



## F2F Updates

Fall has been a busy season for Fear 2 Freedom (F2F). We worked with four community partners and ten college campuses to host Hour 2 Empower events. This semester, we surpassed 25,000 AfterCare and iCare Kits distributed to survivors of sexual assault since we were founded in 2011.

Join us as we reflect on this milestone: 25,000 survivors provided with practical and emotional tools to aid their healing process, 25,000 handwritten notes from students who thought compassionately about someone they may never meet, 25,000 Freedom Bears and his countless hugs. We are so grateful to be part of survivors' journeys from fear to freedom, and we thank you for also being a part of that journey.

Tricia Russell, Executive Director

**In this Issue:**

- Trends in Sexual Assault Statistics P. 1**
- Fall Programs Recap P. 2**
- Champions Luncheon P. 3**
- Shop and Support F2F P. 4**
- F2F Focus P. 5**
- EmpowerMENT Story P. 6**

## Trends in Sexual Assault Statistics

As advocates for sexual assault survivors, we continue to learn more about the sexual assault reporting landscape to better serve our community. We want to educate our readers on some updated statistics so that they can become better advocates and serve their communities.

When F2F was founded in 2011, RAINN (Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network) estimated that someone was sexually assaulted every two minutes. This year, RAINN estimated that someone is sexually assaulted every 73 seconds. That's 1183 assaults per day. While this may mean that sexual assault rates have increased, this new statistic might also mean that more people are feeling empowered to report their assaults than ever before.

At F2F, we work closely with college students. RAINN notes that women between the ages of 18 and 34, especially college students, are particularly vulnerable. Similarly, men in college are 78% more likely to be sexually assaulted than non-students of the same age. The Journal of Studies on Alcohol found that students living on campus are more likely to be victims of sexual assault than those living off-campus. Over half of college sexual assaults occur during the "Red Zone," the time from the start of the semester until Thanksgiving break. NOW (National Organization for Women) cites that members of the freshman class are two and a half times more likely than other classes to experience sexual assault during the Red Zone.

Although these statistics are troubling, we must not allow ourselves to be overcome by pessimism. Instead, we must work even harder to support survivors. Sexual assault is never the survivor's fault. F2F encourages every survivor to tell someone who they trust. We must work together to be compassionate to survivors and continue to change the stigma against reporting.



## Fall 2019 Programs Recap

Our mission is to restore hope and dignity to survivors of sexual assault while empowering students and communities to combat sexual violence. This fall, F2F has been fortunate to visit and work with many universities and community partners. We are so grateful to have the opportunity to educate college students and empower them to Be the Change in their communities.

Between September and November 2019, we provided our Hour 2 Empower (H2E) programs at the University of Maryland College Park chapter of Alpha Tau Omega, Regent University, Radford University, Lipscomb University, and schools near the YWCA of Central Virginia like University of Lynchburg, Randolph, CVCC, and Sweet Briar College. We will also work with Old Dominion University before the end of the academic semester.

After the H2E at Lipscomb University, Kathy Hargis, Title IX Coordinator, said: “We were so happy with the outcome of our recent F2F event! Fear 2 Freedom offers a unique approach to educating students on the topic of sexual assaults. At the end of the event, I had a number of students comment on how impacting this had been for them and ask if we can repeat this event next year. I think this is the best testimony of all.”

We also worked with community partners like NASA, Newport News Shipbuilding, Waters Edge Church, and 1st Advantage Federal Credit Union to provide education and service oriented projects. Our programs had a deep impact on attendees. One person said, “I had the privilege this year of helping Fear 2 Freedom with packing kits during our annual 1st Aide Day. I had never heard of this organization before, but after being introduced to this meaningful group – I will never forget you all! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to help such an amazing organization!” F2F was proud to partner with them for their day of corporate service and we applaud their philanthropic efforts in the community! F2F had a wonderful semester of educating students and communities and we look forward to next semester.





# The First Champions Luncheon



On October 30, F2F held our first Champions Luncheon at Christopher Newport University. This event was hosted by the members of F2F's Champions Circle. The theme of this educational and fundraising event was "Be the Change in Someone's Story" as we believe that everyone has the power to change someone's life; all it takes is an act of compassion. We want to thank our sponsors: TowneBank, Langley Federal Credit Union, Spain Commercial, Ferguson Cares, Breeger Media Group, W.M. Jordan, The Optimal Service Group, Compass Wealth Strategies, Tommy Garner Air Conditioning and Heating, Drucker + Falk, and PB Mares.

During the Luncheon, Tricia Russell awarded the first Champions Award to Dr. Molly Waters, who is a survivor of sexual violence. The Champions Award will recognize the efforts of someone who has gone above and beyond to support survivors of sexual assault. Dr. Waters is proof that kindness and compassion can make a huge difference in the lives of others.



During the Luncheon, our keynote speaker Christen Shefchunas delivered a powerful message of embracing yourself and overcoming your fears. The stories she told about elite athletes struggling with their self-confidence were very powerful, as were the stories she told about her own struggles with confidence. We would like to thank Christen for speaking at the event and impacting so many! Her stories inspired us to be our best because we believe that if you're confident in yourself, you can be more kind and understanding to others.

After Christen spoke, the Luncheon's attendees had the opportunity to donate to Fear 2 Freedom. During the paddle raise, generous event attendees donated over \$30,000 towards F2F's mission of supporting survivors and educating communities. Attendees also had the opportunity to assemble a F2F Kit. This was a powerful and educational moment for our attendees, who saw firsthand

how their contributions help F2F restore hope and dignity to survivors.

The event impacted several attendees who had not heard of F2F's mission before. One Champions Circle member said, "My table loved the event - not all of them were super familiar with F2F (some certainly were) and one guest sent me an email of thanks for inviting her and she said she would be sending in a donation and would love to get involved. My goal was awareness and that definitely happened!"

Thank you to everyone who came to the Luncheon and made it such a success! If you are interested in joining the Peninsula Champions Circle, please contact Tricia Russell at [tricia@fear2freedom.org](mailto:tricia@fear2freedom.org). See page 5 for details on what a Champions Circle is.



## Shop and Support F2F

Check out F2F's exciting new addition to our online store: the exclusive "Be the Change" Bracelet available for \$35 each. Christen Shefchunas, our Luncheon speaker, created a line of Women's Truth Bracelets in which each different colored bracelet contains one Golden Confidence Nugget™ as a physical reminder to the wearer of their worth. Each bracelet color represents a different essential truth. The latest in her line is a F2F-inspired teal bracelet that, in addition to the golden charm that says "Confidence," also has a golden charm that displays F2F's "Be the Change" slogan. A portion of the proceeds from each bracelet sold will be donated to F2F.

Other items available on our online store include F2F's iCare Kits, Freedom Bears, Find Your Joy necklaces, F2F tote bags, F2F founder Rosemary Tribble's book, *Fear to Freedom*, and Christen Shefchunas's book, *Naked Confidence*. Various F2F clothing items are also available, such as "Be the Change" and "1 in 5" T-shirts and long-sleeved F2F fleeces. These clothing items are great conversation starters, and give wearers the opportunity to share F2F's mission and how they can get involved in supporting survivors of sexual assault.



## Shadow Event

On November 5, Christopher Newport University's chapter of Where is the Line? (WITL) hosted their annual F2F Shadow Event. Eight survivors of sexual assault told their stories anonymously. This was an awe-inspiring event. The survivors told varied stories, including aspects of intimate partner violence, child abuse, and sexual assault. We admire these eight survivors who shared their stories and hope that this helps them in their journey from fear to freedom. Gillian Hordusky, President of CNU's WITL chapter, said, "This group of women is the most incredible collection of survivors. They are funny, they're kind, they're resilient. I'm honored to know them." The event included beautiful musical performances by the



Newport Pearls, Faith Tanous, and Alexandra Lagos.

We are thrilled to announce that the Shadow Event will be featured on Virginia Currents, a local branch of PBS. The segment will air on VPM-PBS in Richmond, Charlottesville, and Harrisonburg on Dec. 12th at 8pm and on Dec. 14th at 5:30pm. F2F will post more information as the date gets closer.

We are so incredibly proud of the CNU chapter of WITL for the work they did this month, particularly for their Survivor Support Week, which included two new events, entitled Just Listen and Support Lunch. To find out more about these incredible events, follow WITL on Instagram at "whereistheline\_" or on Facebook at "Where is the Line at CNU"



## Survivors: Share Your Story

F2F is looking for survivors of sexual assault who are willing and interested in sharing their stories! Your story can give hope and healing to other survivors and inspire people to Be the Change in their community. It can also be an important part of your own healing process. If you are willing and interested in sharing your story, please contact us at [getinvolved@fear2freedom.org](mailto:getinvolved@fear2freedom.org).

### F2F Focus



Our F2F Focus is Brittney Drames, from our Board of Directors. She joined the Board last January and says that being a part of the F2F team has been one of the highlights of her year. Brittney is a survivor of sexual violence and discovered F2F in the course of her healing process. She was “all-in” right away. She said, “Being involved with this organization has truly been such a gift to me. I’m filled with gratitude.” Outside of F2F, Brittney is a part-time pediatrician with Suffolk

Pediatrics, taking care of some of our community’s youngest survivors. She is also the full-time mom of two delightful boys. We are so thankful to have incredibly involved board members like Brittney who said, “I love and believe so deeply in the organization and want... to support its mission and the people behind it.” Brittney helped make our Champions Luncheon a beautiful success and is looking forward to helping F2F expand and support the community even more over the next several years.

### Northern Virginia Champions Circle

F2F has recently launched F2F’s Northern Virginia Champions Circle. This Circle serves the Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. region. Like the Peninsula Champions Circle, this group is made up of women who are dedicated to F2F’s mission of educating communities and supporting survivors of sexual violence. If you or someone you know is interested in being a part of this Circle, please contact Tricia Russell at [tricia@fear2freedom.org](mailto:tricia@fear2freedom.org)

### Recent Recognition

F2F is so grateful to announce that we were recognized in Coastal Virginia’s Giving Back Awards Ceremony and in their annual magazine as one of the top 25 nonprofits in the Coastal Virginia Community. We were also recently awarded a grant from the Williamsburg Community Foundation. Thank you to these two great organizations for helping support F2F’s mission!



### F2F Board of Directors:

Carol Downey  
*President*

Denise P. Brown  
*Vice-President*

Mickey Chohany  
*Treasurer*

Rosemary Tribble  
*Founder and Emeritus*

Kelly Martin  
McGowan  
*Secretary*

Susan F. Bryant

Fran Castellow

Dan Chenoweth

Brittney Drames

Chrissy Garner

Sue Ivy

Holly Jones

David Long

Sharon Owlett

Steve Spain

Karen Conwell Smith

Alexis Swann

Janet Taake

Rene Bowditch  
*Emeritus*

Linda Slattery  
*Emeritus*



888-453-3059

PO Box 6104

Newport News, VA 23606

[fear2freedom.org](http://fear2freedom.org)

*Fear 2 Freedom is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization*

### Staff Updates:

Tricia Russell  
*Executive Director*

Muriel Millar  
*Chief Operating Officer*

Maddie Amos  
*Director of Grants  
and Programs*

Lauren Brennan  
*Director of Programs*

Vickie Garton-Gundling  
*Logistics Coordinator*

Kristin Ritchey  
*Director of Development*

### Connect With Us

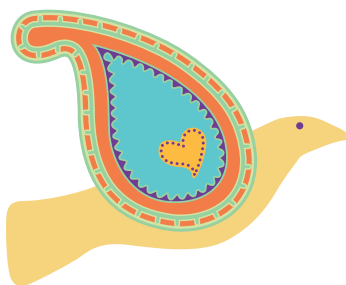
Follow us @fear2freedom



## EmpowerMEnt Story

“The Kit has given me so much comfort! After my assault I felt incredibly hollow and vulnerable. But at the same time I needed a hug. I'm not a fan of teddy bears but the bear is what prompted me to buy your kit. I have been sleeping with it and somehow it makes me feel safe and secure. When I'm having a really rough night I will squeeze it tight. The disappearing notes are also extremely helpful... It is nice to know there is someone who cares and understands. My assault happened about a month ago. Some days are great, other days are challenging, but I keep telling myself that I am getting better each day. Thank you again.”

-Survivor and iCare Kit recipient



## Champions Luncheon

May 19, 2020  
Army Navy Country Club  
Arlington, Virginia



### Champions Circle Luncheon, May 19, 2020