



Diverse & Resilient

May 13, 2020

Appleton City Council

Dear Council Members:

Diverse & Resilient is writing in support of adding the position of Victim Services Office to the Appleton Police Department.

At Diverse and Resilient we work to achieve health equity and improve the safety and well-being of LGBTQ people and communities in Wisconsin. Diverse & Resilient opened our Room to Be Safe Anti-Violence Program in October of 2019 serving survivors of violence including intimate partner, sexual and community-based violence.

Upon opening our Appleton office, Sgt. Duven came and met with our staff to offer support and assistance with LGBTQ survivors of violence. Sgt. Lori Duven is currently the liaison office that we work with for individuals impacted by intimate partner violence. She comes highly recommended from her work at Harbor House who has a long history of collaboratively working with Diverse and Resilient since 2004 in our statewide work. Now that we are located in Appleton with advocates here working with LGBTQ survivors, our need for collaboration and partnership has increased even more.

LGBTQ, especially LGBTQ survivors of color report fear reporting violence to police due to a negative experience in the past with police and social service agencies or the increasing climate of a lack of respect and care for the LGBTQ community that is currently promoted through destructive federal policies that impact us locally. This can be a barrier when an LGBTQ survivor does want to report a crime that has happened to them. It helps to have a trusted liaison in the police department to help. Sgt. Duven splits her work between patrol duties and trying to follow up on domestic violence cases. Anyone with experience knows that successful agencies have full-time staff dedicated to this issue. Especially now.

Prior to the start of the pandemic in early March, Wisconsin was projected to lose 87 lives in 2020 to domestic violence homicide. Since that time, the numbers have skyrocketed. We are now trending at 107, or a lost life every 3.4 days. To review data, visit www.domesticviolencehomicidehelp.com. Intimate Partner Violence in the LGBTQ community is something that is often only talked about behind closed doors. We are grateful for Sgt. Duven who understands the reluctance in reporting and wants to help remove barriers for LGBTQ survivors. Funding a Victim Services Office will help add another layer of support to LGBTQ survivors of intimate partner violence.

We support this request for funding for the Appleton Police Department. If you have any questions, please contact me at 414-343-9032 or email at kflores@diverseandresilient.org

Sincerely,

Kathy Flores-Statewide
Director of Diverse & Resilient's
Room to Be Safe Anti-Violence Program