

Crossroads Wins Statewide Award - Burlington, NC

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The N. C. Center awards recognize nonprofits that demonstrate the high standards of accountability, ethics, and stewardship that the public expects of them as tax-exempt organizations.

Crossroads reduces sexual violence and its effects through confidential counseling, advocacy, education, and community awareness for adults and children. Accepting the award were board members Phil Bowers, Jenny Faulkner, Shirley Baker, Marti Asher, and Griffin McClure and staff members Deana Joy, Suzan Evans, Ginger Murphy, Julie Denton, Meredith Brackett, Cheryl McNair, Karyetta Walker, and Mandy McGill.

"We are honoring Crossroads for its focus on advocacy through education, its success in planning ahead for financial sustainability, and its thoroughness in ensuring quality and ethics," said Jane Kendall of the N.C. Center for Nonprofits.

Crossroads was founded in 1976 after a young Burlington woman was sexually assaulted by a police officer in an adjoining town. After she reported the assault, the local newspaper published her name, address, and phone number. Her community responded toward her with criticism, disbelief, and hate. A close friend of hers who worked as a housekeeper for city councilwoman Barbara McCall suggested to McCall that the community needed a victims' advocacy center. McCall soon held a press

conference about this critical need, and a group of individuals later formed a 24-hour crisis line that became Crossroads Sexual Assault Response and Resource Center.

Last year, Crossroads helped 124 adults and 432 child victims, but victims often had to wait up to eight hours in hospital emergency rooms before they received care. This year, Crossroads added a medical wing to its facility so it can conduct in-house medical exams for children, providing a faster alternative that is more sensitive to children who have been sexually assaulted.

In response to a growing number of victimized children, Crossroads reaches out to children in almost every elementary, middle, and high school in Alamance County, teaching them to recognize inappropriate sexual conduct and how to obtain help when needed. It also developed services in Caswell County at the request of concerned citizens there.

In 1996, it created one of the first Child Advocacy Centers in the state, and its advocacy work also contributed to Alamance County creating a Family Justice Center.