

**MCBW**

Minnesota Coalition  
for Battered Women

2015

# **FEMICIDE REPORT**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDE IN MINNESOTA



*This report is dedicated to the women, children, and men who lost their lives in Minnesota during 2015 as a result of domestic violence.*

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# Domestic Violence Homicides in Minnesota: 1989-2015

**We remember our mothers, our fathers, our sisters, our brothers, our daughters, our sons, our wives, our husbands, our intimate partners, our family members, our friends, our neighbors, our co-workers, our fellow Minnesotans...**

- 1989    At least 18 women died from domestic violence\*
- 1990    At least 26 women died from domestic violence
- 1991    At least 12 women died from domestic violence
- 1992    At least 31 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 8 children died from child abuse+  
           At least 3 women were murdered while being used in prostitution#  
           At least 2 family members/friends were murdered by a woman's current or former partner\*\*
- 1993    At least 28 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 13 children died from child abuse  
           At least 6 women were murdered while being used in prostitution  
           At least 5 family members/friends were murdered
- 1994    At least 19 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 7 children died from child abuse  
           At least 2 women were murdered while being used in prostitution
- 1995    At least 29 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 11 children died from child abuse
- 1996    At least 22 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 17 children died from child abuse  
           At least 6 women were murdered while being used in prostitution
- 1997    At least 17 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 5 children died from child abuse
- 1998    At least 22 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 15 children died from child abuse
- 1999    At least 22 women died from domestic abuse  
           At least 20 children died from child abuse
- 2000    At least 40 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 6 children died from child abuse  
           At least 1 family member was murdered
- 2001    At least 33 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 12 children died from child abuse  
           At least 6 family members/friends were murdered

- 2002 At least 16 women died from domestic violence  
At least 13 children died from child abuse
- 2003 At least 14 women died from domestic violence  
At least 10 children died from child abuse
- 2004 At least 13 women died from domestic violence  
At least 11 children died from child abuse  
At least 3 family members/friends were murdered
- 2005 At least 26 women died from domestic violence  
At least 1 women was murdered while being used in prostitution  
At least 4 children died from child abuse  
At least 2 family members/friends were murdered
- 2006 At least 20 women died from domestic violence  
At least 20 children died from child abuse  
At least 1 family member/friend was murdered
- 2007 At least 22 women died from domestic violence  
At least 10 children died from child abuse  
At least 3 family members/friends were murdered
- 2008 At least 23 women died from domestic violence  
At least 7 children died from child abuse  
At least 2 family members/friends were murdered  
At least 1 man died from domestic violence
- 2009 At least 12 women died from domestic violence  
At least 10 children died from child abuse  
At least 2 family members/friends/interveners were murdered  
At least 1 man died from domestic violence
- 2010 At least 15 women died from domestic violence  
At least 7 children died from domestic violence  
At least 4 family members/friends were murdered  
At least 2 men died from domestic violence
- 2011 At least 23 women died from domestic violence  
At least 4 children died from domestic violence  
At least 6 family members/friends were murdered  
At least 1 man died from domestic violence
- 2012 At least 14 women died from domestic violence  
At least 3 family members/friends were murdered  
At least 1 man died from domestic violence
- 2013 At least 25 women died from domestic violence  
At least 6 family members/friends were murdered  
At least 7 men died from domestic violence

- 2014    At least 16 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 5 family members/friends were murdered  
           At least 2 men died from domestic violence
  
- 2015    At least 22 women died from domestic violence  
           At least 9 family members/friends were murdered  
           At least 3 men died from domestic violence

\*Cases of women murdered where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former husband, boyfriend, intimate partner, household member, or family member.

+Cases of children murdered where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was the father, mother, guardian, babysitter, child care provider, or household/family member of the child; or the perpetrator was the parent's spouse or intimate partner.

#MCBW recognizes prostitution as a system of violence against women and children.

\*\*Cases of family, friends, interveners or bystanders murdered in domestic violence-related situations.

++Cases of children murdered as a result of violence involving current or former intimate partners are now tracked under the family members, friends & interveners category.

# Overview of the Femicide Report

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (MCBW) tracks homicides in which the known or suspected perpetrator was a *current or former intimate partner* or the homicide is the result of domestic violence between current or former intimate partners. This includes family members, friends, and interveners who are killed as a result of the domestic violence being perpetrated by a current or former intimate partner.

## History of the Report

For over 25 years, MCBW has been producing the annual Femicide Report. The information contained within these 27 years of reports is overwhelming in terms of the numbers of individual deaths that are recorded. The reports list the number of people killed, however they do not reveal the enormous number of people impacted by those deaths, nor do the reports reflect the hundreds of thousands of individuals who, across these years, have experienced domestic violence and survived.

## What the Report Measures

In 1989, MCBW began collecting the names of women killed by domestic violence. The report has always recorded the deaths of women killed by current or former boyfriends and husbands. Over time, the report has evolved in terms of the definition of which deaths were included in the report. The report has expanded to include anyone killed due to domestic violence between current or former intimate partners. This includes the homicides between lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and/or transgender current and former intimate partners, as well as cases of men killed by their current and former intimate partners. The report also documents the deaths of other family members, friends, neighbors, interveners, and bystanders who are killed due to domestic violence between current or former intimate partners.

Since 1993, the report has included those killed as a result of being used in prostitution or sex trafficking. These deaths are included because MCBW recognizes prostitution and sex trafficking as a system of violence against women and children. These numbers were tracked separately for a number of years but are now included in the general count.

While there has been some fluctuation over the years, MCBW is working to maintain a consistent definition regarding what is included in the Femicide Report. In recent years the report has consistently listed people killed in Minnesota due to violence by a current or former intimate partner.

## What the Report Does Not Measure

The definition of domestic violence in Minnesota law is broader than the definition that we use for this report. The legal definition of domestic violence is physical violence or threats of physical violence between a family or household member. This includes violence between any family members or household members: adult child to parent, between cousins, roommates who have no intimate relationship, uncles who kill nieces, and parents who kill children. The Femicide Report focuses on one section of that broader definition of domestic violence. MCBW specifically looks at those killed by current or former intimate partners and as a result of domestic violence between current or former intimate partners.

Why do we limit our definition? While all of these homicides are tragic and there are many similarities, MCBW has expertise in intimate partner abuse. We hope that by limiting this report to the intimate partner

definition and looking at those deaths in light of the research that has been done about lethality and risk factors for that specific population, we may find information to help improve our work to end domestic violence.

MCBW also only measures those killed in Minnesota. Sometimes a person from Minnesota is temporarily residing in another state and is killed while living there. That person would not be included in our count. Conversely, someone from Illinois or Wisconsin or New Jersey may be visiting Minnesota and be killed by their intimate partner while in Minnesota. We *do* include that homicide in our count. The reason we make this distinction is twofold. First, we do not have the capacity to monitor the homicides that occur in other states. Second, we gather the Femicide Report information in part to look at what we can do here in Minnesota to improve our work on domestic violence issues. In recent years, we have also included cases where the victim's body is found in Minnesota or where we have reason to believe the homicide occurred in Minnesota, even if the body was found in a different state.

## Limitations of the Report

We rely on public information to create this report. In the early days of the report our sole source of information was media reporting. Currently, we identify most cases through media search results that are tracked daily, and then we follow up with local law enforcement agencies or county attorney's offices for more detail. We also look at other sources of information such as public court data, reports issued by medical examiners' offices, and social media. The way we gather information and the amount of data available to us has changed drastically over the years. However, we still struggle with inconsistent and incomplete information due to the discrepancies in the way information is collected and shared across the state.

We use the phrase "at least" when describing the number of people killed each year because we cannot be certain we have recorded all domestic violence homicides since we rely on public records, primarily news accounts. In addition, almost every year there are deaths of women that are considered suspicious but the cases are not resolved. No state or federal agency collects comprehensive data on domestic violence homicides. In addition, the murders of women and children of color, Native American people, immigrant and refugee women and children, those living in poverty, people with disabilities, rural women, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender people, and those exploited in prostitution and sex trafficking may be underreported in our listing as they frequently go unreported in mainstream media.

While we record all homicides that are a result of domestic violence between current or former intimate partners, we provide yearly comparison information on a series of factors exclusively concerning murdered women. We limit this analysis to women killed by intimate partners because we are looking at the research that has been done on risk and lethality factors for women in abusive relationships. It may be that men face the same risk and lethality factors in abusive relationships, but to our knowledge, that research has not been done.

The information in MCBW's Femicide Report is not meant to be research but rather, a compilation of data gathered from public sources. We gather this information to bear witness to those killed, to raise public awareness of domestic violence, and to help inform our work. One example of this limitation is in regard to tracking the rates of murder-suicides in domestic violence cases. For a number of years approximately 50% of the domestic violence homicides of adult women also involved the perpetrator subsequently committing suicide. This percentage was significantly higher than the homicide-suicide rate reported nationally at 30%. However, the last three years show a decrease. What we don't know, and what this report does not address, is why there is a difference and what the recent decrease means. MCBW is not a



research agency. We present this information in the hopes of raising questions and opening the door to deeper conversations.

## Overview of 2015

The number of Minnesotans killed due to domestic violence varies from year to year. We have seen yearly lows in the teens and highs in the 40s. Last year 23 Minnesotans were murdered due to domestic violence. This year, the number is higher. At least 34 Minnesotans were killed due to violence from a current or former intimate partner.

### **At least 22 women**

Were murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former husband, boyfriend, or male intimate partner.

### **At least 9 friends, family members or interveners**

Were murdered in domestic violence-related situations.

### **At least 3 men**

Were murdered in a case where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former intimate partner.

### **At least 17 minor children**

Were left motherless due to domestic violence murders.

Note: At the time this report was completed, MCBW was reviewing four additional cases. These deaths occurred in 2015 but MCBW is waiting for information on whether the deaths would be officially ruled homicides, and information on the nature of the relationship between the victim and suspected perpetrator. Once full information is public, MCBW will update this report and the revised report will be made available through MCBW's website. [www.mcbw.org](http://www.mcbw.org)

## Femicide Report: Victims and Relationship to the Alleged Perpetrators

	2015		
Relationship to Victim	#	% of Total	Name of Victim
Current/former boyfriend, husband or male intimate partner	22	65%	Adelle (Addie) Jensen April Erickson Ayan Abdi Abdulahi Carol Lee Alexander-Pickart Elizabeth Gregg Esther Nyambura Muchina-Dobie Eugenia (Gina) Tallman Flowera Ransom Grace Ann Van Norman Julie Ann Hildreth Karen Short Kelly Ann Anderson Krista Ambers Krista Marie Fisherman Lanaea Ann Harrison Linda Kay Boehme Lisa Isham Mai Nhue Her Ramona (Mona) Turner Rose Downwind Samirria White Shelley Walley
Current/former girlfriend, wife or female intimate partner	3	9%	Addison Hillard Anthony Morgan Thomas Calvin Donald Jenkins
Other	9	26%	Brooklyn Short* Cole Short* David Allen Madison++ Dominic Larrel Jasper++ Investigator Steven Sandberg+ Joseph Thomas Kroll++ Kavonta Lashawn Pratt + Madison Short* Victoria Alvarez*
<b>Total:</b>	<b>34</b>		

\* Children killed by male intimate partner of their mother.

+ Interveners and bystanders who were killed due to intimate partner violence.

++ Men killed by a current or former intimate partner of a woman they had a dating or sexual relationship with.

## Red Flags for Batterer Lethality

In this report, we pay special attention to women murdered by intimate partners, as the majority of women murdered in the United States and Minnesota are murdered in domestic violence homicides. In fact, over 80% of women murdered in Minnesota between 2010 and 2015 were murdered by a current or former intimate partner. In response to this national endemic, various tools to assess for high risk or potential lethality have been developed based on research of women killed by their intimate partners. While it is helpful to utilize and inform research and incorporate risk assessments in domestic violence cases, we must be cautious of how we use any tools that will determine our response to a victim. It is impossible to predict with certainty which batterers will become lethal to their victims. All batterers should be viewed as potentially dangerous, though there are well-documented indicators of lethality of which everyone should be aware. Included in the factors that have been identified as possible lethality indicators are: separation, extended history of domestic violence or other violence, pregnancy, threats or fantasies of homicide or suicide, access to firearms, threats to use a weapon, stalking, attempted strangulation, sexual assault, extreme jealousy, and control of daily activities.

No risk assessment tool should be used as the sole basis for providing victims access to services and resources, or safety planning with victims, but rather used in addition to other information, especially information provided by the victim. Research has shown that victims are often accurate in predicting future risk, and we should rely on their expertise about their lives.

We must also remember that for victims of domestic violence, interventions that only take into account the danger posed to them by their abusers – while failing to take into account the risks generated in their lives by their immediate personal circumstances – can also inadvertently make them less safe. While it seems counter-intuitive that victims do not cooperate in a criminal justice process that we deem will make them safer by convicting the offender, we must remind ourselves of the many victims in this report who did attempt to leave their abusers but were killed in the process or shortly thereafter, despite significant criminal justice system interventions.

The conversation around assessment of risks to victims of domestic violence cannot simply end in us adapting tools and developing protocols that focus on offender accountability alone; we must also improve the collaborations between criminal justice and community advocacy agencies and commit to being victim-centered.

Each year, MCBW looks at homicide cases in Minnesota and gathers any known information regarding key lethality factors. We specifically focuses on four lethality factors:

- the victim's attempts to leave the abuser;
- previous threats to kill the victim;
- perpetrator's access to firearms; and
- perpetrator's history of violence.

MCBW has been looking at these four lethality factors since 2006. For the past ten years, these lethality factors have been present in a significant number of cases. We would expect that a more complete analysis of public records and interviews with friends and family of the victims would yield more information on other cases and additional information on other red flags.

For each homicide case there is much to be learned from the individual circumstances, as the circumstances surrounding each death are complex and unique. We look at the key lethality factors with the expectation that this information is useful to inform public policy and intervention strategies.

There were 22 women murdered in Minnesota in 2015 by their intimate partners.

### ***Victim's Attempts to Leave the Abuser:***

While conventional wisdom persists that leaving an abuser will always make a battered woman safer, separation often increases the risks of further harm, as batterers "step up" their efforts to control or intimidate the victim. In 2015, 8 of the 22 cases of homicide occurred after the woman had left the relationship, while she was attempting to leave, or if she had

**Eugenia "Gina" Tallman**, and her 15 year old daughter, **Victoria Alvarez** were shot and killed by her husband, Gonzalo Galvan, in their South Minneapolis home. The couple's 7-year-old son was present at the time of the murders, and was taken into protective custody. ***Gina had recently communicated to a family member that she had planned to leave the relationship. Gonzalo told law enforcement that he had confronted Gina after finding a backpack filled with money, accusing her of threatening to "leave him and take his son away from him," according to the criminal complaint.*** Court records indicate that Gonzalo had three separate 5th degree assault-domestic charges (1995, 1997, 2001), none of which resulted in convictions.

made an attempt to leave in the year before she was killed. This is 36% of the cases. This statistic has ranged between 30 – 67% over the years. In many of the cases, information is not known as to whether the victim was planning on ending the relationship. Attempting or planning to leave a relationship does continue to be a significant factor when assessing lethality.

Preparing to leave a relationship can be one of the most dangerous times for battered women. If a perpetrator is involved with the criminal justice system, victims may think that there is increased safety for them at that time. This may or may not be true depending on the level of control and monitoring that is happening from the criminal justice system. We know that in 2015, at least two of the victims were killed shortly after the abuser was convicted of a domestic abuse offense against them, and at least one of the women was killed shortly after an abusive incident was reported to law enforcement.

From our observation over the years, it is apparent that women often confide in family members, friends, or coworkers about their intention to leave an abusive relationship. As a community, we must educate ourselves about existing resources for victims such as voluntary and confidential services through domestic violence programs that can safety plan with victims. We must also look at this data to inform ourselves of the complex situations, such as homelessness or financial instability, that victims who are attempting to leave an abusive relationship can encounter, which can be added burdens and barriers to safety. We need to invest in collaborations that will assist victims in being able to access safety.

***Threats to Kill the Victim:*** Threats by the abuser to kill the victim are among the most reliable indicators of lethality and are the most often overlooked by the criminal and civil justice systems. A review of the media reports of the 2015 murders does not reveal much information about threats to kill. We know that in at least 3 instances, the woman had experienced threats to kill and it is possible that threats to kill may have been part of prior abuse in additional cases.

Without access to and review of police case files and court records, it is difficult to determine whether threats to kill were made against the victim. While the absence of threats to kill does not tell us much, their presence can be a significant indicator of an abuser's risk of lethality. Those who work with victims and those who intervene in domestic violence cases should pay close attention when victims disclose that the perpetrator has made threats to kill.

April Erickson was shot and killed in her home in Maplewood on August 23rd. Her husband, Todd Tennin has been charged in April's death. April's 16-year-old daughter and 12-year-old son, as well as a 15-year-old family friend, were present in the house at the time of the homicide. April's daughter and her friend overheard the argument and shooting. The three children discovered her body.

April's son told police he retrieved a bloody gun from the bathroom and placed it in a windowsill because he was afraid that Todd would return and kill everyone.

***The son recounted that Todd had threatened in the past, "If I ever kill your mom, I'm going to kill the rest of you so there are no witnesses."***

Court records show that **Todd had made many threats to kill his wife and her children**, regularly abused them, and attacked April so brutally last year that she told a friend there was "blood all over the room" and "it looked like a murder scene."

Todd has an extensive criminal history, including several previous charges of assault and illegal possession of firearms. Records show that police were called to the home at least eight times within the last two years, including twice this past year — most recently, three weeks before April's murder.

**Access to Firearms:** In 2015, 11 of the 22 (50%) domestic violence homicides were committed with firearms. While the percentage of domestic violence homicides using firearms fluctuates from year to year, firearms are the most frequent weapon of choice, and firearms are used in about 50% of the documented domestic violence homicides (of women killed - 52% in 2011, 50% in 2012, 42% in 2013, 56% in 2014 and 50% in 2015). These statistics support the studies showing that possession of firearms by an abuser can increase the risk of lethality. In light of current debates regarding guns and gun safety legislation, it is helpful to consider these statistics.

Domestic violence firearm prohibitions are only as effective as their implementation. We need to look at how firearms were acquired. In 2015, in at least 36% of domestic violence homicides of women by firearms, the offender was prohibited from possessing a firearm at the time the homicide occurred. In the other firearms deaths, it appears the perpetrators had no firearms restrictions in place. For all offenses, we have very little data on where and how perpetrators accessed the firearm.

**Julie Hildreth** was shot and killed by her ex-boyfriend, John Plevell outside of the local American Legion in Aurora on November 8th. Several bar patrons reported to police that John had been in the establishment a short time earlier. ***He was upset about Julie's new relationship, and "suggested doing something to her and her new boyfriend if he saw them that evening."***

Court records show that **John was arrested on September 1st and charged** with misdemeanor domestic assault and disorderly conduct for assaulting Julie. He was released on September 3rd, on a \$1000 bail and pleaded guilty to the disorderly conduct charge in October, for which he was scheduled to be sentenced on November 18th. As he awaited sentencing he was subject to a Domestic Abuse No Contact Order (DANCO) that barred him from contacting or seeing her.

Julie had told law enforcement at the time that ***she was afraid Plevell could kill her*** because his violence was increasing.

Since there was no active Order for Protection against John at the time of the homicide and since the misdemeanor domestic assault charge against him had been dismissed, **John was not automatically prohibited from possessing firearms**, but the court could have made specific firearms orders as conditions of his release.

## Observations About the 2015 Femicide Report

### Missing and Inconsistent Data

MCBW invests significant time and resources collecting information on domestic violence homicide cases for the Femicide Report. While most of the information is public and mandatory for different system players to collect, we face challenges in gaining access to this information or find it is not consistently collected across the state.

We rely on criminal complaints and civil/criminal court records to gather histories of perpetrators and victims. The criminal information only tells part of the story. For instance, while we can collect data on past charges against a perpetrator, we do not know if those charges stemmed from an act of violence against an intimate partner. Often disorderly conduct, terroristic threats, or burglary charges stem from domestic violence but that information is not available through the public court records. Court records only reflect the incidents that reach the judicial system. Court records do not have consistent data on how many calls were made to the police and do not indicate an increasing number of calls made in the weeks prior to the homicide. In order to identify the gaps in the system that need to be filled to prevent domestic violence fatalities, we need reliable and consistent data collection on domestic violence incidents.

### Economic Instability

Economic abuse is one tactic batterers use to maintain power and control over victims – it destabilizes victims' access to basic human necessities like employment, housing, food, transportation, and child care. Economic abuse can include prohibiting a victim from working or forcing a victim to work and taking her paycheck; making a victim lose her job or public benefits; forcing a victim to engage in prostitution; exploiting the fact that a victim who has taken care of children for years may be unable to get a living wage job if she leaves the abuser; forcing victims to commit criminal acts to support themselves and their children; denying child support or making it too dangerous to pursue child support; ruining a victims' credit or preventing her from having a credit history; causing a victim to get evicted from or denied access to housing.

Research indicates that a lack of financial resources is one of the most commonly given reasons domestic violence victims stay with or return to an abusive partner. A review of court records indicate that 12 of the 22 (55%) of the women who were murdered in 2015 had faced economic instability in the past. 11 of the 12 had suffered from a lack of economic resources in the past 5 years.

### Disparate Impact

Crime occurs at similar rates across social boundaries, but communities of color and Native communities are disproportionately represented within the criminal justice system; they are also disproportionately represented in the victims of domestic violence homicide. In 2015, 5 of 22 victims were Native American (23%); 7 were African/African American (32%). We also know that victims' personal experiences with the criminal justice system, and those of the communities they belong to, can dictate whether or not they will reach out systems for help. The impact of disparate treatment can be seen in the criminal histories of the victims themselves. Of the 22 women killed by an intimate partner, 7 (32%) had substantial criminal histories. All of the Native women killed in domestic violence homicides had significant criminal histories. 5 of the 22 victims were on some form of criminal supervision at the time of their death.

## Criminal Histories of Perpetrators

Each year, we attempt to look in depth into the criminal and civil histories of perpetrators to understand whether and how the system intervened prior to the homicide. While each year we find a number of cases where the perpetrator had prior involvement in the criminal justice system, in 2015 a large percentage of perpetrators had significant histories of domestic violence and those histories included numerous dismissed charges.

- Almost 60% of perpetrators (13 out of 22) had a history of domestic violence related charges.
- These 13 perpetrators had a total of 76 domestic violence related charges. Only 19 of the charges resulted in convictions. Four of the charges were pending at the time of the homicides; the remaining charges were dismissed.

### *Profiles of Select Perpetrators with Significant Criminal Histories*

#### **Brian Jourdan Jr.**

2008: 3 Felony level Harassment charges & 2 Terroristic Threats charges – Dismissed

2009: Burglary 2<sup>nd</sup> degree - Dismissed

2010: Obstructing legal process, Fleeing a police officer, Giving false name - Dismissed

2008: 2015: 8 alcohol related charges, including 1 DWI - Dismissed

2008: 2015: OFP petition and 2 HRO petitions. OFP & 1HRO - Dismissed

2013: Theft, Take/Drive Motor Vehicle - Dismissed

2014: 5<sup>th</sup> degree Domestic Assault, Pre-trial probation violation – Dismissed

**Brian stabs and kills Krista Fisherman on 2/13/2015**

#### **William Holisky II**

2003: Burglary. 4<sup>th</sup> degree – Convicted

2003: to 2015: 5 protective order petitions and one with several extensions

2006: Violation of protective order misdemeanor charge - Convicted

2006: Terroristic Threats & Harassment - Convicted

2007: Assault with a dangerous weapon & terroristic threats - Convicted and sent to prison

2008: Violation of an OFP – Dismissed.

2010: Right to possess, sell, and deal firearms restored

2013: Felony Domestic Assault - Convicted

2013: Disorderly Conduct - Convicted

2013: Obstructing Legal Process, Giving False Name, and Disorderly Conduct - Convicted

2003-2014: Multiple probation and parole violations

2014: 4<sup>th</sup> deg. Assault on a correctional employee - Convicted - probation until 8/18/2015

**William stabs and kills his ex-girlfriend Lisa Isham on 5/16/2015**

#### **Toby Clark**

1997: Violation of an Order for Protection - Dismissed

1998: 5<sup>th</sup> Degree Domestic Assault - Dismissed

2000: 5<sup>th</sup> Degree Domestic Assault - Dismissed

2000: 5<sup>th</sup> Degree Domestic Assault and Violation of an Order for Protection - Dismissed

2000: Violation of an Order for Protection - Dismissed

2000: Kidnapping – Convicted

2010: Theft and Damage to Property - Convicted

2014: 2 Domestic Assault 5<sup>th</sup> Degree and 1 Disorderly Conduct charge - Dismissed on 6/1/2015

**Toby strangles and kills his girlfriend Krista Ambers on 8/6/2015**



## Media Response

Media can be a powerful tool in raising public awareness of the complicated nature of domestic violence. However, every year, we notice significant differences in the amount of attention certain homicides receive in the media and within our communities. Often, domestic violence homicides of people of color and Native people, or people belonging to rural communities, are overlooked in the major news outlets or receive very little attention.

We also notice that relationships of victims and perpetrators of intimate partner homicides within the LGBTQ community, especially those existing in rural areas, are often miscategorized as “friends,” “roommates,” or “acquaintances,” in media reports. This makes the ability to identify intimate partner homicides that happen within the LGBTQ communities more difficult.

Beyond the issue of the lack of recognition of certain homicides, we have also observed that media coverage of domestic violence homicides often fails to contextualize them as such, and utilizes extremely problematic terminology such as “love triangle,” or “domestic dispute,” or passive language that disguises domestic violence.

In the media coverage of several cases of women murdered in 2015 where there was a history of dismissed charges against the perpetrator, few to none of the media outlets reported that information. Even in homicides where the perpetrator had a documented history of domestic violence, some media outlets did not recognize the murder as a domestic violence homicide.

## Recommendations for Systems and Communities in Minnesota

While the ultimate responsibility for these murders rests with the perpetrators alone, opportunities for meaningful intervention in many of these cases were missed. Especially in the cases in which the victim reached out for help or the perpetrator was known to be dangerous, we should examine the reasons why our systems ultimately failed to protect those victims from lethal violence.

### Data Collection & Sharing

Victims and the perpetrators who killed them interact with various systems that capture information which can be helpful in developing effective interventions and responses to domestic violence homicides. We recommend that:

- ❖ Criminal justice system agencies across Minnesota consistently capture information regarding intimate partner violence. This includes keeping data from 911 calls, arrests, charges, convictions, sentencing, incarceration, supervision, and violations. All agencies should collect reliable, quality data that more fully captures information relevant to domestic violence.
- ❖ Clear guidance be provided to all agencies collecting data with common definitions articulated to achieve greater consistency of data. Terms such as “domestic violence” should be defined and should include subcategorization to distinguish between intimate partner violence and family/household violence.
- ❖ Public data should be easily accessible. MCBW relies on public data for this report. Others should have access to the data as well. If we are to continue to refine policies to address domestic

violence, there needs to be research and ongoing evaluation of data.

### **Criminal Justice System Changes**

Over the past four decades, there have been many advancements in the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence. One thing we have learned, is that batterer accountability is not synonymous with victim safety. The histories of perpetrators in 2015 illustrate this reality. Despite repeated interventions by the criminal justice system, there were fatalities. The high numbers of dismissed charges and the high percentage of offenders with documented criminal histories indicate a need to further evaluate ways to promote victim safety. Our recommendations for the criminal justice system include:

- ❖ Increase the investment in quality Batterer's Intervention Programming (BIP) that is innovative, culturally appropriate, based on research, and locally accessible. Much of the current focus is on getting victims to leave and creating separation between a perpetrator and victim. There needs to be a serious investment in creating a process for change for batterers. While 60% of perpetrators (13 out of 22) had documented histories of domestic violence, only 4 of them (18%) had been charged with domestic abuse-related crimes against the victim that they killed. Without addressing the root causes of battering and changing perpetrators' behavior, there will always be another victim.
- ❖ Expand the criminal court's analysis of dangerousness to include an examination of the full range of criminal behavior. Lethality and risk assessments must include an examination of past patterns of charges including convictions and dismissals.
- ❖ Training for all personnel within the criminal justice system to increase awareness of domestic violence. With heightened awareness of the dynamics and causes of domestic violence, the various courts should consider ways to minimize further victimization within the various legal proceedings. For example, housing court may vary or enhance their responses to victims of domestic violence involved in unlawful detainer housing actions.

### **Enhance Economic Stability**

Minnesota has a history of creating coordinated criminal justice response teams, which often include domestic and sexual violence advocates, law enforcement, prosecution, and corrections. Missing from these community response teams are key players from economic systems: landlords, housing and conciliation courts, homelessness and housing assistance providers, county economic assistance programs, employers, economic safety net programs, social service providers, and legal aid attorneys who assist with economic-related legal needs. Economic stability could be enhanced with the following recommendations:

- ❖ Broaden criminal justice response teams to include economic systems.
- ❖ Work with landlords and homelessness/housing assistance providers to prioritize homeless victims of domestic and sexual violence and to address policies that penalize domestic violence victims.
- ❖ Create policies and practices for prosecution and law enforcement to assess all victims for economic security issues and assist victims to connect with economic supports (housing, food, transportation, child care, employment, crime victim compensation, public benefits).

- ❖ Educate others in economic sectors, such as businesses, tax preparers, banks and lenders, utilities providers, to identify domestic and sexual violence and refer victims for advocacy assistance.

### **Address Racial Disparities**

Many victims of color and Native victims experience added barriers and disparate treatment within our communities and the criminal justice system. All systems interacting with victims need to recognize the impact of trauma victims experience: trauma from battering; and also the historical and current day trauma of disparate treatment. The criminal justice system must be a resource and an option for *all* victims. As a starting point to improving all of our responses to domestic violence, we recommend:

- ❖ Examine the criminal justice response teams and other agency response teams to ensure that they reflect the full diversity of the community.
- ❖ Seek out the expertise of culturally specific domestic violence community organizations to provide leadership for criminal justice system response teams and others in addressing racial disparity issues; and develop policies that more effectively address barriers faced by specific communities.

### **Media Responses**

Media plays a critical role in shaping the public awareness and understanding of domestic violence. The language the media uses can heavily impact the discourse in our communities which in turn can have severe consequences for victims of domestic violence. Media outlets range from the statewide radio, TV and print media to local journalists to social media. We recommend the following:

- ❖ All media partners undergo appropriate training to understand the dynamics of domestic violence and the importance of reporting on acts of domestic violence in context. Media should reach out to local domestic violence experts for their perspective when reporting on domestic violence issues.
- ❖ Media to examine the level and type of coverage provided to homicides that occur in various communities and ensure that all homicides are recognized.
- ❖ Examine reporting policies, including language usage, regarding domestic violence coverage.

### **Community-wide Solutions**

Every year MCBW releases the Femicide Report. Every year the question is raised as to why domestic homicides continue at essentially the same rate. After nearly four decades of organized efforts to end domestic violence in Minnesota, that goal remains elusive: What do we need to do differently/additionally?

MCBW, in partnership with member programs and allied organizations from across the state, spent the past two years grappling with this question. The result is *Empower Our Future: A Plan to End Domestic*

*Violence in Minnesota* (available at [www.mcbw.org](http://www.mcbw.org)). The plan provides strategies and action steps that can be taken up by individuals, communities, and organizations. One priority area within the plan is prevention through social norm change. Intervention and response strategies are not the full answer. We must commit to prevention efforts to stop the violence before it starts. To stem the incidents of domestic violence, we must create environments where everyone knows that violence will not be tolerated and where healthy, respectful, and violence-free relationships are the norm for everyone.

To change social norms and create health environments, *everyone* must see domestic violence as their issue. Many of the victims whose deaths are documented in the Femicide Reports did not have any interactions with the criminal justice system. However, many of these victims did report the abuse to their friends, family members, employers, and others in their communities. A successful response to domestic violence can only be achieved with the investment of an entire community. Whether as a parent, a partner, within the workplace, or in neighborhoods, we all need to talk about domestic violence and work to create healthy communities where domestic violence is not accepted or tolerated. If we fail to keep safety as a top priority, women will continue to be killed and our communities destabilized.

***Together, we can live violence free.***

## **Challenge to Minnesota Communities**

Domestic violence and domestic homicide have a devastating effect on every person living in Minnesota. Each of the victims whose story is told here is someone's daughter, son, mother, father, sister, brother, family member, intimate partner, friend, neighbor, or co-worker.

We pledge to remember the women, children, men, family members, and friends who die each year from domestic violence.

Our challenge to the community is to not let these deaths go unnoticed but rather to use these brutal murders as a springboard for action.

While we have research and tools that can assist us in identifying the people most likely to reoffend and those most likely to engage in high risk and lethal behaviors, nothing can predict with 100% accuracy the batterers who will seriously injure or kill. Some of the women injured and killed in Minnesota each year were so isolated or so disconnected that they never told anyone what was happening, and no one had any information about the abuse. Many of these women, however, *did* interact with our legal system, our medical system, our mental health system or they reached out to family, friends or community members. It is precisely in those cases where we can start to make a difference. We can learn from the tragic loss of life by taking action towards meaningful change.

Over the past decades, we have learned much about domestic violence. Our laws have improved; our advocacy and justice systems and the personnel within those systems have learned, changed and improved how they respond to domestic violence; we talk with our children about healthy relationships and about domestic violence. We applaud all of those efforts but we can do even better. That is the challenge we name for ourselves and for all of Minnesota.

## Key Femicide Statistics (2013-2015) for Adult Women Murdered by a Current or Former Intimate Partner

### Cause of Death

	2013		2014		2015		
Cause of Death	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	Name of Victim
Gunshot	10	42%	9	56%	11	50%	April Erickson Ayan Abdulahi Carol Alexander-Pickart Esther Muchina-Dobie Eugenia Tallman Julie Hildreth Karen Short Lanaea Harrison Ramona Turner Samirria White Shelley Walley
Stabbing	3	13%	2	13%	4	18%	Flowera Ransom Kelly Anderson Krista Fisherman Lisa Isham
Strangulation	2	8%	3	19%	2	9%	Grace Van Norman Krista Ambers
Beating	5	21%	0	0%	1	5%	Linda Kay Boehme
Other/Unknown	4	17%	2	13%	4	18%	Adelle Jensen Elizabeth Gregg Mai Nhue Her Rose Downwind
<b>Total:</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>16</b>		<b>22</b>		

### Victim was Separated from Perpetrator or Attempting to Leave

	2013		2014		2015		
	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	Name of Victim
Separated or Attempting to Leave	15	60%	5	31%	8	36%	Adelle Jensen Elizabeth Gregg Eugenia Tallman Julie Hildreth Lisa Isham Ramona Turner Rose Downwind Samirria White
Together	6	24%	9	56%	11	50%	Ayan Abdulahi April Erickson Carol Alexander-Pickart Flowera Ransom Grace Van Norman Karen Short Krista Fisherman Kelly Anderson Krista Ambers Linda Boehme Shelley Walley
Unknown or Not Applicable	4	16%	2	13%	3	14%	Esther Muchina-Dobie Lanaea Harrison Mai Nhue Her
<b>Total:</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>16</b>		<b>22</b>		

	2013		2014		2015		
History of Violence	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	Name of Victim
Cases in which offender had a prior history of abusive behavior but no documented involvement with legal system	6	24%	4	25%	1	5%	Adelle Jensen
Cases in which offender had a documented prior history of abuse in criminal or civil court	14	56%	3	19%	13	59%	April Erickson Elizabeth Gregg Eugenia Tallman Flowera Ransom Julie Hildreth Krista Ambers Krista Fisherman Lanaea Harrison Linda Boehme Lisa Isham Ramona Turner Rose Downwind Samirria White
Unknown	5	20%	9	56%	8	36%	Ayan Abdulahi Carol Alexander-Pickart Esther Muchina-Dobie Grace Van Norman Karen Short Kelly Anderson Mai Nhue Her Shelley Walley
<b>Total:</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>16</b>		<b>22</b>		

## Geographic Location of Victim

	2013		2014		2015		
Location of Victim	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	Name of Victim
Twin Cities Metro Area	16	64%	9	56%	14	64%	Adelle Jensen April Erickson Ayan Abdulahi Esther Muchina-Dobie Eugenia Tallman Flowera Ransom Grace Van Norman Karen Short Kelly Anderson Krista Ambers Lanaea Harrison Mai Nhue Her Ramona Turner Samirria White
Greater Minnesota	9	36%	7	44%	8	36%	Carol Alexander-Pickart Elizabeth Gregg Julie Hildreth Krista Fisherman Linda Boehme Lisa Isham Rose Downwind Shelley Walley
<b>Total:</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>16</b>		<b>22</b>		



## Homicide – Suicide

	2013		2014		2015		
	#	% of Total			#	% of Total	Name of Victim
No. of homicides where perpetrator then committed suicide	9	36%	6	38%	5	23%	Carol Alexander-Pickart Esther Muchina-Dobie Karen Short Lanaea Harrison Shelley Walley
<b>Total No. of Femicides:</b>	25		16		22		

2012: In 50% of the domestic violence homicides, the perpetrator then committed suicide.

2011: In 48% of the domestic violence homicides, the perpetrator then committed suicide.

2010: In 50% of the domestic violence homicides, the perpetrator then committed suicide.

2009: In 50% of the domestic violence homicides, the perpetrator then committed suicide.

## Murder of Mothers and Effect on Children

	2013		2014		2015		
Children	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	Name of Victim
Murders of mothers with minor children	7	28%	9	56%	9	41%	Adelle Jensen April Erickson Eugenia Tallman+ Karen Short+ Krista Ambers Krista Fisherman Lanaea Harrison Rose Downwind Samirria White
Number of minor children who lost mother	13		19		17		
Number of adult children who lost mother	23		7		28		
Child(ren) present at time of murder or discovered the body	6		7		10		

\*This represents the percentage of cases in which the woman who was killed was a mother of minor children. There were 9 mothers of minor children killed in 2015.

+ Cases in which minor children were killed alongside their mothers.



## Women murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former husband, boyfriend, or intimate partner:



**Krista Fisherman**

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Age 35  
Bemidji  
February 13, 2015

**Krista Marie Fisherman**, 35, of Redby, was found near a mall in Bemidji with several stab wounds on February 13. Brian Keith Jourdain, 25, of Bemidji, was identified from video surveillance as the person with Krista at the mall before the stabbing, according to court documents. Krista was found lying in the street a short time later. Krista was transported to Sanford Bemidji Medical Center where she was pronounced dead. She was stabbed at least four times, with one wound proving fatal.

Brian has been charged with two counts of 2nd-degree murder, one with and one without intent, in her death. He had 8 different domestic violence related charges against him between 2008 and 2015. They were all dismissed, with the last one being dismissed less than a year before he killed Krista. Krista leaves behind four minor and two adult children.



**Lanaea Harrison**

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Age 23  
Norwood Young America  
March 11, 2015

On March 11, **Lanaea Ann Harrison**, 23, was killed by her boyfriend, Milo Willis Leistiko, 51, who then committed suicide. At the time of the murder, they were both residing in Norwood Young America. The evidence found at the scene indicates Milo shot and killed Lanaea. He then placed her body in a waterfowl decoy bag before turning the gun on himself and taking his own life. Milo has domestic assault and procuring prostitution convictions in his criminal history. According to the authorities, law enforcement had been called to the home “a half-dozen times” since 2007 on reports of theft, child custody disputes, and other concerns. Lanaea leaves behind a toddler son.



**Linda Boehme**

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Age 65  
Granite Falls  
March 17, 2015

**Linda Kay Boehme**, 65, was killed by her boyfriend, Chad C. Laraby, 53, in her Granite Falls home on March 17th. Police found Linda unresponsive with head and facial injuries. She was flown to Hennepin County Medical Center, where she died as a result of severe head trauma. Chad was charged in Yellow Medicine County District Court with second-degree murder in her death. He has an extensive criminal history which includes several dismissals for sexual assault and disorderly conduct charges, six misdemeanor convictions for disorderly conduct, and additional convictions for trespassing, theft and drunken driving. He was convicted of 2nd-Degree Murder - Without Intent While Committing a Felony and was sentenced to 240 months in prison. Linda is survived by three adult children and five adult step-children.



**Esther Muchina-Dobie**

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Age 39  
Savage  
March 30, 2015

**Esther Nyambura Muchina-Dobie**, 39, was shot in the head by her husband Rodney Terrell Dobie, 41, before he killed himself. Police found their bodies on March 30th at a house in Savage while responding to a welfare-check call from Esther's employer after she didn't report for work that morning. Esther was last seen leaving work March 28th. Neighbors shared that the couple had moved into the neighborhood within the past 12 months, and that police had visited the home about two weeks before the homicide. Authorities believe Rodney Dobie used a 9 mm Glock handgun to shoot Esther once in the head, then fatally shot himself in the head. According to a death announcement, Esther was buried in her home country of Kenya.




**Samirria White**


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Age 19  
Saint Paul  
April 4, 2015

**Samirria White**, 19, was shot and killed by her boyfriend, Dimitri Harrell, 21, in the early hours of April 5th, at an apartment in St. Paul. Witnesses, including Samirria White's siblings who were at the apartment, stated that they had heard an argument between the couple in which Samirria told Dimitri she wanted to break up with him. She was later heard asking Harrell not to point his gun at her. Dimitri shot Samirria once in the head. He was Gone On Arrival when the police responded and found Samirria's body on the floor of the bedroom. She was declared dead at the scene. Samirria was holding the couple's three-month-old daughter at the time Dimitri killed her. He was convicted of Murder - 2nd Degree - With Intent-Not Premeditated in Samirria's death and was sentenced to 366 months in prison.

**Ayan Abdi Abdulahi**, 21, of Bloomington, was shot and killed by her boyfriend, Ahmed Abdirahim Abdi, 17, in south Minneapolis on April 11th. The Hennepin County Medical Examiner said Ayan was shot in the head. A relative of Ahmed's who also lived in the home reported the shooting after hearing a gunshot in Ahmed's room and seeing him run out the back door. An investigation led to Ahmed's arrest on April 24th in Kansas City, Missouri where he was staying with relatives. Ahmed has been charged with 2nd-degree murder in Hennepin County.


**Ayan Abdulahi**


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Age 21  
Minneapolis  
April 11, 2015


**Mai Nhue Her**


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Age 41  
Saint Paul  
May 12, 2015

**Mai Nhue Her**, 41, was taken to Regions Hospital in St. Paul because of a head injury on May 12. She died from her injuries on May 15. Police arrested her husband on suspicion of murder but he was not charged. The medical examiner was unable to determine Mai Nhue's cause of death.



**Carol Lee Alexander-Pickart**, 76, was killed by her husband, Jerome "Jerry" Ralph Pickart, 84, on May 15th, at their home in Winona. Carol was found dead of a single gunshot wound to the head in her living room. Jerome was found near Carol with a self-inflicted gunshot wound. He was transported to the hospital and died two days later. Police confirmed that this was a murder-suicide.

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**Carol Lee Alexander-Pickart**

Age 76  
Winona  
May 15, 2015

**Lisa Isham**, 52, was killed by her ex-boyfriend, William Holisky, 63, on or about May 16th. Lisa was found dead in her Duluth home two weeks later on May 30th. She was stabbed numerous times with a knife. William has been charged with second-degree intentional murder. He has an extensive history of violence against women, with at least three felony assault convictions on his record, including the use of firearms against an ex-girlfriend and assaulting a corrections officer. He was granted the right to own and possess firearms in 2010, after he had served a prison sentence for shooting into the house of an ex-girlfriend who had a protective order against him. In 2011, the New York Times did a profile on William as part of a piece about felons who were allowed to own and possess firearms by the court. Lisa leaves behind two children.




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**Lisa Isham**

Age 52  
Duluth  
May 16, 2015




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**Elizabeth Gregg**

Age 45  
Franklin  
June 11, 2015

**Elizabeth Gregg**, 45, was killed by her boyfriend, Dwayne Alan Case, 29, at a campsite near Franklin on June 11th. Elizabeth died as a result of a broad-head arrow perforating her stomach and liver. Her body was found under a blanket in a tent she was sharing with Dwayne.

Dwayne was discovered at the campsite with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to his head as a result of an attempted suicide. Dwayne had told an acquaintance he wanted to commit suicide prior to the murder and attempted suicide. A few months prior to the homicide, Dwayne had been charged with physically and sexually assaulting Elizabeth. There was a Domestic Abuse No Contact Order (DANCO) barring Dwayne from seeing or contacting Elizabeth. He has been convicted of 2nd-degree murder in connection with Elizabeth's death.



## Shelley Walley

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Age 69  
Madison  
July 29, 2015

**Shelley Walley**, 69, was shot and killed by her husband, William Walley, 78, who then turned the shotgun on himself and committed suicide at their home near the rural town of Madison. Law enforcement performed a welfare check on the couple on July 29th and discovered their bodies in the living room.

**Krista Ambers**, 36, was murdered on August 6th in her Brooklyn Park home by her live-in boyfriend, Toby Nicholas Clarke, 37. When police arrived at the home in response to a report of an unconscious person, Krista was found without a pulse and had injuries to her neck and arms. According to the Medical Examiner the cause of death was strangulation. Krista's family stated that they had seen visible marks of abuse on her in the past, and expressed concern. Toby has an extensive history of domestic abuse in both criminal and civil courts and also served prison time for kidnapping a former victim in 2000. Between 1997 and 2015, Toby had 12 different charges stemming from domestic violence incidents filed against him, 10 of which were dismissed. 3 of these charges stemmed from an assault against a former intimate partner in October of 2014 and all of them were dismissed on June 1, 2015, two months before Toby fatally strangled Krista. Krista has three children.



## Krista Ambers

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Age 36  
Brooklyn Park  
August 6, 2015



## Kelly Anderson

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Age 45  
South Saint Paul  
August 7, 2015

**Kelly Ann Anderson**, 45, was stabbed to death by her boyfriend, Thomas Luby, 58, in his South St. Paul home. On August 7th, Thomas called 911 and told a dispatcher he killed a woman. When police arrived, they found Kelly dead in the living room. According to the Medical Examiner, Kelly had cuts on her right jawline, chin, neck, and a fatal wound to the base of her neck. Scratches on her stomach and swelling to her lips and right eye were also present. The Medical Examiner stated that Kelly had two deep cuts to the outside of her hand, which were consistent with defensive wounds. Thomas has been charged with 2nd-degree intentional murder. Kelly leaves behind two children.






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**April Erickson**

Age 41  
Maplewood  
August 23, 2015

**April Erickson**, 41, was shot and killed by her husband, Todd Larry Tennin, 31, in their home in Maplewood on August 23rd. Two of April's children, a 16-year-old girl and a 12-year-old boy, along with their 15-year-old friend, were present at the time of the homicide. The children found her body and contacted a neighbor who then contacted authorities. April told a friend that Todd had been severely abusive to her in the past and that his behavior was escalating. Todd has an extensive criminal history, including several previous charges of assault and illegal possession of firearms. Records show that police were called to the home at least eight times within the last two years, including twice this past year — most recently, three weeks before April's murder. Todd has been charged in Ramsey County with 2nd-degree murder. April was the mother of four children.

On September 8th, 36-year-old **Grace Ann Van Norman** was suffocated by her 27 year-old boyfriend Lauren Mason Grove Lynch at his apartment in Forest Lake. Law enforcement responded to a report of a foul smell by a neighbor and found Grace dead in the living room. The Medical Examiner ruled that Grace died due to homicidal violence, with the primary cause of death being asphyxiation. Lauren confessed to punching Grace, strangling her, suffocating her with a pillow, and stabbing her with a kitchen knife several times. Lauren lived in the house with her body for three days until police arrived at the apartment. He did not have any documented history of domestic violence and has been charged with 2nd-degree murder for killing Grace.




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**Grace Van Norman**

Age 36  
Forest Lake  
September 8, 2015




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**Karen Short**

Age 48  
Greenwood  
September 8, 2015

**Karen Short**, 48, was murdered by her husband, 45-year-old Brian Short, shortly after he shot and killed their three teenage children, **Cole**, 17; **Madison**, 15; and **Brooklyn**, 14; as they slept. Brian Short then committed suicide in their Greenwood home. Investigators estimate the deaths occurred on September 7th or September 8th, although the bodies were not found until September 10th. It was determined that Brian Short shot and killed Karen as she attempted to call 911 for help; he had purchased the gun a few days before the homicides.



**Ramona Turner**

Age 54  
Saint Paul  
September 17, 2015

On September 17, 54-year-old **Ramona “Mona” Turner**, was shot and killed by 56-year-old John “Jack” Gordon Weisner Jr., her partner of over 40 years, in their St. Paul home. Jack then stabbed himself several times in an attempt to commit suicide. According to family, Mona had been attempting to leave the relationship for the last five years. Jack assaulted Mona in 2009 which resulted in a misdemeanor domestic assault conviction. She reported the abuse to law enforcement and her family, and sought an Order for Protection against him at that time. According to media reports, there were several instances of John controlling Mona and perpetrating abuse against her. Mona, who had two sons with Jack, was killed in the presence of one of her sons and his girlfriend.

**Eugenia “Gina” Tallman**, 48, and her 15-year-old daughter, **Victoria Alvarez** were shot and killed by her husband, Gonzalo Galvan, 50, in their South Minneapolis home. The couple’s 7-year-old son was present at the time of the murders and was taken into protective custody. Gina had recently communicated to a family member that she had planned to leave the relationship. Gonzalo told law enforcement that he had confronted Gina after finding several backpacks filled with money, accusing her of threatening to “leave him and take his son away from him.” Court records indicate that Gonzalo had three separate 5th-degree assault-domestic charges (1995, 1997, 2001), none resulted in convictions. He has been charged with first-degree murder in the deaths of Gina and Victoria.



**Eugenia Tallman**

Age 48  
Minneapolis  
September 25, 2015



**Flowera Ransom**

Age 48  
Minneapolis  
October 1, 2015

**Flowera Ransom**, 53, was killed by her husband Wayne Ray Watson, 51, on October 1st at their residence in Northeast Minneapolis. Autopsy results confirmed that Ransom died as a result of stab wounds to her neck. Court records show that Wayne has a long history of crimes involving trespassing, disorderly conduct and drinking alcohol in public. He also has convictions for assault and drug possession and has had domestic abuse related charges dismissed in the past. Wayne is currently facing 2nd-degree murder charges for murdering Flowera.



**Rose Downwind**

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Age 31  
Bemidji  
October 20, 2015

**Rose Downwind**, 31, was killed by her ex-boyfriend Marchello Anthony Cimmarusti, 40, with whom she had three children, on October 20th. Rose was reported missing on October 21 and after a two month long search, Marchello confessed to killing her.

Marchello had been abusive to Rose in the past and was charged with domestic assault against her on October 7th. As a result of those charges, a Domestic Abuse No Contact Order (DANCO) was put into place preventing Marchello from contacting Rose. On October 20th, Marchello assaulted and killed Rose as she attempted to take a video of him violating the DANCO. His cousin and friend assisted him in hiding Rose's body which was found burned and buried in a shallow grave in December. Marchello has been charged with 2nd-degree murder for murdering Rose who leaves behind five children.



**Julie Hildreth**

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Age 49  
Aurora  
November 8, 2015

**Julie Ann Hildreth**, 49, was shot and killed by her ex-boyfriend, John Joseph Plevell, 51, outside of the local American Legion in Aurora on November 8th. Julie's current boyfriend told police he was outside the bar with her and when they went to re-enter the building, he heard what sounded like a deer rifle shot and saw Julie drop to the ground. Several bar patrons reported to police that John had been in the establishment a short time earlier, was upset about Julie's new relationship, and "suggested doing something to her and her new boyfriend if he saw them that evening." At the time he killed her, John was on pre-trial probation for a recent assault against Julie and was also subject to a Domestic Abuse No Contact Order (DANCO) that barred him from contacting or seeing her. According to court records, John was arrested on September 1st on charges of misdemeanor domestic assault and disorderly conduct for beating Julie. He was released on September 3rd, on a \$1000 bail and pled guilty to the disorderly conduct charge in October, for which he was scheduled to be sentenced on November 18th. He has been charged with 2nd-degree intentional murder in the death of Julie, who leaves behind two children.



**Adelle Jensen**

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Age 25  
Minneapolis  
November 18, 2015

**Adelle “Addie” Jensen**, 25, has been missing since November 18. Her ex-boyfriend, Joshua Dow 31, was arrested on probable cause of murder but has been charged with interference with a dead body while concealing evidence in connection with Adelle's death. Addie's family shared that she had been “struggling with a relationship” and had recently moved in with them. Addie leaves behind a two-year-old daughter that she had with Joshua.

## Men murdered by an intimate partner:



**Addison Hillard**

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Age 58  
Saint Paul  
May 29, 2015

58-year-old **Addison Hillard** was stabbed and killed by his girlfriend, 47-year-old Sherry Henderson, on May 29th, at their apartment in St. Paul. Police were summoned more than 12 hours later and learned that the stabbing occurred during an argument while Henderson and Addison were drinking. Sherry has a history of violence, including violence against Addison. Nearly two years ago, Henderson used a knife to slash Addison, but no charges were filed. According to the autopsy report, Addison's stab wound was 5.5 inches deep and went through his lung and into the pulmonary artery. The Medical Examiner determined that Addison would not have survived even if he had received immediate medical attention for his stab wound. Addison's daughter told the police that her father had recently shared with her that he wanted to break up with Sherry because of the physical abuse. Sherry was convicted of 2nd-degree murder and sentenced to 15 years in prison. Addison was the father of two children.



**Anthony Morgan**

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Age 21  
Minneapolis  
June 10, 2015

**Anthony Morgan**, 21, was stabbed and killed by his girlfriend Biana Jackson, 22, on June 10th, in South Minneapolis at his apartment. Police were called to the apartment on the report of an assault with a knife. Anthony was taken to the Hennepin County Medical Center where he was pronounced dead upon arrival. According to the Medical Examiner, Anthony Morgan died of a sharp force injury to the neck. Biana was charged with 2nd-degree murder without premeditation in the death of Anthony.





**Thomas Jenkins**

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Age 21  
Saint Paul  
December 5, 2015

**Thomas Calvin Donald Jenkins**, 21, was killed by his girlfriend Melissa Marie Fostvedt, 33, on the afternoon of December 5th in her St. Paul apartment. An autopsy found a fatal stab wound to Thomas's chest, as well as a defensive wound on his left forearm. The examiner determined that he bled to death and his wounds were a result of homicide. Melissa's three children were present at the time of the homicide. She has a criminal history that includes assault, disorderly conduct, and interference with 911. Melissa was charged in Ramsey County with one felony count of 2nd-degree murder.

## Friends, Family Members, Interveners murdered in domestic violence-related situations:



**Joseph Kroll**

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Age 31  
Brainerd  
January 4, 2015

On January 4th, CC and her boyfriend, **Joseph Thomas Kroll**, 31, were shot in their apartment in Brainerd by Tyler Allan Cronquist. Joseph died as a result of the shooting and CC survived a gunshot wound to the head. Tyler was charged with 2nd-degree murder with intent but not premeditation; attempted 2nd-degree murder with intent; 1st-degree assault to cause great bodily harm; and 2nd-degree assault with a dangerous weapon. He has previously been charged with a DWI and misdemeanor domestic assault. Joseph leaves behind a minor daughter whom he had with CC.


**Cole Short**


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Age 17  
Greenwood  
September 8, 2015


**Madison Short**


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Age 15  
Greenwood  
September 8, 2015


**Brooklyn Short**


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Age 14  
Greenwood  
September 8, 2015

**Karen Short**, 48, was murdered by her husband, 45 year-old Brian Short, after he shot and killed their three teenage children, **Cole**, 17; **Madison**, 15; and **Brooklyn**, 14, as they slept. Brian Short then committed suicide in their Greenwood home. Investigators estimate the deaths occurred on September 7th or September 8th, although the bodies were not found until September 10th. It was determined that Brian Short shot and killed Karen as she attempted to call 911 for help; he had purchased the gun a few days before the homicides.


**Victoria Alvarez**


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Age 15  
Minneapolis  
September 25, 2015

**Eugenia “Gina” Tallman**, 48, and her 15-year-old daughter, **Victoria Alvarez** were shot and killed by her husband, Gonzalo Galvan, 50, in their South Minneapolis home. The couple’s 7-year-old son was present at the time of the murders and was taken into protective custody. Gina had recently communicated to a family member that she had planned to leave the relationship. Gonzalo told law enforcement that he had confronted Gina after finding several backpacks filled with money, accusing her of threatening to “leave him and take his son away from him.” Court records indicate that Gonzalo had three separate 5<sup>th</sup>-degree assault-domestic charges (1995, 1997, 2001), none resulted in convictions. He has been charged with 1st-degree murder in the deaths of Gina and Victoria.




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**Steven Sandberg**

Age 60  
Saint Cloud  
October 18, 2015

**Investigator Steven Sandberg**, 60, was shot and killed in St. Cloud Hospital on October 18th as he was monitoring the shooter, 50-year-old Danny Hammond. Danny was wanted by police for assaulting and kidnapping his wife in the days prior to the murder of Investigator Sandberg. According to media reports, Danny had been abusive to his wife for the past 25 years and she told him she wanted a divorce on October 10th. In response, he physically assaulted her, intimidated her with firearms, and kept her captive overnight while threatening to kill her and commit suicide. The victim was able to convince Danny to let her go to her father's house where she contacted law enforcement. Investigator Sandberg was one of three deputies who responded to her call for help. On October 12th, he was charged with multiple counts including kidnapping, assault and terroristic threats, and a warrant was issued for his arrest. The same day, officers found him unresponsive at his house and he was transported to the St. Cloud Hospital where law enforcement presence was requested due to the seriousness of his violence against his wife. Investigator Sandberg was monitoring Danny when he assaulted the officer, got a hold of his gun, and shot him. Hospital staff subdued Danny by using a taser and he later died due to cardiac arrest. Investigator Sandberg leaves behind a daughter.




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**David Madison**

Age 39  
Austin  
November 1, 2015

**David Allen Madison**, 39, was killed by Michael McIntosh, 37, on or about November 1st in Austin. His body was discovered in the Cedar River in Mower County on November 1st and an autopsy determined that he died due to strangulation and blunt force trauma. In the two weeks prior to David's death, he told a number of people that Michael wanted to harm him. Michael was threatening David because David was involved in a relationship with Michael's girlfriend while he was serving time in jail on a drug offense. Michael was released from jail two days before the murder. He has been charged with 2nd-degree murder in the death of David, who leaves behind two young children.



**Dominic Jasper**

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Age 26  
Saint Paul  
December 10, 2015

**Kavonta Pratt**

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Age 23  
Saint Paul  
December 10, 2015

Jamaine Jamie Williams, 24, shot and killed **Dominic Larrel Jasper**, 26, and Dominic's friend **Kavonta Lashawn Pratt**, 23, at his ex-girlfriend's apartment in St. Paul on December 10th. Dominic was dating Jamaine's ex-girlfriend. Jamaine showed up at the ex-girlfriend's apartment a week prior to the homicide and "threatened to kill all of them" while waving a gun around. On the day of the homicide, Jamaine knocked on his ex-girlfriend's door pretending to be the police. He then shot and killed both Dominic and Kavonta while injuring another friend of Dominic's. Jamaine has an extensive criminal history and has been charged with possession of firearms in the past.

He faces two counts in Ramsey County of intentional 2nd-degree murder and one count of intentional attempted 2nd-degree murder. Both Dominic and Kavonta leave behind young children.

# About the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

**The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women** was founded in 1978 to serve as a unifying voice for battered women and to link battered women's programs in the state with the common purpose of ending domestic violence.

**MCBW** is a statewide, member-based organization serving more than 80 local, regional, and statewide member organizations that advocate for an end to battering. MCBW members programs include battered women's shelters and safe homes, community advocacy programs, criminal justice intervention projects, state and national training and technical assistance organizations, human rights organizations, and homeless shelters and transitional housing programs. Members include 12 culturally specific and population specific programs serving differing communities.

MCBW is working to improve conditions for battered women and their families by increasing public awareness, impacting public policy and increasing the capacity of those who work directly with domestic violence victims and their families.

## **Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is to provide a voice for battered women and member programs; challenge systems and institutions so they respond more effectively to the needs of battered women and their children; promote social change; and support, educate, and connect member programs.

## **Vision Statement:**

The vision of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is to end violence against women and their children and to achieve social justice for all.

## **In 2015, at least 34 Minnesotans lost their lives as a result of domestic violence.**

### ***Remember their names...***

1. January 4, 2015 Joseph Kroll, Brainerd, died from gunshot wounds.
2. Feb 13, 2015 Krista Marie Fisherman, Bemidji, died from being stabbed.
3. March 11, 2015 Lanaea Ann Harrison, Norwood Young America, died from gunshot wounds.
4. March 17, 2015 Linda Kay Boehme, Granite Falls, died as a result of severe head trauma.
5. March 30, 2015 Esther Nyambura Muchina-Dobie, Savage, died from gunshot wounds.
6. April 4, 2015 Samirria White, St. Paul, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
7. April 11, 2015 Ayan Abdi Abdullahi, Minneapolis, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
8. May 12, 2015 Mai Nhue Her, Saint Paul, died as a result of head injury.
9. May 15, 2015 Carol Lee Alexander-Pickart, Winona, died from a gunshot wound.
10. May 16, 2015 Lisa Isham, Duluth, died from being stabbed.
11. May 29, 2015 Addison Hillard, St. Paul, died from being stabbed.
12. June 10, 2015 Anthony Morgan, Minneapolis, died being stabbed.
13. June 11, 2015 Elizabeth Gregg, Franklin, died from injuries from an arrow wound.
14. July 29, 2015 Shelley Walley, Madison, died from gunshot wounds.
15. August 6, 2015 Krista Ambers, Brooklyn Park, died as a result of strangulation.
16. August 7, 2015 Kelly Ann Anderson, South St. Paul, died as a result of stabbing.
17. August 23, 2015 April Erickson, Maplewood, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
18. Sept. 8, 2015 Grace Ann Van Norman, Forest Lake, died as a result strangulation.
19. Sept. 8, 2015 Karen Short, Greenwood, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
20. Sept. 8, 2015 Cole Short, Greenwood, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
21. Sept. 8 2015 Madison Short, Greenwood, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
22. Sept. 8, 2015 Brooklyn Short, Greenwood, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
23. Sept. 17, 2015 Ramona (Mona) Turner, St. Paul, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
24. Sept. 25, 2015 Eugenia (Gina) Tallman, Minneapolis, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
25. Sept. 25, 2015 Victoria Alvarez, Minneapolis, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
26. October 1, 2015 Flowera Ransom, Minneapolis, died as a result of being stabbed.
27. October 18, 2015 Investigator Steven Sandberg, St. Cloud, died from gunshot wounds.
28. October 20, 2015 Rose Downwind, Bemidji, died as a result of an assault.
29. Nov. 1, 2015 David Allen Madison, Austin, died as a result of blunt force trauma.
30. Nov. 8, 2015 Julie Ann Hildreth, Aurora, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
31. Nov. 18, 2015 Adelle (Addie) Jensen, Minneapolis, died of unknown causes.
32. Dec. 5, 2015 Thomas Calvin Donald Jenkins, St. Paul, died from being stabbed.
33. Dec. 10, 2015 Dominic Larrel Jasper, St. Paul, died from gunshot wounds.
34. Dec. 10, 2015 Kavonta Lashawn Pratt, St. Paul, died from gunshot wounds.

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women publishes *The Femicide Report*, a report on those murdered in our state, to educate the public about the lethality of domestic violence. We report on the murders that occur at the hands of abusers to direct attention to the challenges faced by all of the women and children who are living with abuse and as a call to all Minnesotans to come together because it takes the entire community to end violence.

The 2015 Femicide Report is compiled from news accounts. Please contact MCBW if we have missed a death or if you have updated or more complete information on any femicide.

We ask that the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women be credited when information from this report is used.

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