

## THE JOURNEY

by Krista Stafford, Administrative Assistant

I started working with the SARP Center as a volunteer, completing my training to be a California Certified Sexual Assault Crisis Counselor in July 2010.

I was never exposed to issues like sexual assault growing up, so branching out and going through the SARP training came as a bit of a shock to my parents and friends, but everyone was very supportive of my decision. Sexual assault prevention became a goal for me through my greater awareness of issues surrounding gender and equality, and I wanted to make a difference in the San Luis Obispo community, a place I call home since arriving as a Cal Poly student.

As soon as I completed volunteer training, I knew I wanted to be more involved with the SARP Center, so I became an intern for six months. In that time I learned so much and really grew as an individual.

**I realized that there are issues that are bigger than all of us, but one person can help bring change to that issue.**

I felt like that person; I was an individual working to stop sexual assault within a greater organization and an even greater movement. After my internship, I continued to volunteer with the SARP Center as much as I could, taking off a few months to do an internship in Washington, DC over the summer.

When I came back, I wanted to jump right back in with the SARP Center and continue working with the people I had come to love and working to bring light to an issue that I believed needed to be

better revealed to the world. I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to be hired on as the new part-time Administrative Assistant, allowing me to devote even more of my time to sexual assault recovery and prevention.

The SARP Center has been such a great part of my college experience and I hope to continue my work with them even after graduation. Let the journey continue!



*Administrative Assistant, Krista Stafford is a Cal Poly Student, and she will be graduating this December! She has been a volunteer with the SARP Center since July 2010 and recently joined the SARP Center staff in September.*

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# The SARP Center Voice

The Sexual Assault Recovery & Prevention Center of San Luis Obispo County

FALL 2011 NEWSLETTER

## GIVING THANKS AT THE SARP CENTER

by Kristy McCray, Executive Director

As Thanksgiving approaches, I'd like to take this moment to give thanks to all of our supporters in their various forms: community members, donors, volunteers, board of directors, and, of course, staff!

I appreciate community members and businesses for coming to Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, buying tickets to Evening with an Artist, sponsoring events, and helping out with publicity and marketing.

I appreciate our donors for continuing to contribute when they can, donating to the annual campaign, offering in-kind items for our raffles and silent auctions.

I appreciate the volunteers at the SARP Center, the backbone of our agency and our 24-hour crisis line, taking calls in the middle of the night and giving up their weekends and free time to accompany survivors on medical exams and to law enforcement interviews.

I appreciate our board of directors, who provide guidance and vision for the agency, help with fundraising, and give governance and financial support to the SARP Center.

I appreciate, most of all, our amazing staff. Day in and day out, they provide top quality services to survivors and their loved ones in the community. They are innovative and constantly seeking ways to improve the experiences of our clients. They work tirelessly to eliminate sexual assault in our community, be it through education presentations, outreach events, or just talking with community members and breaking myths and stereotypes.

November is a time for giving thanks, and here at the SARP Center, we feel no differently. Every day, I am humbled by and appreciative for the SLO community that gives so much to our agency, allowing us to transform the lives of survivors through hope, healing and empowerment.



*Executive Director Kristy McCray joined the SARP Center staff in January 2010 after serving as a volunteer for 2 years. Kristy received her Masters in Education from USC in 2007.*

## WATCH YOUR DRINK FACTS ABOUT DRUG FACILITATED SEXUAL ASSAULT

by Jess Hawley, Education Services Director

With holiday parties on the horizon, I wanted to take this time to address an issue in our county and applies to everyone, not only those who drink alcohol. Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault (DFSA) is when an individual uses a drug, such as alcohol, GHB, "roofies", Ecstasy or Ketamine, to incapacitate someone in order to have sex with them.

**It's really scary to think and talk about DFSA, but it's important to be aware and know how to keep you and your friends safe.**

First of all, it's important to know what to look for and what these drugs do. Alcohol is used as a weapon when someone is too drunk to say no, or so drunk that he or she is unconscious, and someone has sex with them anyway. Someone who is under the influence of drugs and alcohol cannot legally give consent—he or she is not in his or her right mind to say "Yes."

GHB, or Gammahydroxybutyrate, is what we call a "trash can" drug, which means it's homemade with common household ingredients. The purpose of GHB is to make a person black out. To the common person, he or she will appear extremely intoxicated: having trouble walking and standing, slurred speech, etc. It's so important to know your limits, as well as those of your friends. If your friend has had only one drink and can barely stand, then there is something wrong. If your friend has only been drinking soda and he or she appears drunk, again, something is wrong. GHB is odorless, tasteless, and colorless. *Continued inside...*

## SARP IS THANKFUL FOR SLOCCF

Jill Doyle, SARP Center therapist, accepting a \$2,000 Women's Legacy Fund grant from Janice Fong Wolf, Director of Grants and Programs for the San Luis Obispo County Community Foundation at the annual Women's Legacy Fund Luncheon in September 2011. A big thank you to the supportive staff and funders at the Community Foundation!



## WHY SARP THERAPISTS CHOOSE TO DO THIS WORK

Often I am asked, "Why would you want to work with survivors of sexual abuse? It must be so disturbing!" My answer usually reflects that, yes, sexual assault is a horrible act perpetrated on another but it does happen. Pretending as if it doesn't really happen might make one feel safer, but it won't actually change the reality that it does, even in SLO County! I feel like I'm doing something positive by helping survivors heal from the trauma of sexual abuse.

The SARP Center offers advocacy, crisis services, and a 24-hour crisis line to survivors and their loved ones to give them the support they need. This creates a level of safety unparalleled for this kind of work in our county. When survivors who are in therapy are engaged in addressing the horrible things that have been done to them, having access to a 24-hour crisis line that is staffed with certified rape crisis counselors helps create enough emotional safety to accomplish what is needed for them to move on with their lives.

### The courage that sexual abuse survivors exhibit is inspiring.

It is extremely gratifying to witness the transformation that takes place when healing occurs, affecting not only the survivor, but those whom the survivor has contact with. These are some of the reasons I've made the choice to be a therapist at the SARP Center.

As the Clinical Counseling Director, I also have the privilege of training dedicated marriage family therapist interns and trainees to do this work. They can then utilize this specialized knowledge to help survivors of sexual abuse in future clinical settings. I consider myself fortunate that, along with the other therapists at SARP, I am able to help facilitate healing so survivors can move on with their lives, often even stronger than before the assault.



Vicki Pobor, MS, LMFT  
Clinical Counseling Director

Working with survivors of sexual abuse is one of the most fulfilling aspects of my work as a therapist. I consider it part of my calling to help women. When the trauma of sexual abuse happens to a woman, it alters the course of her life. For many women, their hopes and dreams for the future disappear, and day to day functioning becomes the focus of their life energy. I view my role in this work as being part of the woman's healing team, along with other professionals, who can get her life back on track.

Jill Doyle, MA, LMFT  
SARP Therapist



In the refrain to "Me and Bobbie McGee," Janis Joplin sings, "Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose." When we are traumatized or victimized, we can remain frozen in the fear that we've lost everything, anxiously clinging to our former reality and frantically trying to reconstruct our former identity. We can also, however, summon the courage to look at the pieces of our broken life, examine each one, and make a conscious decision to keep the pieces that work for us and discard those that no longer serve us—finding a newfound freedom and ease in the world.

I work as a therapist at the SARP Center because our clients are those courageous individuals who know, at some deep level, that they are stronger than their trauma and that with that strength,



they can work through their pasts and reshape their futures. My clients are the strongest, fiercest, most resilient people with whom I have ever worked. I am deeply honored to be able to accompany them on their journeys.

Lisa Nosal, MA, MFT-Intern  
SARP Therapist

## SARP CENTER'S SPECIAL VOLUNTEER UNIT TALKS ABOUT GIVING BACK

by Jeannette Page, Crisis Services Director

Donating time and energy is no easy feat when leading busy lives like our volunteers. From students to retirees, nurses to educators, the elite members of the SARP Center's Special Volunteers Unit (or SVU for short) understand what it means to juggle commitments. Yet, given such occupied schedules, what drives our volunteers to spend those precious few hours giving back when they could otherwise be relaxing? We interviewed some of our dedicated volunteers to find out just that.

Our volunteers became involved with the agency for a number of reasons: Babs Mondschnein was a juror on a rape trial and decided to get involved with the SARP Center after seeing SART Coordinator and Public Health nurse, Buffy Ramirez, testify at trial. Kris Roudebush related to the agency's stance on empowerment and wanted to be a part of the movement to end violence against women. Another volunteer, Veronica Heiskell, who works at Cal Poly's Gender Equity Center, wanted to gain more direct experience working with survivors of sexual assault. Others, like Destiny James, wanted to increase their ability to work with therapy clients who are survivors. All the SVU members initially became involved for a myriad of reasons, but at the core of it all was the desire to help others in need, to give back to their community.

Volunteers do so much for the SARP Center; in addition to taking shifts on our 24-hour crisis line, they staff SARP informational tables at community events, assist in planning and coordinating fundraising and awareness events like Evening with an Artist and Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, sit on our Board of Directors and

other committees, accompany survivors who are reporting a sexual assault to law enforcement, meet with clients for peer counseling sessions, and even provide office support for our agency. Through their dedication, they enable our agency to serve the community of San Luis Obispo.

**"Just knowing that 24-7, someone is always there for an individual in need, links me with the community. SARP and other volunteer driven organizations are there for me and mine...I feel the need to give back and pay it forward,"** says

Babs. Kris notes that she gets to "help members of my community every time I answer a hotline call, educate someone about the resources of the center at one of our booths or go on an accompaniment."

Christina Kaviani, who is both an advocate and a board member at the SARP Center, says that volunteering for the SARP Center has "made my career what it is today and given me the ability to give back to so many people." Volunteering at the SARP Center, for many of our volunteers, enables members of our community to give back.

When asked about the best part of volunteer-

ing at the SARP Center, volunteers focused on how rewarding it is to know that something as simple as listening to a survivor in crisis makes a huge difference for that individual. Kris says what she enjoys most about volunteering at the SARP Center is "leaving an accompaniment or hanging up after a hotline call and knowing that I made a difference in someone's life; that my support could be a small step towards their healing." Veronica loves that she can "make a change in someone's life." Another rewarding aspect of giving back via the SARP Center's volunteer program is being a part of the movement to end sexual violence. Destiny enjoys being "a part of something and doing something good with my spare time by helping others." Christina appreciates "being educated and a part of a community of people that care about other people."

Though it takes time and effort, giving back sustains our community in addition to being a rewarding experience. If YOU would like to join our SVU team and give back to your community, please contact Jeannette Page, Crisis Services Director at [volunteer@sarpcenter.org](mailto:volunteer@sarpcenter.org)



The SARP Center's Crisis Services Team:  
Crisis Services Director, Jeannette Page,  
and Crisis Services Specialist, Jane Pomeroy.

*Watch Your Drink, continued from page 1...*

The real name for "roofies" is Rohypnol, and it is illegal in the United States. It comes in the form of small blue pills that say "Laroche" on them because Hoffman Laroche is the manufacturer. It can also come in powder form. "Roofies" are designed to make someone pass out. And as we know, when someone is unconscious, he or she cannot give consent. Something to know about roofies is that the dissolved form will leave foam on the surface of a drink. So if your drink has foam on the top and it shouldn't, don't drink it. As with GHB, someone under the influence of roofies will look like he or she is drunk.

Ecstasy, like alcohol, is usually voluntarily ingested, and it gives the taker a false sense of euphoria. This puts a person more at risk for sexual assault because he or she doesn't believe that someone—particularly, someone they know—would do anything to hurt them.

Lastly, Ketamine is an animal tranquilizer that is more commonly used on horses. It paralyzes the animal: it can still see and breath and think, but it can't move. If you give a person Ketamine in a high enough dose, the same thing can happen, which means that if he or she were in danger, that person would not be able to get away.

Parties with friends can be really fun! I am by no means saying don't have fun with your friends, but there are some things you should do to reduce the risk of DFSA. And like I said, just because you don't drink alcohol, doesn't mean you're not at risk. There have been reports of drugs being slipped in sodas, and I had a friend who had drugs put in her water.

When you're at a party or at a friend's house, don't accept a drink you didn't pour yourself or see poured in front of you. Between that drink being poured and it being brought to you, anything can be put in it. Don't put your drink down or give it to someone you don't know to hold while you go to the bathroom. While you were away, anything could have

been put in it. Don't drink from an open, public punch bowl. If possible, bring your own beverages to parties. There's nothing wrong with that!

There are a few important things to remember if you think you or a friend has been drugged. First of all, get your friend out of the situation and to a place of safety. The person who drugged him or her is going to be looking for them. Second of all, get a drug test done immediately. Police will do it, hospitals will do it, community health centers will do it. These drugs are metabolized very quickly: they will be out of your system within four to eight hours of ingestion, which is why getting drug tested as soon as possible is so important.

Have fun and meet new people! Just be aware and know what your options are if you or a friend needs help. Please call us at 805-545-8888 or email us at [education@sarpcenter.org](mailto:education@sarpcenter.org) for more information or to schedule an education program for you and your friends.



Jess Hawley, The SARP Center's Education Services Director, has been with the agency since August 2009. She graduated from Cal Poly with a degree in Journalism and served a year as the AmeriCorps member at the university's Women's Center, now the Gender Equity Center.