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Women's Coalition of St. Croix to Host Forum Focused on How Domestic Violence Affects Marginalized Groups

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October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM), and annually, the Women's Coalition of St. Croix (WCSC) hosts a number of events to raise awareness around this crime that affects families and communities-at-large.

For DVAM 2021, WCSC has partnered with the Virgin Islands Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Council (VIDVSAC), Legal Services of the Virgin Islands (LSVI) and the PFLAG Interest Group, to host the first forum focused on domestic violence and how it can affect people who identify with groups that have been marginalized historically. The forum will include a panel discussion and a question-and-answer segment for audience participation. Panelists will represent a variety of public service organizations, including Disability Rights of the Virgin Islands and the

Virgin Islands Department of Health.

The “DV in Special Populations Virtual Forum” will be held via Zoom, on Wednesday, October 27, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Special populations to be discussed include: people with disabilities, seniors, people who self-identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and others (LGBTQIA+), immigrants and people who do not speak English.

“Tactics used to isolate or otherwise cause harm can target a survivor’s age, mental capacity, sexual orientation, a disability or their gender identity,” noted Clema S. Lewis, WCSC’s Executive Director and moderator for the event. Programs and services available to all victims and survivors in the U.S. Virgin Islands will also be discussed, including legal services.

Social workers, case workers, caregivers, first responders, victim advocates and others from agencies that offer direct services to victims and survivors of domestic violence are invited to attend the forum, in addition to the general public.

“It’s important that victims and survivors—wherever they are in their experience, and those who assist them, participate in this important conversation,” commented Pamela Sanes, originator of the forum idea and planning committee member. Zoom invitations will be emailed and the information will be available on social channels and websites of WCSC, VIDVSAC, LSVI and other outlets.

Contact WCSC at 340.773.9272, or visit westx.org, for more information on the “DV in Special Populations Virtual Forum” and the organization’s DVAM activities calendar. WCSC’s other upcoming DVAM events include Virtual “Take Back the Night,” on October 21, and the “Drive Out DV” Motorcade, on October 30.

The Women’s Coalition of St. Croix says its mission is to support and empower people impacted by violence. Legal Services of the Virgin Islands’ mission is to access justice, protect rights, and educate people in poverty in order to empower them to move toward self-sufficiency. PFLAG is the first and largest organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people, their parents and families, and allies.

The Virgin Islands Domestic and Sexual Assault Council’s mission is to coordinate resources for educating, creating awareness, preventing and responding to reduce the occurrence of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking cases.

Call WCSC’s main office/crisis center – 340.773.9272, or visit westx.org, for information on free and confidential services for victims and survivors of violence and families in need.