships with diverse communities, including Indigenous peoples, ethno-cultural communities, new immigrants, seniors, persons living with disabilities, and those who self-identify as sexual minorities.

In 2015, the DOP became part of the new Community Engagement Department. Together with programs such as Public Education, Volunteer Management and Communications, these SACE programs that reach out and connect with the community at large have started the process of working more collaboratively as a team.

In 2015 the DOP team spent many hours at community events, trainings, workshops, and educational sessions. We were able to network and engage in relationship-building with other agencies and community members. Additionally, a mutual learning process was established: many prominent speakers were asked to come to SACE and speak to our staff. In doing so, SACE staff were educated about relevant resources and programs, and the speakers were introduced first-hand to SACE and its services.

One of the goals of the Diversity Outreach program has been to reduce barriers and increase the accessibility of SACE services to targeted communities. SACE was proud to partner with other community organizations to bring awareness to, and take action against, the issue of sexual violence. 2015 was the end of a two-year project headed by ACT Alberta in which SACE worked closely with other agencies to develop a Community Action Plan to address the sex trafficking of girls and women in Edmonton. Other committees that the DOP was part of include: the Sexual Exploitation Working Group (SEWG), the Ethnocultural Family Violence Coalition (EFVC), and the Cultural Diversity Collaborative (CDC).

2016 saw the DOP continue to provide workshops and presentations to diverse communities. Together with SACE public educators, we facilitated monthly sessions on "Sexual Assault, Self-Care & Meditation" to incarcerated women at Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre. This program will continue in 2016, and we hope to expand to the Edmonton Institution for Women. Other educational sessions included Sexual Harassment at the Immigrant Women's Integration Network (I-WIN), Panel participation at the public Screening of "India's Daughter", and Sexual Assault presentations at the Catholic Social Services - Immigration & Settlement Service.

The Diversity Outreach Program continues to be very successful, in part because of the support of other departments and staff at SACE. Their readiness to share their knowledge, experience and networks not only assisted the Program, but also helped to develop a strong professional bond within the organization.

### **Meital Siva-Jain**

*Diversity Outreach Coordinator*



# We Believe volunteers are crucial to our agency.

## Volunteer Services • Community Engagement

In 2015 I had the distinct privilege of working with the many volunteers at the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton who contributed over 13,000 hours towards our collective goal of ending sexual violence in our communities.

This past year we had 4 classes complete volunteer training and go on to join our existing volunteers, taking calls and providing support and information on our 24-Hour Sexual Assault Crisis Line. In the fall our training class was one of the biggest yet, with over 25 participants. All of the volunteers on the Crisis Line go above and beyond the call of duty, many regularly putting in more hours than we required for a total of 8474 hours given to shifts on the Crisis Line. Such dedication has led to an overwhelming increase in coverage, and because of the hard-working volunteers SACE staff have experienced less burnout from crisis line shifts, yet another example of how vital this passionate team of volunteers is to our organization.

SACE is incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated team of fundraising and event volunteers. Included here is our core group of bingo volunteers, the various members of the community who worked our casino, and the volunteers who already give their time to SACE in other ways and step up to take on extra volunteer roles at events like Edmonton Pride, the Edmonton Comic and Entertainment Expo ("Cosplay is Not Consent" campaign), our Chapters fundraiser, and of course It Takes Two 2015, our second annual fundraising gala. Altogether fundraising volunteers gave over 390 hours to SACE and it is thanks to them that we are able to continue pursuing new fundraising initiatives that not only support our programs, but also generate awareness of the services we offer out in the community.

The office saw an ebb and flow of volunteers in 2015, starting out the year strong and seeing even more join, including a high school student who volunteered for her summer vacation. In the fall numbers declined, particularly after two volunteers became staff at SACE, however our existing volunteer Megan S. stepped up to fill the gap during these months. We also saw the continued dedication of our long-time office volunteers, Sandi and Tasia, who are always finding new ways to contribute to the SACE office environment. In whatever capacity they volunteered, this important team gave 680 hours of their time in administrative support.

All of the hard work the volunteers do for SACE deserves ample recognition, and in 2015 we were fortunate to be able to increase our formal recognition of volunteers by introducing a new appreciation award. In honour of a former volunteer who passed away in 2015, we created the Donna Leskie Memorial Community Builder Award to recognize a volunteer who extends their reach into the greater community.

Working with the volunteers over the past year has only served to strengthen my belief that they are the backbone of SACE. Each of them put so much of themselves towards our agency's mission of ending sexual violence in our community, and I believe that our vision of a world free of sexual violence would not be achievable if it were not for their commitment and generosity.

**Shannah Barros**

*Volunteer Manager*

*I chose to volunteer with SACE for a specific reason. In 2013, a close friend of mine committed suicide. The experience galvanized me, pushing me to interact directly with people who needed help. I wanted to prevent what had happened to my friend. Through SACE, I make a difference. SACE is a front line experience-you are there, interacting directly with people who have suffered trauma. This work is challenging, to say the least. Many of the survivors have suffered childhood abuse, or recent sexual assault. Few have many resources, and often suffer 'victim blaming' from their friends and family. Alleviating the suffering of these people requires a delicate, compassionate approach. Emotionally, this type of experience has an immense toll on the call receiver, as some of the experiences survivors have suffered are truly horrific. Despite this, the experience is incredibly rewarding. From this experience, I feel that I directly impact those who have suffered, who often have few other resources to respond to situations like sexual assault. I feel that as a person, I have become a better listener, as well as a more compassionate individual.*

- MARK H

*I have been so impressed with every single person I have met from the moment I first walked through the door at SACE. Everyone is so caring, compassionate, strong and smart, and I consider myself lucky to be contributing to this group in any way. I was impressed by (and greatly appreciated!) the amount of effort that went into training volunteers for the crisis line and the way that volunteers are made to feel confident and empowered to handle the most difficult of situations. Volunteering on the crisis line can be incredibly difficult, and it is also incredibly rewarding. Knowing that I am affecting change, instilling hope, or even just helping someone stand to get through their day is why I volunteer for SACE. I strongly believe in the work SACE does in the community and I am proud to be a part of it.*

- ROBYN W



- **64%** Crisis Line Shifts
- **19%** Crisis Line Training
- **5%** Admin Support
- **3%** Fundraising Events
- **1%** Community Events
- **2%** Special Projects
- **3%** Board Meetings
- **3%** Volunteer Meetings

# We Believe #IBelieveYou is a powerful response that helps survivors heal.

## Communications & Development • Community Engagement

2015 was a landmark year for SACE in many ways, and throughout all the exciting initiatives our different program areas and our agency as a whole undertook, a major focus was on increasing the ways that we share information in all that we do. Perhaps most overtly, this meant working to build our public profile through social media campaigns and awareness events in addition to our ongoing public education and outreach work, but in its fullest sense SACE has been taking stock of the ways we communicate with each other, with our clients, and with our community in order to expand our reach and maximize our impact.

In February of 2015, SACE had its second annual *It Takes Two* fundraising gala. Once again with Title Sponsor, Servus Credit Union, and Media Sponsor, CTV Edmonton, the evening was a sold-out success despite having doubled its ticket sales. This year we focused our attention on showcasing who we are to the many agencies and individuals in attendance that support us every day. The evening included greetings from Honourable Minister Heather Klimchuk, Minister of Human Services, and City Councillor Amarjeet Sohi, followed motivational speaker Colin Millang, and presentations from SACE that included funny insights into counselling with kids and teens, a reading from a children's book written and illustrated by a former SACE client, the premier screening of our video "SACE: Who We Are", and a (light!) roasting of our retiring leader, Karen Smith.

2015 marked our 40th anniversary of providing services to the Edmonton community, and in June we celebrated our history by hosting an open house for our supporters. Councillor Bev Esslinger presented us with a City Proclamation, we shared information about our history and services through social media and with informational posters at the event, and attendees contributed to a collaborative art piece, which now hangs proudly in our reception area.

In the fall we saw another period of transition. Our outgoing ED Karen Smith was honoured with a Daughter's Day award for her work on the issue of sexual violence in Edmonton over the last more than 2 decades, work that helped start the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) and has built a lasting partnership with EPS. Our existing teams that work out in the community merged to become the new Community Engagement department, and were joined by the pilot MOMentum program, another legacy of Karen Smith. Campaigns in the fall included participation in the "Cosplay is Not Consent" initiative at the Edmonton Comic and Entertainment Expo, the AASAS "I Believe You" campaign online and in universities, a fundraiser at Chapters Whyte Avenue, and social media awareness for the December 6th National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women in Canada. Though our capacity was modest, our efforts to expand our reach through social media saw a 78% increase in Twitter followers, and we hope to continue to grow our part of the conversation in this realm.



We are continuing to build new and more organic ways of collaborating and meeting the needs of Edmonton's diverse communities, both directly and in partnership with other agencies that share in this work of addressing sexual violence. Just a short list of committees and collaborations we are proud to be a part of: AASAS (Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services); SHECE (Sexual Health Educators Collective of Edmonton); SANE (Sexual Assault Network of Edmonton); SAVE (Sexual Assault Voices of Edmonton); CIAFV (Community Initiatives Against Family Violence); Elizabeth Fry Society/Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre. Consultations of note in 2015 included those with: ETS; EPS; MacEwan University; ECSD; Concordia University; Zebra Centre; Edmonton Canadian Forces Base.

In late 2015 work also began to prepare for a bigger and better gala for 2016, which will see a name change to We Believe: A benefit for SACE. This name builds on our core beliefs, and on the momentum of the provincial #IBelieveYou campaign, to frame this fundraising and awareness event around the power of coming together as a community to show that We Believe survivors, We Believe that people can heal, and We Believe in the power of community to turn the tide on sexual violence here in Edmonton.

Finally, in 2015 work began on a rebranding of SACE. Through 2016 and beyond we will be revisiting our foundation and, through a series of consultations with stakeholders, reaffirming and rebuilding our agency to better reflect who we are today, and how we can best be of service to Edmonton area communities. This year's Annual Report features a new look that is a transition to where we see things heading, but over the next year we invite every one of our staff and board, volunteers, clients, partner agencies, funders, and community members who would like to be a part of this process to contact SACE and get involved.

**Sara Cameron**

*Communications and Development Specialist*



# sace

sexual assault centre  
of edmonton

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Office **780.423.4102** • Support and Information Line **780.423.4121**

