



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

NC Board Chairman Marcello Banes



Newton County Family,

Along with Breast Cancer Awareness Month, October is also Domestic Violence Awareness Month – another worthy cause that needs our attention.

I feel so strongly about bringing about bringing more awareness to the damage domestic violence has done and is doing to our community that, I, along with Judge Samuel Ozburn, put together the Newton County Domestic Violence Task Force in August of 2018.

For the past two years this group has been meeting with the mission to eradicate domestic violence through:

- Advocacy for victims
- Treatment for victim families and offenders
- Teaching best practices through partnerships with the local community, including agencies
- Accountability of perpetrators



We had a terrific turnout in October of last year for a men's community breakfast, in which 2,500 men met in an open and frank discussion on domestic violence. This effort, led by Co-Chairs Kimya Motley and Cheveda McCamy, was just one way the group has gone about teaching our community about domestic violence.

I am here to tell you that domestic violence is an issue in our community that needs our attention.

When the task force was formed in August of 2018, Newton County ranked No. 4 in the state in reported domestic violence cases.

Since that time our Domestic Violence Task Force has grown to 60 members and they have taken on the commendable goal of trying to eradicate this issue in our community. There is still a lot of work to be done.

Through September of this year there have been 12 cases of Family Violence felonies, 153 Family Violence misdemeanors, one Domestic Violence murder and 439 Temporary Protective Orders (TPO). This year, alone there have been 3,159 calls to 911 regarding Family Violence in Newton County. In 2019 there were 36 cases of Family Violence felonies, 195 Family Violence misdemeanors, two Domestic Violence murders and 645 TPOs.

This is sad and unacceptable. No one in our community should be in danger in their own home. Domestic violence not only leaves physical scars but also mental ones that take years to recover from, and sometimes the mental infliction is irreversible.

Newton County's Domestic Violence Task Force looks forward to continuing to provide valuable resources to the community as it works towards its mission of eradicating domestic violence. If you are interested in joining the task force contact Secretary Nwaka Hughes at nhughes@co.newton.ga.us for more information.

The task force meets the third Friday of every other month at 11:30 a.m.