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Wider Opportunities for Women Awarded US Department of Justice Grant

(10-21-14) – Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) has received a three-year grant from the US Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) to provide training and technical assistance to OVW grantees serving survivors of intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking around the issues of safety, economic security and sustainability of employment.

Since 2010, the Economic Security for Survivors (ESS) Project has provided over 1,700 advocates, victim service and criminal justice professionals across all 50 states with strategies, tools, education and training to improve how programs and policies respond to the economic consequences of abuse and support the economic security for survivors.

“Victims of intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking are often encumbered by economic costs that shape their ability to recover, leave an abusive situation or achieve future financial independence,” says ESS Project Director Sarah Gonzalez Bocinski. “The criminal justice system and community service providers play distinct and crucial roles promoting economic security and justice. The ESS Project helps bring an economic lens to this work.”

Over the course of the three-year grant, the ESS Project will provide free on-site technical assistance opportunities to OVW grantees, develop a suite of training modules for the criminal justice system, continue to host its quarterly webinar series, and produce its quarterly Economic Empowerment Spotlight newsletter. The ESS Project will also work closely with the Massachusetts Rural Domestic and Sexual Violence Project, the Michigan Domestic Violence Treatment Board and the Oregon Crime Victim Services Division to implement both justice and community-based strategies to strengthen their response to survivor's economic needs.

“Thanks to the technical assistance WOW provided in April 2013, key Oregon stakeholders and criminal justice grantees include economic security recommendations in law enforcement and prosecution trainings and curricula. The Oregon Department of Justice, Crime Victims’ Services Division (DOJ CVSD) and statewide partners are excited to have the opportunity for our grantees to continue advancing their understanding of how advocates and other criminal justice professionals can promote financial justice and independence for survivors of domestic and sexual violence,” Diana Fleming, Oregon Fund Coordinator.

For more information about the ESS project and training and technical assistance opportunities, visit www.wowonline.org.

Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) was founded in 1964 to promote empowerment, equity and economic independence for women and girls. Based in Washington, DC, WOW has helped women across the nation achieve greater levels of economic security through career preparation and technical and non-traditional skill training. WOW also advances equal education and employment opportunities, freedom from financial abuse and secure retirement.

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