INTRODUCTION

After the murder of George Floyd in 2020, many agencies in the business and non-profit sectors affirmed their commitments to racial equity and hired diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) consultants to help guide their adoption of equitable practices. In the years that have passed, DE&I consultants report that many organizations’ investment in these efforts have waned. With this report, we reaffirm our commitment to center equity at the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV). With our work, we seek to move beyond performative efforts that often leave the status quo unchecked to embrace strategies that move power, representation, and resources to communities that have been the least supported. Because we believe that identity-based discrimination and oppression are at the heart of violence in our culture, our team will hold our commitment to equity, until the violence is ended.

Much of our work in this reporting period has been inward-facing. We see our responsibility to take action to redress discriminatory behaviors in our communities, but to have integrity in that work, we recognize that we must also work to identify and change the habits of white supremacy that we hold within our organization. We invite our stakeholders to review this report and to provide us with feedback about where we are getting it right, where we have space to learn and grow, and areas of opportunity that we have not yet considered.
MAKING SPACE

In this reporting period, we added the “making space” dimension to our equity plan to adopt agency practices that help to keep us intentional and facilitate our ability to honor our equity commitments. As a team, we have recognized that centering equity in our work will require that we collaborate with new partners to adopt new programs and practices, but when confronted with the haste and urgency of grant proposals, deliverables and reporting, we observed that we often default to known partners and practiced programs.

With the addition of the “making space” category, we name this problem, we define our willingness to embrace risk, and to advocate for the time needed to support the successful development of new partnerships and programs. We believe that naming these practices will help to keep them front of mind as we write project timelines, and we will advocate for more flexibility and risk tolerance with funders who share the Coalition’s commitment to equity.

ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION

The ICADV staff and board continued to develop our equity knowledge, skills and practices this year. A significant development was the addition of an accountability category to our organizational development plan.

In listening sessions that our accountability partner, Restore Forward conducted with affinity groups of BIPOC team members, white team members and the board of directors, conflict avoidance was an organizational habit that many of us identified or identified with. The Restore team convened a retreat with our staff to develop plans for how we can engage with one another in authentic and accountable ways. We are continuing to work with Restore to develop our accountability skills and to implement accountability processes. From conflict management role plays to the establishment of an anonymous reporting mechanism that will allow us to learn from and address our harmful behaviors, we are working to normalize supported accountability within our team.
In this reporting period, we observed areas of growth and areas of loss in our work to convene a diversely representative coalition and to create leadership opportunities for stakeholders with identities that have been marginalized.

**Representation**

In 2022, ICADV initiated a process of semi-annual assessment to invite staff, board members, consultants, and youth council members to share information about their identities. We conducted this assessment to help us better understand our representation, and to be more intentional in inviting in new team members with identities, experiences and perspectives that we might be missing. We repeated the survey in 2023 and information about our demographics over the past two years is represented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICADV 2022</th>
<th>ICADV 2023</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
<td><strong>Board</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: 71%</td>
<td>White: 55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIPOC: 29%</td>
<td>BIPOC: 45%</td>
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With turnover and growth among our staff and board, we observed a loss in the diversity of our representation, especially with our BIPOC representation.

ICADV has convened a working group to develop new practices to improve the ways that we recruit and retain BIPOC colleagues and board members. Other identities reported by ICADV staff, board members and consultants include:

- **Sex and gender identities** — 71% of our team identify as female or cis-female; 19% as male or cis-male; 10% selected other identities including trans male, asexual and non-binary/gender fluid.

- **Abilities** — 33% of our team members identify as neurodivergent, as a Disabled person or as a person with disabilities.

- **Ages** — Our team members range in age from under 18 to over 60.

- **Romantic and Sexual orientation** — 32% of our team members report romantic and sexual identities other than straight with identities including bi-sexual, queer, and other fluid identities.

- **Communities with histories of oppression and trauma** — 37% of our team members identify as coming from a community that has faced divestment, violence, and trauma.

- **Survivors** — 43% of our team members identify as a survivor of abuse or violence.
ICADV convened a Survivor Advisory Board (SAB) to help ensure that ICADV’s programs center survivors’ experiences and needs. The SAB is comprised of 13 survivors from all walks of life, from across Indiana. The board members will meet with ICADV staff to learn about and provide feedback on our projects. Additionally, the SAB will work to develop and identify resources to help invite more survivors into the process of building solutions to domestic violence—through fostering connections with formal DV service providers, and through the provision of peer support.

ICADV has designated funds to pay survivor board members for their time as they help to guide our work.
ICADV is working to increase leadership and representation of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color by convening a BIPOC affinity community, hosting an annual BIPOC Leadership Summit, and initiating the Belongingness Cohort. The BIPOC affinity group, organized by ICADV’s BIPOC staff, is an opportunity for all BIPOC-identifying program staff and advocates to attend monthly meetings created for social support and connection. The Leadership Summit engages the same community with the opportunity for connection and expands to a national audience of BIPOC advocates. The Summit has created a platform for national BIPOC presenters to encourage participants to prioritize self-care, and to embrace their culture and lived experience as advocates for equitable opportunities and representation of BIPOC leaders in our movement. Each of these strategies works to enhance diversity in recruitment practices, equity in retention strategies, and advancement opportunities, ultimately increasing representational and leadership for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

The ICADV youth engagement strategies have facilitated a range of equity plan priorities. In 2023 youth council members and the coalition’s young adult intern engaged in systems advocacy, learned about the state legislative process, read and discussed bills, attended hearings and rallies, wrote to legislators, and even offered testimony. Youth council members and interns represent a diversity of identities, increasing the perspectives of youth of color, LGBTQ+, neurodivergent, and system-impacted youth in the ICADV network. Young people engaged with the coalition were compensated for their lived experiences and perspectives, including compensation for presentations statewide including the Indiana Youth Health Summit, the ICADV Prevention Summit, and the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV) Health Equity Youth Summit.
Legislative successes included a $3 million annual increase in DVPT funding (one of the largest sources of state funding supporting ICADV and community-based DV programs) to offset the loss of federal dollars. Additionally, eligibility and benefits for the Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) program were updated for the first time in 35 years, and eligibility was expanded to include pregnant women. Medicaid eligibility was modified to allow pregnant women and minor children, who are immigrants residing legally in the country, to be immediately eligible for Medicaid coverage rather than being required to wait five years to apply.

While celebrating these gains, we also struggled with losses. ICADV and our partners unsuccessfully opposed legislation that seeks to control information and limit freedoms. Bills passed into law during this session include the denial of gender affirming health care, educational supports for trans youth, and the restriction of educational freedom through the banning of books within school and public libraries.

In the 2024 legislative session, ICADV will continue to champion the investment of state resources in benefits that help to support survivors, and to prevent violence. Additionally, we will oppose efforts that seek to control—from health decisions and identity-based discrimination to general information—because we believe that laws like these create a culture of control that enables relationship violence.
Resources

Forty-three percent of ICADV’s 2024 fiscal budget is designated for equity-focused efforts. This represents a commitment of nearly 1.29 million dollars to advance equity in our work. These funds are invested across all areas of Coalition operations and include:

- Percentages of staff salaries for designated activities;
- Adaptive technologies and supplies;
- Equity-specific project costs;
- Travel expenses for training, presentations and projects related to equity;
- Consultant payments (including Indiana Disability Justice partners, Youth Council members, Restore Forward, SAB members and Deaf Hope, among others);
- Payments to project partners and communities;
- Interpretation and translation services;
- Awareness, education and outreach messaging and materials;
- Flex funds to support basic needs among survivors with identities that have been marginalized;
- Pro bono and low bono legal representation for survivors with identities that have been marginalized;

New and expanded areas of equity investment this year have included the adoption of new accessibility technologies for the Coalition’s website, payments to Indiana Disability Justice content creators, and compensation for survivors serving on our Survivor Advisory Board. Additionally, ICADV initiated two new, multi-year projects. The team has invested staff time and also payments to support the participation of member DV programs working to assess and expand organizational supports for BIPOC staff members and survivors. Finally, ICADV was one of 12 states awarded the DELTA AHEAD grant from the CDC. This five-year funding stream centers health equity, and supports prevention projects at the state and community levels.

Though shifts in funding have affected the continuity of projects and personnel, we have continued to increase the percentage of Coalition funds invested in equity work, and to identify new sources of funding to fulfill our commitments. Funding strategies have included designating funds in existing grants (where allowable) to support equity-focused efforts, applying for new funding streams that align with this work, centering equity in fundraising events, and utilizing unrestricted dollars to support emerging equity needs and opportunities. We have also worked proactively with our funders, and in our donor cultivation efforts to share information about our equity work and to help ensure alignment in our equity commitments with the individuals and organizations that support our work.
SERVICES

ICADV staff continued to engage in processes of assessment, planning, training, technical assistance, convening learning communities and distributing resources to support the local adoption of services that reach, and support the needs of survivors with identities that have been marginalized. We observed gains and losses in our ability to provide equitable, survivor-centered services in the past year.

Barriers to equity-centered services that we faced this year were primarily limitations related to funding. At points during the year, ICADV had to suspend new applications for our Satellite Attorney Project and Economic Justice program. Both of these projects have been administered with consideration of survivors with identities that have been marginalized in order to reach and support those who may not have benefited from traditional domestic violence services.

ICADV was able to designate significant funds to support these programs with additional funding made available through COVID relief programs, but with the loss of that supplemental funding, we have struggled to maintain levels of service within the Economic Justice and Satellite Attorney projects. ICADV continues to seek new sources of funding to maintain these critical services that support survivors in creating safe lives in their communities.

Significant areas of investment and growth in our equity-centered services this year included:

01 ICADV launched the Belongingness Cohort to engage ICADV and member program directors in a journey to operationalize organizational cultures embracing under-represented racial groups. Participating agencies will be engaged in a process of organizational assessment, training, technical assistance and peer-supported learning as they work to expand organizational supports for both advocates and survivors of color. Agencies participating in this Belongingness Cohort will evaluate the policies and practices that they have in place to support their BIPOC stakeholders and will then develop organizational equity plans to expand and institutionalize those supports. With this strategy, we hope to increase and sustain BIPOC representation in the DV workforce, and work to ensure that programs create a welcoming environment for BIPOC survivors.
ICADV designated funds to coordinate an alternative sheltering project. Each region in the state was provided with funds to cover emergency hotel stays for survivors when all shelters in their area were full. Hotel placements were also used as an alternative safety solution where survivors with complex needs could not be effectively supported in the communal living environment of emergency shelter.

ICADV engaged in an extensive process to update the state’s Abuse Intervention Program (AIP) standards. They represented this work with colleagues in national conversations, and advocated for AIP practices that can make accountability systems more equitable and generative.

ICADV continued to convene the “Loneliness Cohort” to work with member programs to build out strategies for fostering social connections and peer support among survivors. We believe that this strategy will expand the reach of support to survivors who may not have sought services from a formal program.

Throughout the past year, ICADV team members have continued to report our equity priorities and actions across the Coalition’s communication platforms. We have invited our stakeholders to join us in our commitments and to provide feedback as we engage in this work.

One significant effort undertaken to increase inclusive access to Coalition information was the addition of the Recite Me Assistive Technology Toolbar to ICADV’s website. This program provides our website visitors with a broad range of accessibility tools that enable them to engage with our content in the ways that best suit their individual needs. The accessibility tools include a screen reader, translation services in over 100 languages, visual modifications, and reading aides including a ruler, screen masker, magnifying glass, and dictionary.
TRAINING

In this reporting period the training director worked to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for promoting accessibility across the broad spectrum of life needs for training participants. Though the document will provide helpful guideposts as we work to build inclusive trainings, we learned through application that we didn’t have practices and funds in place to fully support the plan. We learned that with our movement habits of haste, and leaving registrations open until the last minute, we only allowed ourselves the space to be responsive to fairly simple and predictable accommodation requests. Absent the time and resources necessary to plan for accommodations, we learned that our assurances of our commitment to inclusion were, in part, performative.

We have appreciated the opportunity to grow in our mistakes in collaboration with our community stakeholders. Going forward, we plan to build more time into our processes, to be prepared to engage our learning communities in creative problem solving, to be conscious of the limitations of our training space (including considering other locations when needed), to be transparent about limitations in our ability to accommodate all requests, and to engage in generative conversations to plan for solutions.

Another question of equity within trainings that our team deliberated was about the use of Native American land acknowledgements. ICADV received questions and requests for guidance around this issue from our community stakeholders. We made our decision in conversation with representatives from Native American communities; they told us that land acknowledgements, absent action, didn’t feel like genuine support. Because the community told us that acknowledgements alone felt performative, we have decided not to incorporate them into our practice, but we will continue to identify opportunities to partner with and support the Native people living in Indiana.
DATA

Over the past year, ICADV continued to collect data with and from communities most impacted by violence to guide our prevention and service strategies. The evaluation team sought feedback from survivors about their experiences with the mobile advocacy service model, and conducted listening sessions to get more information about supports that we could provide to facilitate survivor engagement and leadership.

A particularly generative strategy in this period was Indiana Disability Justice’s (IDJ—a project of ICADV) work to collect data with and from people with disabilities describing their needs for safe and healthy sexual lives. The leaders at IDJ observed a near total absence of research describing healthy sexuality among people with disabilities. This omission fits within, and reinforces, ableist norms that infantilize and limit the full humanity of disabled people. The absence of information also contributes to a culture of secrecy and shame that increases disabled people’s vulnerability to sexual and relationship abuse.

The IDJ team moved into this gap by conducting a community needs, strengths and desires assessment with disabled people in Indiana. Survey findings were used to create a series of accessible infographics with information to help normalize and promote sexual health among people with disabilities.
WHAT’S NEXT?

Focus areas for development in our equity work over the next year include inward-facing strategies and new areas of systems advocacy.

01 Internally, we are working to build out a new “equity in operations” category for our organizational equity plan. Focusing on equity in operations creates opportunities to increase equity in areas ranging from representation in vendors, to equitable organizational practices, to thinking about how ICADV can value and celebrate the team that makes our outward-facing program work possible.

02 A new systems strategy that ICADV will pursue is advocating for diverse representation on the government appointed task force groups and commissions we serve on. Commissions like these hold considerable power in defining social problems, and the solutions—including where and how state resources are invested. Without consideration of identities in appointments, these commissions are frequently over, or exclusively represented by white decision makers.