

We will begin shortly. While you wait...

Improving Responses to Native Women:

Acknowledging, addressing and reforming the ways institutional responses to violence against women can increase disparate outcomes

with

Olga Trujillo, Praxis Senior Trainer and Program Specialist and

Rebecca St. George, Staff Attorney for the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

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Praxis International - Technical assistance on analyzing institutional responses to violence against women

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IMPROVING RESPONSES TO NATIVE WOMEN: ACKNOWLEDGING, ADDRESSING AND REFORMING THE WAYS INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN CAN INCREASE DISPARATE OUTCOMES

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Presenters

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- **Olga Trujillo**, Senior Program & Training Specialist
- **Rebecca St. George**, former Coordinator for the Duluth Audit, now Staff Attorney for the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- **Maren Woods**, IATA Program Manager

Origins of the Duluth Audit

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- **We knew:**
 - Native women are more likely to be raped than anyone else.
 - Anecdotally that Native women in Duluth were not getting a very good police response when they reported sexual violence.
- **Wanted to get substantive information that could promote action to change things for the better.**

Getting Buy-In

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- **Not difficult at all.**
- **We received a state Office of Justice Programs grant.**
- **Duluth's long history of addressing domestic violence collaboratively helped - got agencies on-board to look at sexual violence similarly.**
- **Some people never really did jump on board - hospitals.**

Who was involved?

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- Duluth Police Department
- St. Louis County Sheriff
- St. Louis County Attorney
- PAVSA advocates
- Other community advocates

Scope and Focus: How did you determine?

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- Tough process
- Started out too ambitious
 - Kept trying to map the whole criminal justice process after a rape is reported.
 - It was too big.
- We spent quite some time narrowing it down – finally focused on police and advocacy response to Native women who reported to the police that they'd been raped, in Duluth.

Questions?

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Findings

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- We didn't think we'd find many reports
- We didn't think we'd find a very good response.
 - Our first plan was to take at least a couple of cases that were prosecuted and map them all the way through the system.
- We found over fifty police reports from a 2 or 3 year period.
 - There were NO charging recommendations sent to the county attorney's office.

How did the team react to the Findings?

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- Combination of disbelief, shock, anger, renewed energy to address the problems.
- Tired sort of validation, depending on the profession of the person reacting.

Recommendations?

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- Changes to Duluth Police Department's response to any sexual assault, staffing changes,
- Changes to PAVSA
 - Particularly in their attempts to diversify their staff and Board.

Implementation

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- Most recommendations were implemented

Advice for other communities?

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- What are you looking to do?
- It takes a huge amount of work, and a pretty big emotional toll.
- Keeping minds and hearts open to the idea that everyone on your team is in it for good reasons and to make the community better.
- You must get buy-in from high up in all organizations involved.
- Plan to put way more time into it than you intend to.

Questions & Wrap Up

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