



**DELAWARE'S Violence Against Women Act Initiative**  
**Cross-Boundary Collaboration and Partnerships**

Executive Summary  
Delaware's VAWA Project  
**Cross-Boundary Collaboration and Partnerships**

"The Violence Against Women's Act reflects a firm commitment towards working to change the criminal justice system's response to violence that occurs when any woman is threatened or assaulted by someone with whom she has had an intimate relationship, with whom she was previously acquainted, or who is a stranger. By committing significant federal resources and attention to restructuring and strengthening the criminal justice response to women who have been or potentially could be victimized by violence, we can more effectively ensure the safety of all women." (from OJP's STOP Manual)

The Violence Against Women Act grant program provides assistance to states for the development and strengthening of effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies and victim services in cases involving violence against women .Delaware's allocation is \$838,000. The Act requires that twenty-five percent of the funds be allocated to each of three categories: prosecution, law enforcement, and victim services. The remaining twenty-five percent is left to the discretion of the state. These funds are administered through the [U.S. Department of Justice, Violence Against Women Grants Office](#).

One of the seven areas of emphasis in the grant program is: Developing and improving data collection and communications systems linking police, prosecutors, and courts or for purposes of identifying and tracking arrests, protection orders, prosecutions, and convictions.

Delaware's VAWA project developed an automated solution to increase the ability of nonprofit advocacy centers in the State of Delaware to check on the status of court issued, domestic violence treatment compliance information on behalf of victims of abuse. In the past researching the compliance of treatment for court issued Protection from Abuse (PFA), would mean phone calls done by the nonprofit court based advocates on behalf of the victim to over 15+ Batterer's Treatment Programs in the state. This was a cumbersome task that did not effectively assist the victim because data was not consistent or readily available and time is a critical issue for the victim.

## Delaware's Violence Against Women Project

### **SECTION C**

#### **BUSINESS PROBLEM AND SOLUTION**

In 2006, the Violence Against Women Implementation Committee (VAWA) formed through Executive Order No. 29, was tasked to appropriate the use of federal funds received under the Violence Against Women Act, to facilitate the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program. The purpose of the VAWA project was to develop an automated solution to increase the ability of nonprofit advocacy centers in the State of Delaware to check on the status of court issued, domestic violence treatment compliance information on behalf of victims of abuse

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This initiative was accomplished thru a collaborative effort amongst the legislative and executive branches of government along with private treatment providers and nonprofit organizations.

The primary stakeholders for the development and implementation of this project were:

- Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS)
- Criminal Justice Council (CJC)
- Department of Technology and Information (DTI)
- Justice Information Center (JIC)
- Private Batterer's Intervention Treatment Programs
- Nonprofit court based advocates

### **Section D**

#### **Improvement in Government Operations**

The collaboration of multi-state agencies along with private sector partners was an impressive accomplishment in many ways functionally, technically and most importantly serving to protect the citizens.

There were two goals met in deploying the application:

1. Federal grant stipulated that the application had to be in production by August, 2007.
2. Unveiling of the application by the Governor during Domestic Violence Month, October 2007.

The technical challenge was to present data that crossed agency boundaries integrating and presenting main frame data; along with being able to securely authenticate the private sector partners to grant them the necessary access to data enter the treatment information along with granting agency, nonprofit court based advocates, and court officials view/search access to that data. The data that was collected through the designed application would further assist law enforcement and the corrections officers by being reversed applied to the main frame application for accessibility and viewing for further enforcement and accountability of the abuser and the court ordered PFA's. The technical team designed an application that utilized web-services to the mainframe to present the mainframe data on PFA's thru a secured authentication front end from the internet.

## **SECTION E PUBLIC VALUE**

The business challenge was to get buy in from the private treatment programs to participate in the use of the system as without the treatment data being entered, the system would serve no purpose. This was a difficult challenge as each treatment center has their own database that they utilized and we were requesting them to do data entry into another system. We were able to garner buy in and participation by designing a system with their input and needs in mind. Functionality in data entry was as simple as possible with search and reporting capabilities for their internal needs. The utilization of a web-service to the mainframe gave the private treatment providers; view access to PFA's to assist them in their diagnosis and design of a treatment for the abuser. This functionality was never granted to them prior due to accessibility issues with the mainframe which made assessments on treatment and fulfillment of the PFA's more difficult.

The accomplishment of government and private collaboration resulted in the VAWA system serving not only government entities but reaching out further and greater by

serving to protect the victims of abuse. As a result, abusers are able to be held accountable for their compliance to PFA's by a simple click of a mouse!