

**Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), Office of Women's and
Children's Health (OWCH)**

When I volunteered to submit something for the website, I was wondering what in the world I would write. Therefore, I am writing an open letter to all the Rape Prevention and Education Program (RPEP) Contractors (hereby known as 'agencies') in Arizona to let them know how proud I am of each of them.

I for one am extremely grateful they are "out there". Thankfully, there are people who are willing to take this type of commitment on, so to speak. Without their passion, commitment and loyalty, where would we be? I firmly believe in giving credit where credit is due, and Arizona would not be so far with this issue, if it were not for the dedication of these wonderful, engaging people.

In fact, I am very lucky to fund such diverse people, programs and opinions! From the 'big city' to the rural areas, the universities, to the Native American Reservations, I greatly admire them. **Every** one of them displays extraordinary enthusiasm for this field, how can you not admire that trait? Add considerable flexibility and you have a dynamite person within the program. I always look forward to our quarterly meetings where we have 'discussion time' built into the agenda. Why? The agencies give undivided attention to the subject; each other, share fresh insights, and most importantly share a depth of understanding with each other. This definitely includes 'opinions' on issues such as, Public Service Announcements (PSA's), videos, and the like; they **respect** each other as peers, educators, colleagues and most importantly as people. The knowledge they possess in this field is phenomenal and their concern is beyond reproach. I venture to add, few rival their personal talent and commitment to this field! I consider myself extremely lucky to be in their company.

Arizona has come quite a way since its inception of this program, again the persuasiveness, reliable, spirited personalities of this 'group' have achieved much! The passion they each share is certainly contagious. With their input in to the web site, the

collaborations, sharing of information and the many committees they sit on *Arizona* has and is hearing their collective voices. Do we have a ways to go yet? Probably, however with the passion shown by these fine folks, I have no doubt Arizona will go far in this field.

I must compliment them on the many things I 'throw' their way, and I am constantly amazed as they 'take it in stride". One might think, this would disrupt the flow of things, most notably, the 'internal' workings of each of their agencies. If it has, they have been gracious enough not to show it.

I cannot begin to express the support I receive from the Arizona Department of Health Services, (ADHS) Office of Women's and Children's Health (O.W.C.H) where RPEP is housed. They have embraced the program and have offered continued support through the years. Additionally, they have attended meetings in my absence, thus moving Rape Prevention and Education into the eyes of other community partners and agencies.

To Northland, Our Town, Horizon Human Services, Arizona State University, Wingspan, Peer Solutions Inc., Mt. Graham Safe House, Southern Arizona Against Sexual Assault, (SACASA) Center for Prevention of Abuse and Violence (CASA), University of Arizona, and Ama Doo Alchini Bighan Inc. (ADABI)

Thank you for your dedication, passion, and endless hours promoting Rape Prevention and Education in the State of Arizona.

You are an inspiration to all.

Thank-you!

Carol