

The Purple Place: Connecting Survivors of Domestic Violence to Community Resources
Siddhi Shah & Destiny Colmenares

Name:

Siddhi Shah & Destiny Colmenares

Project Title:

The Purple Place: Connecting Survivors of Domestic Violence to Community Resources

Your IWL Policy Area/s:

Law and Advocacy, Human Rights, Public Health & Medicine

Specific Social Problem or Policy Issue you seek to address with this SAP:

Domestic violence plagues many intimate partner relationships in the United States, with women of all ages being disproportionately affected by this prevalent issue. Women in our age bracket — ages 18 to 24 — are most likely to experience abuse at the hands of their significant other, especially young women of color from urban communities. Middlesex County proves no exception to the issue of intimate partner violence in the U.S. Currently, there is space for more personalized, inclusive, and resource-abundant online communities for survivors of domestic violence, loved ones of survivors, and other allies.

Major Research Outcomes/Demonstrated Need:

Over a quarter of all women suffer domestic violence, often referred to as intimate partner violence or IPV, throughout their lifetime (Sardinha et. al). As awareness about the impacts of domestic violence has increased, there has been a similar increase in resources targeted at aiding a survivor's safety and security. Despite the prevalence of domestic violence-focused organizations, there is a lack of a comprehensive tool that connects survivors to existing sources of help, especially in Middlesex County.

Form of Action you will take to address the above-outlined issue:

Our social action project, *The Purple Place*, will create a website aimed at disseminating community resources to survivors of domestic violence and pair it with a virtual event. Our website will also act as a community-building platform as it will offer survivors and those who know survivors the opportunity to share their stories.

Gender Component*:

Although anyone can experience domestic violence, the World Health Organization reports that about 1 in 3 women are subjected to intimate partner violence in their lifetime. Decades of research agree that, not only are women much more likely to suffer abuse in intimate relationships, but low-income women of color are the most likely. *The Purple Place* will offer a support and healing-based online safe space for women survivors of domestic violence and allies of all sexualities and socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.

Will your SAP be combined with a departmental thesis,* with the Honors College or Honors Program Capstone?

Yes, Honors Program Capstone. (Siddhi Shah)

Project Advisor/s:

Armani Beck-McField (abeck@sociology.rutgers.edu)

Funding Request Letter

Dear IWL Committee:

As Leadership Scholars at the Institute for Women's Leadership, we request a grant of \$1000 to support our social action project, *The Purple Place*. In this Social Action Project, our objective is to create an easily accessible online platform storing a wide-range collection of different-level community resources for survivors of domestic violence or intimate partner violence within Middlesex County. In conjunction with our website *The Purple Place*, we wish to facilitate an open webinar that hosts professionals with experience in supporting survivors of DV/IPV that discusses how organizational structures can foster positive and meaningful support.

Over the years, the number of resources targeted towards survivors of DV/IPV has become plentiful, yet many barriers to accessing these resources remain. Further, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic creating what many refer to as "The Second Pandemic" with a surge in domestic violence within households, our goal with *The Purple Place* is to provide a thorough, inclusive, and comprehensive resource guide for survivors of domestic violence to access from anywhere. You can read more about our intentions for our Social Action Project, *The Purple Place*, in the following pages. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Siddhi Shah and Destiny Colmenares

Executive Summary

Domestic violence continues to be a pervasive issue in our communities that disproportionately affects women. In fact, over a quarter of all women suffer domestic violence, often referred to as intimate partner violence or IPV, throughout their lifetime (Sardinha et al). With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic also giving rise to domestic violence in intimate relationships, there is a need for supportive and adaptive informal and formal resources for domestic violence survivors everywhere. We aim to create a project focusing on the psychosocial needs of domestic violence or intimate partner violence (IPV) survivors in Middlesex County, but constructing a technologically-based project that may aid the healing processes of survivors anywhere. Survivors of domestic violence face several factors that can negatively impact their mental health, such as the stigma surrounding conversations about the topic, the difficulty of finding the few resources available to help them, and the lack of spaces allowing survivors to empower one another.

Our Social Action Project will consist of creating a safe-space website with links and contacts for formal professional support like counselors, recommendations to books, YouTubers, artists, and podcasts related to surviving and healing from domestic violence abuse, as well as an optional anonymous forum for telling one's and reading others' stories about their experiences for a sense of connection and community, regardless of location. Further, we will be creating an educational program in the form of a webinar for the local community in collaboration with partner organizations and other professionals with experience in supporting survivors of all different types of gendered abuse. Although this project will focus on uplifting a group that is predominantly women, we also aim to support any vulnerable populations facing abuse at home whose struggles are rarely validated or supported.

Statement of Need

Approximately 1 in 3 women experiences domestic abuse in their intimate relationships worldwide (World Health Organization). Further, on average, about 20 individuals per minute are physically abused by their intimate partner in the United States (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence). Although social movements have catalyzed support resources like hotlines for domestic violence survivors, intimate partner violence continues to be a pervasive issue in America as the U.S. government fails to consistently enforce anti-domestic violence laws to protect all survivors, with vulnerable groups of women experiencing the most abuse. In fact, women ages 18-24 — the age range of IWL leadership scholars — are most likely to experience abuse in intimate partnerships (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence). Yet, there are little to no accessible online social support systems that are created by women in this age bracket themselves to better facilitate survivors' journeys to coping for a level of comfortability.

The effects of domestic or intimate partner violence on survivors are extensive. Domestic or intimate partner violence can manifest itself through emotional, financial, physical, or technological abuse. Therefore, many survivors live with several psychosocial consequences, often for years after the abuse occurred. Not only may a survivor have to cope with physical injuries from the abuse, but there are also many mental health challenges that can accompany such traumatic events. Leaving an abusive relationship comes with its own social impacts and can also affect an individual's housing and financial stability (National Network to End Domestic Violence). Such abuse has the ability to impact every aspect of someone's life as well as the lives of their loved ones, and survivors deserve to be supported in navigating these impacts.

There are now domestic violence-focused organizations across the country offering a vast range of services including housing, mental health support, and even financial literacy classes to

survivors. However, these resources continue to have barriers to access, especially for people of color and those that live away from urban areas where these resources are primarily located. In fact, “70-93% of abused women do not know how to get help from community agencies” (Hewins et al). The safety net system for domestic violence survivors continues to be extremely fragmented and difficult to navigate for most survivors. There is a clear need for the development of a tool such as *The Purple Place* that can serve as a comprehensive platform that aids survivors in connecting with community resources that further support the specific needs of each individual survivor.

The COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the prevalence of domestic abuse in partnerships and households. Research has shown there are several pathways that connect the pandemic and the domestic abuse of women, including “economic insecurity and poverty-related stress; quarantines and social isolation... inability to temporarily take shelter from abusive partners” (Xue et. al). As the pandemic forced Americans all around the country into periods of quarantine, “mobility restriction, a lack of informal support, such as that from family, friends, coworkers, further [contributed] to increased rates of family violence during the pandemic” (Xue et. al). Considering that low-income women of color are most susceptible to domestic violence, more formal support systems like therapy and shelters may often be out of reach. However, these formal resources became increasingly inaccessible to larger vulnerable communities of women due to the pandemic’s several lockdowns. In the heightened absence of formal support, informal online support shone. Xue’s study showed that social media platforms such as Twitter proved effective for survivors of domestic violence looking for support, a sense of community, and connections to resources such as hotlines, funding support, and websites similar to *The Purple Place*.

In April 2022, the end of the pandemic is in near sight, but the threat of other national and international disasters that can limit access to support resources is everlasting. Further, there will always be survivors who cannot access in-person resources due to their situations. Hotlines are frequented by survivors with mobility restrictions, but hotlines receive “more than 20,000 phone calls” daily, oversaturating them (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence). As a result, there is a need for more online support systems for survivors.

Often, survivors of domestic violence feel isolated as a result of the widespread stigma surrounding conversations about the topic. As a result, a sense of community is a key factor in ensuring proper support for survivors, an aspect we aim to provide with the ability to share anonymous stories on *The Purple Place* website. One study has found that protective factors for survivors include, “social support, help-seeking behavior, and the availability of community-based services addressing the issues of abuse” (Gerino et. al). Our website and webinar aim to address and improve both social support structures as well as the availability and accessibility to community-based services. In addition, research has found that “women are more likely to share their experiences in technology-based interventions,” especially in regards to abuse, further supporting the necessity of the storytelling feature of *The Purple Place* website which we mentioned above (Su et. al). Finally, research has also shown that confidentiality and privacy are essential for survivors seeking support (Wood et. al). Therefore, technological safeguards must be implemented to prioritize the safety of survivors who visit websites and share their experiences in online spaces like *The Purple Place*. Currently, however, there are little to no online spaces that allow for survivors to recount their experiences with abuse, especially while hiding their identities for safety purposes. Since women are more likely to share about their past experiences with domestic violence on online platforms, *The Purple Place* will provide

anonymity for website visitors and survivors who wish to share their stories. Ultimately, *The Purple Place* combines the accessibility of technology with a community-based support system, both of which are desperately needed resources for domestic violence survivors.

Project Action Plan and Timeline

As a project with two main components, the goals on our timeline for *The Purple Place* are broken down into two main categories: the development and rollout of our website, and the development, promotion, and presentation of our webinar.

The Purple Place website will be the main focus of our social action project, and as such, we will begin research and development of it beginning in April. The main components of the website development, in order in which we will conduct them, include the research and outreach required to link existing resources on the website, the completion of an IRB that will allow us to publish anonymous stories of survivors on our website, the physical construction of the website, and the rollout and promotion of the website. Our goal is to publish the website in the month of September, meaning that much of the research for the website as well as the IRB will be completed throughout the end of the Spring 2022 semester and the summer. We will continue with website development through the end of summer and into the Fall 2022 semester, and promotion will follow the rollout of the website.

Our website will remain our main focus until August 2022, at which point we will begin the construction of our webinar. Our goals within the first three weeks of August will be to create a detailed outline of the webinar's programming, which includes the confirmation of participation from potential speakers/panelists. Once our webinar's layout is complete, we will meet with our advisor, mentors, and support staff to revise as necessary until finalization. We will be utilizing our connections to the IWL consortium and our official *The Purple Place* Instagram to maximize the number of attendees for our webinar, which will take place at the end of October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Finally, we will upload our webinar to our website, and continue to

utilize our Social Action Project as a platform for healing and community-building for domestic violence survivors and allies.

Below you can find our proposed timeline detailed with our goals and action items, each with month-specific deadlines that will ensure the completion of all project components.

MID APR 2022

- Finalize the bibliography and research for our Executive Summary and Statement of Need.
- Meet with our advisor Professor Armani Beck-McField to discuss preliminary challenges to our website and content construction.
- Consult with IWL Program support staff (i.e. Sasha Taner Wood & Zainab Alam) regarding updated project logistics.
- Brainstorm and finalize our Webinar's focus and length.

LATE APR 2022

- Reach out to any possible sponsors or collaborators for our Social Action Project and upcoming Webinar.
 - Connect with 1-2 potential speakers who express interest in participating in our webinar as panelists or speakers; maintain close contact with them with updates, questions, and openness to feedback.
- Decide on a website building platform for *The Purple Place* and create any necessary accounts pertinent to building.

MID MAY - LATE JULY 2022

- Commence building our *The Purple Place* website
 - Considerations during this time will include: Color schemes, sensitive language, layout of website, construction of different tabs
 - Collecting existing resources in the New Brunswick community, in New Jersey, and nationally
 - Connecting with existing resources before inclusion on *The Purple Place*.
- Joint completion of IRB before building storytelling platform on *The Purple Place* for survivors of domestic violence and intimate partner violence.

AUG 2022

- Finalize website content and layout and complete a working draft of *The Purple Place* to present to advisor & mentors for feedback.
 - Revise the website as needed; considering sensitive language, resource effectiveness, color schemes, and more.
- Create an Instagram account for outreach and promotion of live website.
 - Goal: Make five posts promoting website and highlighting specific resources
 - Goal: Accumulate at least fifty followers
- Begin drafting Webinar layout: materials, programming, timeline of events, and speaker lineup.
 - Contact potential speakers for final approval of webinar participation

SEP 2022

- *The Purple Place* Website goes live.
 - Social media promotion and outreach to collaborators continues to spread awareness about website.
- Connect with individuals (either survivors or those that know a survivor) that may want to share their stories anonymously on the website.
- Revise plans and materials for Webinar as necessary per advisor, mentor, and program support staff feedback.
- Based on all feedback and availability of collaborators, finish webinar program planning by the end of September.

OCT-NOV 2022

- Utilizing *The Purple Place*'s Instagram Page for Social Media Promotion of our Website and upcoming Webinar.
 - Daily Instagram Story Posts in the 15 days leading up to Webinar date.
 - Weekly feed posts with sneak peeks of our webinar's planned programming + DV/IPV statistics + sponsor biographies
- Disseminate Mass E-Mail Chain to IWL Consortium with Webinar details and registration links; 2nd reminder e-mail a week prior to webinar date.
- End of October: Webinar Event

- Host webinar to attendees.
 - Deliver Thank You e-mails to sponsors and partner organizations; maintain contact as The Purple Place lives on.
- November: Uploading of Webinar to The Purple Place as a community support resource.

Collaborating Partners

Advisor:

Our advisor is Armani Beck-McField, a Sociology Professor at Rutgers University. She has extensive experience researching and teaching about the construction and maintenance of privilege and identity in contemporary U.S. society. Professor Beck-McField considers herself extremely passionate about education and supporting undergraduate scholars, specifically in the field of gender and sexuality studies. Professor Beck-McField has earned a B.A. in Psychology and a Certificate in Sexuality and Gender Studies from The Pennsylvania State University, University Park (2014), an M.Ed. in Human Sexuality from Widener University (2016), and an M.A. in Sociology from Rutgers University (2021). We are confident that Professor Beck-McField's background in Sociology and Gender Studies will benefit us when considering sensitive language to utilize when trying to support survivors through our project, widening our access to Women's and Gender Studies journals for supplementary research, and overall encouragement and support.

Organizations:

Since Rutgers students make up a large population within Middlesex County, and considering that women between the ages of 18 to 24 are most likely to experience abuse from their significant other, we would like to collaborate with two Rutgers-based organizations including the Rutgers Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA) and the Rutgers Law Domestic Violence Clinic.

The VPVA has been a presence on the Rutgers campus since 1991 and is heavily involved in creating awareness about domestic and other forms of intimate partner violence on

campus. Their large presence on campus is supported by faculty and student volunteers, and collaborating with an organization with such extensive experience in the IPV field will be incredibly beneficial to the success of this project.

The Rutgers Law Domestic Violence Clinic, which is located in Camden provides representation to survivors of domestic violence and also works a helpline where survivors can call for legal advice, referrals to attorneys, and other nearby resources. We are hoping to partner with the Rutgers Law Domestic Violence Clinic to discuss the many legal resources open to Rutgers students or New Brunswick survivors of intimate partner violence as more formal resources of support.

Project Scholars:

Siddhi Shah is a junior in the School of Arts and Sciences of Rutgers University-New Brunswick majoring in Cell Biology and Neuroscience with a minor in Women's and Gender Studies on a pre-med track. She is a certified Domestic Violence Advocate in the state of California and previously volunteered with Narika, a South-Asian focused domestic violence agency, where she directly worked with survivors. Additionally, Siddhi is currently an intern at the Libertas Center for Human Rights, where she has gained exposure to domestic violence on a global scale, and its intersection with other forms of torture, international affairs, healthcare, and the asylum-seeking process. The combination of these experiences has shown her the necessity of a culturally-sensitive and inclusive resource guide for survivors of domestic violence.

Destiny Colmenares is a sophomore in the School of Arts and Sciences of Rutgers University - New Brunswick majoring in Political Science and double minoring in Sociology and

Women's and Gender Studies on a pre-law track. She is a Leadership Scholar at the Institute of Women's Leadership where she has gained substantial knowledge of gender-based violence both inside of the United States as well as on the global stage. In the Spring of 2022, Destiny interned with the Center for Reproductive Rights, where she gained experience researching the impact of strict reproductive law on low-income women of color as well as governmental weaponization of the public to ban or limit abortions. Through her time with the Center, she has worked under several attorneys who dedicated years of work to legally advocating for survivors of intimate partner violence, further fueling her passion for creating a Social Action Project where she can bridge her youth and passion with a contemporary support-based online platform for domestic violence survivors.

In our attachments at the end of this proposal, please review our resumes for your further consideration of our credentials for completing this Social Action Project.

Evaluation

Our goal through *The Purple Place* is to create a supportive, culturally-sensitive, and above all inclusive community for survivors of domestic violence. As such, we would like the opinions of survivors to guide the further development of the website once it is formally published. We would like to implement an anonymous feedback box or form on the website so that visitors to the website can give us honest and constructive feedback on the features and resources on our website. Especially between when the website goes live in September to when our social action project is submitted in November, this feedback will allow us to further develop the website so it can best serve survivors in Middlesex County. This can also serve as a means for other community organizations to reach out to us for further collaboration.

Our hope is that we will continue with The Purple Project past our graduation as Leadership Scholars. As such, we will be releasing an Evaluation Form after our webinar in October to all attendees, including panelists or speakers, Program Director Sasha Taner Wood, Assistant Director Elizabeth O'Brien, Women, Work, & Community Professor Zainab Alam, and our advisor Armani Beck-McField. Our evaluation form will ask questions such as: How would you rate the effectiveness of this webinar? If there was anything that could have been done better content-wise, what could have been changed? If we did a second part to the webinar, is there anything we should look to particularly add? How can we make our webinars more inclusive and culturally-sensitive moving forward? There will be more personalized questions included in our form once we complete our webinar. This form will allow us to move forward with The Purple Place past our planned webinar as we will collect feedback from an array of attendees with differing point of views, possibly even including survivors of domestic violence.

However, besides this form, we also plan to meet with our advisor, program's support staff, and second-year mentors on a need-to-meet basis as previously outlined on our project timeline. These meetings will allow us to collect constructive feedback on every single portion of our project: our website, our promotional materials, and our webinar so that we are consistently evolving our website and webinar materials into web-accessible structures that feel safe, comfortable, and inclusive.

Additionally, in order to implement the ability for survivors to anonymously share their stories on *The Purple Place* website, we will be completing an IRB. In our timeline, the IRB will be started and submitted by us in June, allowing for ample time for approval and edits, as needed. We aim for the website to go live in September, giving us four months to complete the IRB submission and approval process.

Budget

The following budget covers our anticipated expenses for completing our Social Action Project, The Purple Place. Our budget has two major categories: our website-building component and our project promotion component. Our website-building component includes the following: we will be utilizing WIX to create our website and implement our wished features and Canva to create our logo, any resource toolkits, as well as any other necessary designs to post on our Instagram and website prior to beginning the promotion for our webinar. As for our project promotion component, we will also utilize Canva to create 200 flyers to post over Rutgers University and the greater New Brunswick area. Beside the in-person promotion with our flyers, we will also buy Instagram Promotion packs to heighten awareness of our project's Instagram with the goal of maximizing our reach as well as general attendees to our webinar. Besides these two components, we also plan to send thank you notes to speakers, collaborators, mentors, co-sponsors, and partners as a way to express our gratitude for their help with completing The Purple Place's objectives. The remaining money we allocate for any emergency changes that may happen to our budget, to ensure we are able to continue with our project regardless of unexpected events.

SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT BUDGET COMPONENT	EXPENSE ALLOCATED OUT OF OUR BUDGET	JUSTIFICATION FOR PARTICULAR EXPENSE
WIX Website Plan (Domain, Platform, VIP Features)	\$45/month for 7 months Total: \$315/\$1000	Half of our project includes creating a website, The Purple Place, that fosters community-building and support for IPV survivors. The WIX VIP website plan will allow us to buy a domain, keep it free for over a year, and utilize

		special features to maximize the experience of website visitors.
CanvaPro	\$119.99/year for 1 year Total: \$119.99/\$1000	We will utilize CanvaPro to design all of our graphics — for The Purple Place’s logos, our flyers, our Instagram posts, etc. CanvaPro expands the accessibility to personalized graphic templates and brand kits that will allow us to create website features and promotional flyers that are holistic to <i>The Purple Place’s</i> specific goals.
GetPrint Flyers to promote Webinar (200pc)	200 flyers; Total: \$120.52/\$1000	Hosting an effective webinar will involve many different forms of promotion. Designing and printing flyers to put up around popularly-frequented spots in the New Brunswick community will allow us to get the word out there about our event.
Social Media Promotion of Webinar	\$150/\$1000 over 6 months	We will use this money to promote our Instagram Page for <i>The Purple Place</i> . This will serve as an avenue for a wide audience to learn about our mission, the website, as well as the webinar.
Thank You Notes for Speakers, Collaborators, Co-Sponsors & Mentors	\$2 for 25 notes Total: \$50/\$1000	This project, especially the webinar component would not be possible without the help of several individuals and organizations, and we

		believe it is important to thank them for their time and help in putting together the event.
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$244.49/\$1000	We would like to set aside the remaining nearly \$250 dollars for unexpected or currently unforeseeable costs. This will allow for smooth completion of all the goals in our project in the case that one of our current budget items becomes more expensive, or new costs come to light.

Conclusion

Our social action project, *The Purple Place*, addresses the need for an age and culture sensitive online resource guide and community-building platform supporting survivors of domestic violence. The creation of a website paired with a recorded webinar will allow for an easily accessible web structure that can reach individuals within Rutgers University, Middlesex County, and beyond. Receiving a \$1000 grant from the Institute of Women's Leadership will allow us to utilize the optimal website-building, graphic content creating, and promotional tools when working toward completing our Social Action Project into a website that can run for years to come and support survivors past our time in the Leadership Certificate Program. Further, our potential collaborating partners will have the opportunity to connect with one another to further the overall well-being of domestic violence survivors, extending the impact *The Purple Place* is able to have. Ultimately, domestic violence disproportionately affects women — specifically low-income women of color. Our objective with *The Purple Place*, as Leadership Scholars, is to use the experiences we earned while a part of the program to have meaningful and sustainable impacts on vulnerable communities of women affected by intimate partner violence.

Attachments

The Purple Place's Team List:

Team Member	Position
Siddhi Shah	<i>Project Scholar</i>
Destiny Colmenares	<i>Project Scholar</i>
Armani Beck-McField	<i>Project Advisor</i>

Collaborating Partners Agreements:

Below you can find email correspondence with our advisor. Professor Beck-McField had given us her verbal commitment to the role in person, and we followed up over email to get formal, written commitment and to set up our first meeting.

RACE RELATIONS; Research Project Summary + Advisor Role Inbox x



Destiny Colmenares

to Armani, me ▾

Thu, Apr 14, 6:59 PM (22 hours ago) ☆ ↶ ⋮

Hi Professor Beck-McField,

It is Destiny from your Race Relations class! I know I mentioned my research project centering around supporting IPV survivors, for the [IWL Leadership Scholars Certificate Program](#). I have attached part of our proposal's rough draft for your consideration!

Currently, my partner Siddhi (who I have CC'd) and I are looking for an advisor. We plan to meet with our advisor at least once a month, and probably around 2-3 extra times during the summer as we finalize our website and begin planning our webinar. I immediately thought of you as a perfect advisor for our project, not only because of your extensive experience working in sociology but because Siddhi and I want to ensure we are using the best and most sensitive language within our website/webinar when trying to support survivors on their path to healing. Please let me know if this advisory role interests you!

Siddhi and I would also like to meet with you via Zoom whenever you have perhaps a half-hour free! We can meet tomorrow or any time over the next week! Let us know your availability and we can set up a Zoom invitation. Thank you and enjoy your night!

--

Best regards,

Destiny Colmenares

Rutgers University SAS, Class of 2024

B.A. in Political Science

Minors in Sociology & Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Undergraduate Intern, Center for Reproductive Rights

destiny.colmenares@rutgers.edu

Project Scholar Resumes:

DESTINY COLMENARES

dc1359@scarletmail.rutgers.edu

99 Jackson St
Passaic, NJ, 07055
862.596.8398

EDUCATION

Rutgers University, New Brunswick – School of Arts and Sciences
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Sociology

New Brunswick, NJ
Class of 2024

- Cumulative GPA: 4.0, Major GPAs: 4.0

Passaic County Technical Institute - Vocational High School
Academy of Criminal Justice

Wayne, NJ
2016-2020

- Weighted GPA: 4.214; Graduated in Top 5% of class

WORK EXPERIENCE

Spring Lake Day Camp
Girls' Camp Counselor

Ringwood, NJ
June 2019-August 2021

- Supervise a group of eleven-year-old girl campers in camp-wide activities and events. Promote teamwork, socialization, and group bonding. Update parents by charting camper progress daily.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Rutgers University Mock Trial Association
A-Team Plaintiff Attorney

New Brunswick, NJ
Sep 2020-Present

- Gaining valuable trial advocacy skills through the reviewing of a case packet, formulating arguments, and presenting such arguments before real judges and attorneys at law.

Rutgers University First-Year Fellowship Emerging Leaders Program
Fellow

New Brunswick, NJ
Jan 2021-May 2021

- Strengthening interpersonal and leadership skills, enhancing communication and critical thinking skills, and accomplishing increased exposure to opportunities as a first-year student at Rutgers University.

The Darien Civic Engagement Project
Project Member at Eagleton Institute of Politics

New Brunswick, NJ
Jan 2021-May 2021

- Gaining research skills on civic education rates in the U.S., and providing New Brunswick High School juniors with the civic, political, and expressive tools needed to address public issues within their own community.

PCTI Mock Trial
Team President, Lead Plaintiff Attorney

Wayne, NJ
Sep 2017-June 2020

- Traveled statewide to participate in mock trials as a student attorney, trained new members in public speaking and comprehension of the New Jersey State Bar Foundation-revised Federal Rules of Evidence.

SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS

- Protection of Minors Certification, *January 2021*
- Fluent in Spanish and English

- Critical Thinking, Teamwork, and Public Speaking

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Mock Trial New Jersey State Bar Foundation Finalist: 2018, 2020
- PCTI World Language Honor Society - Spanish Chapter Inductee, *2019-2020*
- PCTI Rho Kappa Social Studies Honor Society Inductee, *2019-2020*

Siddhi Shah

408-813-8979 | siddhi.a.shah@rutgers.edu | www.linkedin.com/in/siddhi-a-shah

EDUCATION

Rutgers University-New Brunswick

May 2023

- B.A. Cell Biology and Neuroscience, Minor in Women's & Gender Studies

Certificate in Women's Leadership, Institute of Women's Leadership

2021-2023

- 19-credit Leadership Scholars Certificate Program

LEADERSHIP

Community Outreach Coordinator, Rutgers GlobeMed

Sept. 2020 - Present

- Strengthen collaboration with Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey through increased communication and transparency.
- Implement public health campaigns to educate Rutgers community such as the Human Trafficking Summit.

Managing Editor & Journalist, Rutgers Examiner (Pre-Health Journal)

Sept. 2019 - Present

- Advise 4-5 journalists each semester throughout the process of writing and editing their articles.
- Authored articles about the opioid crisis and access to mental healthcare for our biannual publication.

Events Coordinator, Rutgers Kier's Kidz

May 2021 - Present

- Develop advocacy and fundraising events to raise awareness about pediatric cancer such as Halloween Card-Making Event.
- Establish relationship between club members and a cancer patient through collaboration with Embrace Kids Foundation.

EXPERIENCE

Intern, Libertas Center for Human Rights at NYC Health & Hospitals

Jan. 2022-Present

- Engage in community organization outreach to identify mental health resources for asylum-seekers or survivors of torture.
- Maintain current data on political climates and major world events that impact eligibility of clients for services.

Volunteer Domestic Violence Advocate, Narika

Sept. 2021-Present

- State-certified advocate with 40 hours of training providing crisis management to survivors of domestic violence.
- Engage mindfully with individuals calling hotline and connect with resources such as shelters, food aid, or lawyers.

Clinical Research Intern, Adamson Lab at Stanford Department of Neurosurgery

June 2020-Present

- Accelerate recruitment for a clinical trial studying the efficacy of rTMS in treating headaches and pain in Gulf War veterans.
- Administer PTSD CAPS-5, Hamilton Depression, and Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale assessments by critically and empathetically listening to veterans speak about their most traumatic experiences.
- Design studies to investigate psychological effects of long-COVID in collaboration with other lab members.

Crisis Counselor, Crisis Text Line

April 2020-Present

- Received 30 hours of training in reflective listening, collaborative problem solving, and crisis management.
- Risk assess and provide support to texters to bring them from a hot moment to a cool calm.

Undergraduate Researcher, Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Sept. 2019-Present

- Conduct immunohistochemistry, fluorescent microscopy, BCA Assay, and ELISA procedures to generate data for studies examining the effect of dysbiosis on the development of Multiple Sclerosis in mice models.
- Synthesize data from the lab and literature to deliver presentations at weekly lab meetings.

Co-Founder, NeuroNerdz

Jan. 2016- Present

- Published the book, "How to Become a NeuroNerd", ranked #1 new release on Kindle.
- Collaborated with school administrations to set up after-school programs at five elementary schools to introduce basic neuroscience concepts.

HONORS

- Phi Beta Kappa Honors Society | Dean's List (All Semesters) | Rutgers Academic Excellence Award

SKILLS

- *Research:* Immunohistochemistry, ELISA, Mice Handling, Neuropsychological Testing & Scoring, Clinical Trial Recruitment
- *Other:* Non-Profit Volunteering and Management, Teaching, Data Entry and Analysis, Microsoft Office, Google Drive
- *Languages:* Verbal fluency in Gujarati and Hindi, Limited proficiency in Spanish and Marathi
- *Crisis Counseling:* Domestic Violence, Mental Health, Active Listening, Empathy, Cross-cultural communication

Bibliography

- Delara, M. (2016). Mental health consequences and risk factors of physical intimate partner violence. *Mental Health in Family Medicine*, 12(01).
<https://doi.org/10.25149/1756-8358.1201004>
- Hewins, E., DiBella, B., & Mawla, J. (2013). *White Paper: Domestic Violence and the role of the Healthcare Provider*. Retrieved February 14, 2022, from
https://www.nj.gov/dcf/women/archive/WhitePaper_DomesticViolence.pdf
- Mittal, Shalini, and Tushar Singh. "Gender-Based Violence during Covid-19 Pandemic: A Mini-Review." *Frontiers in Global Women's Health*, vol. 1, 2020,
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fgwh.2020.00004>.
- Ofstehage, A., Gandhi, A., Sholk, J., Radday, A., & Stanzler, C. (2011, September). *Empowering Victims of Domestic Violence: Social Issue Report*. Root Cause. Retrieved February 15, 2022, from
<https://rootcause.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Empowering-Victims-of-Domestic-Violence-Social-Issue-Report.pdf>
- Ogbe, E., Harmon, S., Van den Bergh, R., & Degomme, O. (2020). A systematic review of intimate partner violence interventions focused on improving social support and/ mental health outcomes of survivors. *PLOS ONE*, 15(6).
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0235177>
- Sardinha, Lynnmarie, et al. "Global, Regional, and National Prevalence Estimates of Physical or

Sexual, or Both, Intimate Partner Violence against Women in 2018.” *The Lancet*, 22 Feb. 2022, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(21\)02664-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(21)02664-7).

Stockman, Jamila K., et al. “Intimate Partner Violence and Its Health Impact on Ethnic Minority Women.” *Journal of Women's Health*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2015, pp. 62–79., <https://doi.org/10.1089/jwh.2014.4879>.

Vil, N. M., Sperlich, M., Fitzpatrick, J., Bascug, E., & Elliott, J. (2021). “I Thought It Was Normal.” Perspectives of Black Nursing Students From High-Risk IPV Communities on Causes and Solutions to IPV in the Black Community. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 088626052199793. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260521997939>

Wennerstrom, A., Haywood, C., Wallace, M., Sugarman, M., Walker, A., Bonner, T., Sutton, Y., Keller, B. L., Lewis, M., Springgate, B., & Theall, K. (2018). Creating Safe Spaces: A Community Health Worker-Academic Partnered Approach to Addressing Intimate Partner Violence. *Ethnicity & Disease*, 28, 317–324. <https://doi.org/10.18865/ed.28.s2.317>

Wood, Leila, et al. “Voluntary, Survivor-Centered Advocacy in Domestic Violence Agencies.” *Advances in Social Work*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2020, pp. 1–21., <https://doi.org/10.18060/23845>.

Xue, Jia, et al. “The Hidden Pandemic of Family Violence during Covid-19: Unsupervised Learning of Tweets.” *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, vol. 22, no. 11, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.2196/24361>.