

## Save the Date! Sat., June 17, 2023 for the Walk For NO MORE!



Photo courtesy of Reading Eagle

Maria Mateo, center, Bilingual Counselor at Safe Berks, leads her team Ni Una Mas, Ni Una Menos (Not One More, Not One Less) in the 2022 Walk For NO MORE!



### Fast Facts

**Date:** Sat., June 17 - WFNM precedes West Reading's Art on the Avenue!

**Time:** 9:00-11:00am

**Location:** Corner of Penn Ave. & Park Road, Wyomissing, look for large tent!

**Teams:** Start a team, join a team, or participate as an individual fundraiser

**Registration:** Opens on April 1, 2023; [www.SafeBerks.org/WalkForNOMORE](http://www.SafeBerks.org/WalkForNOMORE)

**T-shirts:** All who register by June 1 will receive a free T-shirt!  
Festivities will include: music by DJ Serrano & light refreshments

**Cost:** Free to attend; donations greatly appreciated

**Questions:** email [Walk@SafeBerks.org](mailto:Walk@SafeBerks.org) or call 610-373-1206, ext. 115

**Sponsorships:** contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development, at 610-468-9637 or [MindyM@SafeBerks.org](mailto:MindyM@SafeBerks.org)

### Voices of Change Honorees



**LGBT CENTER**  
OF GREATER READING



## Safe Berks & The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation TEAM UP Raffle Winners!

When Jean Staples heard about this new fundraiser, she immediately decided to buy some tickets. "I thought it was a marvelous idea," said Jean. "Both organizations do so much for the community."

She bought seven tickets. When she heard the stunning news that she had won, Jean decided to give the prizes to her husband and their nephew, Dan Maradiaga, 19, a senior at Exeter High School. "This was a wonderful bonding event for both of them," she said.

On Dec. 9, all three enjoyed dinner at Cheers American Bistro, and then Carl and Dan traveled in style via Rhoads Limousine to the Wells Fargo Center, Philadelphia, to see local basketball legend Lonnie Walker IV and the Los Angeles Lakers play the Philadelphia 76ers.

Lonnie's agent, Corey Kemp, met Carl and Dan at the game and invited them to visit with Lonnie's family. After the game, Corey introduced them to Lonnie. "This was just unbelievable," said Carl. "It was more than a basketball game; it was an event. I have followed Lonnie's career since he was in Reading High. Lonnie is a very special young man. It was so exciting to see how he has developed over the years."

Rhoads Limousine provided car service back to the DoubleTree By Hilton Reading, where the winners enjoyed overnight accommodations and breakfast. Thanks to Lonnie, the Lonnie Walker IV Foundation, our generous sponsors, and Daniel Muldrow of Safe Berks, who helped coordinate this Raffle, which will equally benefit both organizations.



Lonnie Walker IV, left, local basketball legend, meeting and greeting Carl Staples, center, and Dan Maradiaga, after the Lakers played the 76ers.

## A Message from our CEO

Wow! It is hard to believe we are already part way through a New Year, I hope 2023 has started out happy and healthy for you and your families, and you are looking forward to SPRING!

On behalf of everyone at Safe Berks, I want to share heartfelt gratitude to all our donors and volunteers for supporting us throughout the year, especially during the holidays. As you can see on page 4, generous donors delivered gifts for our survivors, volunteers raised much-needed funds by wrapping gifts at our Berkshire Mall gift wrapping table, and volunteer cooks delivered delicious meals to our residents almost every day. There are no words to fully express our appreciation, but we need you to know how much this means to us and our survivors.

I also want to thank our growing number of dedicated staff, who provide compassionate, expert services to survivors every day, and the passionate community leaders who serve on the Safe Berks Board of Directors, led by Board President Mandy Acuna. Together, we strive to reach our Vision - that Berks County has zero tolerance for domestic violence and sexual assault.

As you can see from our cover, we were thrilled to partner with local basketball legend Lonnie Walker IV to offer the first annual Safe Berks & The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation TEAM UP Raffle! This new fundraiser, which equally supported Safe Berks and The Lonnie Walker IV Foundation, provided a once-in-a-lifetime experience for the winners to see Lonnie and the Lakers play the 76ers, and meet Lonnie after the game! Thanks to all who supported this fundraiser and our generous sponsors, the DoubleTree by Hilton Reading and Rhoads Limousine.

As Winter transforms into Spring, we are preparing for April which is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Please see page 5 for more information about #SAAM and how we collaborate with local hospitals, colleges, and community organizations to raise awareness about sexual violence, how to prevent it, and how to support those who are affected by it.

Please save the date Saturday, June 17 for our annual Walk For NO MORE! You will find more details on the cover, and we will keep you posted on our website and social media. On June 17, we will gather as a community to say NO MORE domestic violence! NO MORE sexual assault!

With your help, we are building a Safe Berks!

Gratefully,



**Safe Berks CEO Beth Garrigan**  
Photo by John Secoges, Photo courtesy of Berks County Living magazine

## Safe Berks Seeking Volunteer Cooks!

Does your family, club, or church group enjoy cooking? Sharing a homemade meal with the residents of Safe Berks provides both physical nutrition and kindness, both so important to the healing journey for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Safe Berks is seeking volunteers to provide dinner to residents every evening of the week. Another option is to sponsor dinner from a local restaurant.

**For more info, or to schedule a dinner, please contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development, at 610-468-9637 or [MindyM@SafeBerks.org](mailto:MindyM@SafeBerks.org).**

Thanks to all our volunteer cooks!

Together, we are building a Safe Berks!



Thank you to this women's group from the Mohnton area for providing meals every other month for the families in our Safe House, and thanks to all our volunteer cooks!

**Safe Berks services are free, confidential, and available in all languages.**

Toll Free Hotline:  
**844-789-SAFE (7233)**

or

**Text SAFE BERKS to 20121**

Available 24/7/365

**Counseling**

610-373-1206, ext. 606

**Legal Services**

610-373-1206, ext. 107

**[Peace@SafeBerks.org](mailto:Peace@SafeBerks.org)**

**[www.SafeBerks.org](http://www.SafeBerks.org)**

Follow Safe Berks



## New Director of Education & Outreach Programs at Safe Berks



Ashley Moyer,  
Director of Education  
& Outreach Programs

Congratulations to Ashley Moyer, who was recently chosen to serve as the new Director of Education and Outreach Programs at Safe Berks! Ashley earned her Bachelors of Science degree from West Chester University, and Teacher Certification in K-12 Health and Physical Education. Prior to working at Safe Berks, Ashley served the Children's Home of Reading as a teacher for nine years, and also served many Berks County School Districts, including Reading, Twin Valley and Antietam, in long-term substitute teaching positions.

"I take great pride in the Prevention Education we offer to youth and adults," said Ashley. "My new role allows me the opportunity

to create, communicate, and lead a progressive initiative in which we educate and advocate for healthy relationships, address risk factors of domestic violence and sexual violence, and build protective factors in our community to lead a better tomorrow."

As the leader of the Education team, Ashley coordinates Camp Safe Berks, Advocate Training, and our work in Berks County schools, providing free, age-appropriate education and awareness programs to students in high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools.



Camp Safe Berks, our annual free day camp for teens ages 13 to 17, will take place July 24-28. This summer the Education team will also introduce a new free day camp for younger children, Camp Safe Berks Jr., July 10-14 for ages 10 to 12. These fun and interactive camps offer youth the opportunity to learn about social justice and how to collaborate to create positive change. Campers also meet new friends and positive adult role models, and enjoy games, art projects and guest speakers! Updates and application forms will be posted on our website at [www.SafeBerks.org/education-outreach/](http://www.SafeBerks.org/education-outreach/) and on our social media. Any questions, contact Ashley Moyer at [AshleyM@SafeBerks.org](mailto:AshleyM@SafeBerks.org) or 610-373-1206, ext. 132.

## Advocate Training to Start May 1

Safe Berks Advocate Training will be held May 1 through June 7. This free training will be offered on Monday and Wednesday evenings in a hybrid format, which allows participants to attend in person or via Zoom. Advocate Training, which is held each year for staff and volunteers, provides in-depth knowledge about domestic violence and sexual assault, how to support survivors, and efforts to prevent violence. Upon completion, all participants are invited to explore additional internship, volunteer, and job opportunities at Safe Berks. To register or for more info, contact Ashley Moyer at [AshleyM@SafeBerks.org](mailto:AshleyM@SafeBerks.org) or 610-373-1206, ext. 132.

## Congrats to Winners of the Safe Berks Employee Spotlight Award!

These dedicated staff members were chosen by their co-workers. We honor them for going above and beyond the call of duty every day, truly displaying the Safe Berks values of Safety, Respect, Empowerment, Education, and Hope, and upholding our mission of relentless commitment to advocating, educating, and ending abuse. Thank you for your service!



Mindy McIntosh

**Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development**, joined the Safe Berks staff in 2017, and shares her passion for making the world a better place every day. Mindy has dedicated countless hours to planning successful fundraising events, recruiting and training volunteers, and sharing information about our needs with donors and advocates. She created the successful Volunteer Cooking program at Safe Berks. Thanks to her enthusiasm, residents enjoy a delicious homemade dinner almost every night of the year. A logistical expert, Mindy spearheads the annual Walk For NO MORE, the Celebration of Peace, and many other events and programs. Her positive energy, cheerful smile, and incredible work ethic are truly amazing.



Veronica DeHart

**Veronica DeHart, Medical Advocacy Partnership Program (MAPP) Specialist**, joined the Safe Berks staff in 2021, and excels at both serving clients with compassion and providing educational programming to healthcare professionals. During the busy holiday season, she volunteered to work holidays, allowing other advocates time off. Veronica provides advocacy to survivors at local healthcare facilities. She is part of the team that provides this support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Her service is always client-centered, compassionate, and respectful. Veronica is always looking to expand her knowledge, educate the community, and serve as a mentor for new MAPP advocates.



Maricela Sandoval

**Maricela Sandoval, Legal Advocate**, joined the Safe Berks staff in 2022. She provides compassionate support and advocacy to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault who are seeking free Legal Services from Safe Berks. Legal Services include assistance with requesting Protection From Abuse (PFA) orders and providing accompaniment to survivors at the Berks County Courthouse. Maricela provides these empowering services in both English and Spanish. Despite any obstacles she might encounter, Maricela always maintains a calm, professional, and empathetic demeanor, focusing all her efforts on providing excellent service to her clients. She also shares her positive attitude with her co-workers every day.

## Safe Berks Gift Wrapping Table Raises Over \$12,000!

Heartfelt gratitude to all our dedicated volunteers – thanks to their time and positive energy, we raised more than \$12,000 through the Safe Berks Gift Wrapping Table at the Berkshire Mall! We also thank every member of the community who brought their gifts to the table to be wrapped and donated to Safe Berks. Special thanks to Pam Conlon for coordinating Santander Bank staff who served as volunteers, and Heather Fink, Donor & Board Relations Administrator at Safe Berks, for coordinating community volunteers. All donations help Safe Berks continue to provide free and confidential services to local survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault 24 hours every day, 365 days a year. Together, we are building a Safe Berks!



Heartfelt thanks to the hundreds of generous people who donated and delivered lovely new gifts to Safe Berks residents to make sure the holidays were warm and bright! We are truly grateful to all who brought their holiday spirit to Safe Berks!

## Free Education for Healthcare Professionals



Meghan Sager, Director of the Community Outreach & Response (COR) Department at Safe Berks

Identifying and responding to domestic and sexual violence in healthcare settings can have a significant positive influence on the health of survivors.

### Lunch & Learns

Lunch & Learns and other educational programs better prepare healthcare professionals for conversations with survivors and provide the necessary information to connect with an advocate and services. Survivors may have few opportunities to speak to someone alone about the abuse. The trust, expertise and confidentiality of healthcare professionals could provide a safe space for survivors to disclose abuse.

“We receive the majority of our calls from the Emergency Departments, and we are grateful for those staff, and those partnerships,” said Meghan Sager, Director of the Community Outreach & Response (COR) Department at Safe Berks. “Moving forward, we not only want to continue education at the hospitals, but also to conduct outreach to urgent cares, primary care providers, radiology, pediatrician offices, gynecology, dental offices, and all other healthcare facilities within the county. We want healthcare professionals to feel comfortable

calling us and to feel prepared when patients disclose abuse. Our goal is to reach more survivors at routine appointments and check-ups rather than connecting individuals to services when they are harmed enough to present at the Emergency Departments.”

Healthcare providers are an essential link in the coordinated effort to break the cycle of abuse and build a healthy community. Identifying and responding to domestic violence and sexual assault in healthcare settings can make a tremendous difference for patients’ physical health, mental health, safety, and quality of life.

Safe Berks Medical Advocates are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide on-site response and support to survivors at all local hospitals and healthcare centers. To request support from a Medical Advocate, call the Safe Berks 24-hour Hotline at 844-789-SAFE (7233) or text SAFE BERKS to 20121.

**To schedule a Lunch & Learn or other free educational programming, contact Meghan at [MeghanS@SafeBerks.org](mailto:MeghanS@SafeBerks.org) or 610-373-1206, ext. 108.**

The Safe Berks Medical Advocacy Partnership Program (MAPP) offers free specialized education to all healthcare providers in Berks County. The MAPP Advocates provide education in many forms, including in-person presentations to groups, Zoom presentations, and one-on-one education for staff members. MAPP Advocates also offer “Lunch & Learns” which include a free lunch, as well as education about domestic violence and sexual assault.

## April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month #SAAM

In 1975, a group of women in London, England, gathered on a street after dark to protest against sexual violence. That protest was the first "Take Back the Night" march.

The idea caught on in many nations around the world. In 1978, the first "Take Back the Night" events in the U.S. were held in San Francisco and New York City. In the early 1980s, these marches grew into Sexual Assault Awareness Week. In 2001, April was designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM).

The statistics are staggering. According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), 81% of women and 43% of men experience some form of sexual harassment and/or sexual assault in their lifetime; and one in five women experience rape or attempted rape in their lifetime.

Throughout April there will be events and discussions held locally and around the world, bringing attention and awareness to the public health issue of sexual violence. Online, these discussions and events are marked with the hashtag #SAAM. Topics will include healthy sexuality, speaking out about sexual assault, ending sexual



Safe Berks staff will plant pinwheels during SAAM to show support for survivors of sexual assault.



Safe Berks staff will distribute teal ribbons and info about our free services during SAAM.

assault on campus, ending sexual harassment at work, how to help survivors, and the prevention of sexual violence.

During April, Safe Berks staff will share thousands of teal ribbons along with information about our free services for survivors. These teal ribbons will be distributed at hospitals, medical offices, restaurants, shops, community organizations, and at many other locations and events throughout Berks County.

Safe Berks staff will collaborate with local colleges and community organizations to support SAAM events. Our staff will also plant pinwheels outside our Chestnut Street facility, to symbolize our support for survivors of sexual assault.

More information about SAAM is available at the NSVRC website at [www.nsvrc.org/saam](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam) and at the PA Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) website at [www.pcar.org](http://www.pcar.org).

By using your voice, you can become an agent of change. Whether you are showing your support for a survivor, educating yourself, or helping someone better understand these issues, your voice is powerful.

## Safe Berks PeaceTrust Invites New Members!

Founded in 2006, the PeaceTrust is a leadership giving program that helps Safe Berks by providing solid, dependable funding. Members of the PeaceTrust also become powerful advocates for Safe Berks in the community. Each year, members of the PeaceTrust gather at a special luncheon to hear the latest updates from Safe Berks and to enjoy time connecting with each other.

We invite you to join the PeaceTrust and help Safe Berks continue to grow and meet the many challenges of serving survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In addition to the annual luncheon, Safe Berks is hosting small gatherings of current and future PeaceTrust members each month. These events include updates from Safe Berks staff, information about the PeaceTrust, and refreshments.

For more information about PeaceTrust, or if you would like to attend one of these monthly events, please contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development at Safe Berks, at 610-468-9637 or [MindyM@SafeBerks.org](mailto:MindyM@SafeBerks.org). Information about PeaceTrust and online registration are also available at: [www.safeberks.org/donate/peace-trust/](http://www.safeberks.org/donate/peace-trust/).

Members of PeaceTrust donate funds to support our free 24-hour services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Each member commits to donating \$500 to Safe Berks each year for five years. Payments can be made

annually, quarterly or monthly. There are also opportunities for new Junior members to join by donating \$300 per year, and for young people to become "Link" members with a \$100 donation.

"We are truly grateful for the support of our PeaceTrust members," said Beth Garrigan, Safe Berks CEO. "In addition to generous financial support, PeaceTrust members share their ideas with Safe Berks and represent us positively in the community."



*PeaceTrust*

Thanks to Lily's Vineyard on Skyline Drive for hosting a recent PeaceTrust mixer, and thanks to everyone who attended!

**SAVE THE DATE!**

# Walk For NO MORE

**Saturday, June 17, 2023,  
9:00-11:00am**

**Corner of Penn Ave.  
& Park Road,  
Wyomissing,  
look for large tent!**

**Info. & Registration:**

[www.SafeBerks.org/WalkForNOMORE](http://www.SafeBerks.org/WalkForNOMORE)

**Precedes Art on the Avenue  
in West Reading!**

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
READING, PA  
PERMIT NO. 155

Celebration of *Peace*

## New & Transformed Gala

**To be held in February 2024**

**DoubleTree by Hilton, Reading**

Updates: [www.SafeBerks.org](http://www.SafeBerks.org), click on Events

**The vision of Safe Berks is:  
Berks County has zero tolerance for  
domestic violence and sexual assault.**

### Board of Directors

Mandy Acuna, President  
Heather Adams, Vice President  
Nicole Yuengel, Treasurer  
Barbara Boland, Secretary  
Helen Najarian, Director Emeritus  
Beth Garrigan, CEO  
Mereliss Colon Ortiz, COO  
Emily Santos, Chief HR Officer

Carey Babczak  
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Dr. Noahleen Betts  
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Sara George  
Paul Marrella  
Todd Migliaccio, Ph.D.  
Laura Morgan  
Missy Orlando  
Rachael Romig  
Adrean Turner



### Gifts to Safe Berks

The Give Now button, located on our website at [www.safeberks.org/donate/donate-now/](http://www.safeberks.org/donate/donate-now/), is a convenient way to support Safe Berks. Receipts are generated immediately via email. The official registration and financial information of Safe Berks may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does imply endorsement.

### Contact Us

Safe Berks  
255 Chestnut Street  
Reading, PA 19602

[www.SafeBerks.org](http://www.SafeBerks.org)  
P: 610.373.1206 | F: 610.372.4188  
Email: [Peace@SafeBerks.org](mailto:Peace@SafeBerks.org)

Toll Free Hotline:  
844-789-SAFE (7233)  
Or Text SAFE BERKS to 20121



United Way of Berks County

