

Domestic Violence PSA filmed at library



Photos by Crystal Cecil

Green County's Courtney Edwards, Marion County Domestic Violence Advocate, discusses scenes with volunteers Lindsey Ingram and Angela Talbott at the library Monday.



Filmmakers Blake Judd and Cody Meek hold up cue cards for participants. The public service announcement was written by Nathaniel Essex, Marion County High School. Essex, who won first place in a local contest promoting domestic violence awareness, will be presented \$500 by the Attorney General and the PSA will be shown on local television and will be used across the state by the Attorney General's office.



Volunteer Mason Stone read lines for the PSA about domestic violence. The script will allow viewers to see common "cover ups" that may be often overlooked.



Sierra Harper volunteered her makeup services for the filming event. Above, Harper, right, touches up the bruise on Tina Despain's eye prior to her segment. Approximately 10 people helped out during filming.

Deadline for news and advertising is 2 p.m. central time Monday. However, earlier is always better.

Landis has new title in Green Co.

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The proposal says, "Whereas no victim services are currently offered in this county, the establishment of this program would broaden the awareness and increase the access to crisis intervention services, safety planning, emergency legal assistance and advocacy, referrals to outside agencies, and other direct support services to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, and other crimes."

From January to June 2018, the Green County Attorney's Office received and reviewed 92 complaints.

"Having someone to sit down and talk with, someone to explain the process and someone to actually accompany them to court hearings and proceedings— is such a comfort to those in crisis," the County Attorney said. "We want victims to know that we really do care about them—that's the whole reason we do what we do. We are not only interested in punishing offenders, but we want to help victims pick up and piece their lives back together."

The Green County Circuit Clerk reported 27 protective order petitions were filed during that time period.

An advocate could help ease the protective order filing process for victims, the project proposal said.

According to Greensburg Chief of Police Wayne Hedgespeth, the Greensburg Police Department's ratio of officers to residents is 1:309.

A letter provided by the Chief for the proposal said that while the department does all it can to assist in enforcement of laws, there is no way to address all the concerns of crime victims, given their numbers. An advocate could help crime

victims find assistance with case status updates, restitution issues, and legal advocacy.

"Victims of crimes deserve to have information and know their rights during the court process," the Chief said. "I'm glad we now have an advocate for our victims. I believe Lindsay will do an outstanding job."

The Green County Sheriff's Office agreed that an advocate could definitely help with the legal process, especially for those unsure how and where to obtain information on shelter, counseling or guidance in general.

With an office located adjacent to the Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Robby Beard thinks the position will be great for the county.

"It'll help out tremendously as far as helping victims out," Beard said. "She will communicate with domestic violence and crime victims and help them sort it out, find resources for whatever they need, and keep in contact with them."

Landis plans to follow a Project Timeline. The timeline includes planning a Community Awareness Event, creating and distributing brochures and several other plans in the near future.

"My goal from the start was to establish victim services in our community. When the grant was approved, I was ecstatic," Landis said. "At this point, I want to establish stronger collaborative relationships with law enforcement and community agencies."

Landis is looking to make a difference in the community with her new title.

"Green County had ZERO victim services, which meant if someone was the victim of a crime, how would they know how to navigate

the legal process? How to do things like file a violation for a protective order? With these VOCA funds, I can provide referrals to outside agencies, facilitate placement into domestic violence shelters or treatment programs, assist in protective orders, and much more."

She is confident Green County will be pleased with the new service.

"I think when this community comes to-

gether, it's an amazing thing," she said. "I want to see everyone come together to better support victims of crime."

Landis hopes to be in her new office at the Courthouse by the end of February. She will also maintain an office at the Green County Attorney's office.

Landis can be reached at 270-932-0911 or by email at gvictimadvocate@gmail.com.



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