



Office of the County Attorney

Jenna M. Peterson
Redwood County Attorney

Joseph M. Sanow
Rudolph P. Dambeck
Assistant County Attorneys

PRESS RELEASE

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REDWOOD COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE HOLDS TRAINING TO HIGHLIGHT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

October is designated as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Part of the responsibility of the Crime Victim Services Program of the Redwood County Attorney's office is to provide information and education to both the community and professionals. As such, it seemed appropriate to shine light upon one of the most misunderstood domestic violence crimes: Domestic Assault by Strangulation.

On October 10th, 2018, the Crime Victim Services Program and the Redwood County Attorney's Office hosted a training entitled *Strangulation: Recognizing, Investigating, Prosecuting, Collaborating*. Denise Kerkhoff, Crime Victim Services Coordinator, organized the event and was able to bring together approximately 40 area professionals representing Law Enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, Hospital based RN's, Prosecutors and Crime Victim Advocates. The training featured two highly regarded speakers touting many years of experience with these types of complex cases. Linda Walther R.N., SANE, provided perspective from the medical field and Captain Randy McAlister who is a Certified Threat Manager with the Cottage Grove Police Department detailed investigative techniques and the perspective from law enforcement. Participants also had the unique opportunity to hear from a survivor of strangulation which added a real life dose of reality.

"We have been given an exceptional opportunity to bring awareness and provide training regarding these types of crimes in our community through funds we received from the Office of Justice Programs in the form of a Crime Victim Services Prosecutorial Grant." Redwood County Attorney Jenna Peterson stated. "It is our responsibility to take full advantage of that opportunity. This year we chose to focus on the topic of strangulation because it is a distinct crime with a high lethality rate that ironically usually leaves very little visible injury to the naked eye. The injuries most commonly associated with strangulation often take hours or even days to appear, sometimes not appearing at all. The lack of visible injury does not mean strangulation did not occur." Peterson stated, "Training those who have first contact with the victim is vital in collecting all the information we need to hold the offender accountable and make our community safer."

For further information regarding this training, other trainings, or the services of the Redwood County Crime Victim Services Program please contact the Redwood County Attorney's Office or visit our website.