



May 2015

Newsletter

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Victim Service Center of Central Florida.

### A Message from Lui

April, which is globally recognized as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, was a very special month at the Victim Service Center of Central Florida!

The month kicked off with City of Orlando Mayor, Buddy Dyer, and Orange County Mayor, Teresa Jacobs, reading separate proclamations for the City and Orange County respectively, declaring the Month of April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Both proclamations were presented to the

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### Wish List

Gift Cards in \$5-\$10 increments  
T-Shirts (Large and XL)  
Elastic Waist Pants in all sizes  
Sports Bras  
Flip Flops (6,7,8)  
Office Supplies  
Bus Passes  
Children's DVDs  
Children's Books

[For our full list of top needs, visit our website!](#)

### Education

Learn how you can make our community safer! Schedule a personalized training with our Outreach and Prevention Specialist!

You could learn about:  
- Sexual Assault

The entire month was very busy for the VSC team, organizing several events throughout the month, including Cheers to Change, our 2nd Annual Gala. We also partnered with the Osceola County Sexual Assault Response Team and held our first Sexual Assault Awareness Conference in which over 150 individuals traveled from all over the state to attend. [Read More](#)

## Highlights from Sexual Assault Awareness Month!

### VSC Holds Another Successful Annual Gala



Over 300 people gathered on April 17th to support VSC at our 2nd Annual Gala, Cheers to Change, which was held at the Mennello Museum of American Art.

We are grateful for the support from our generous sponsors, partner agencies, board members and the community for raising awareness of our mission.

All proceeds from the silent auction, sponsorships, and ticket sales will directly support VSC's *free* services. If you were unable to attend but would like to support the victims we serve, please [click here](#) to donate!

### VSC Partners with the Sexual Assault Response Team to Hold the Sexual Assault Awareness Conference in Osceola County

- Stalking
- How Men Can Prevent Sexual Violence (Sensitivity Training)
- Crime Prevention
- Identity Theft
- Internet Safety
- Personal Safety Planning

[Click here](#) to setup your training today!

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## It's official! VSC is Now an Approved CE Provider

We are excited to announce that the VSC has been approved as a provider for continuing education by the Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling.

Our CE Provider number is 50-16927.

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## Meet the Team!

### Ambia Valentine

(Certified Sexual Assault Counselor/Victim Advocate): Ambia holds a Masters in Counseling and Psychology from Troy University. She has worked in social services for the last 14 years.

On April 10, the Victim Service Center partnered with the Osceola County Sexual Assault Response Team to hold a day-long conference at the Kissimmee Civic Center in celebration of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The conference, which had over 150 attendees, featured presentations from Sex Crime Detectives, VSC's Lead Therapist, Holly Smith, and a panel of sexual assault survivors.



"This year's SAAM Conference was the first held in partnership with Osceola County, continuing to strengthen this very important relationship. Our goals were to educate the community and create awareness about VSC throughout Central Florida and particularly in Osceola County", said Lui Damiani, Executive Director of VSC.

We had very positive feedback from the conference attendees. "This conference was not only educational but extremely empowering, especially for professionals who work in the field of combating abuse", one attendee said. "I am thankful for the survivors. Hearing their stories was very important" another attendee added.

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## Denim Day Raises Awareness

## **Robert Butcher**

(Accounting Coordinator): Robert comes to us from Maine and has almost 20 years' experience as an accountant, business manager, and assistant controller. He has a Bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts- Lowell and has worked in the nonprofit sector.

## **Ufuoma Akpotaire**

(Grant and Marketing Coordinator): Ufuoma attended Columbia Law School where she earned her Masters in Law. Prior to joining the VSC, she worked in the development departments for non-profit organizations in New York.



In recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Denim Day, VSC encouraged the Central Florida community to wear jeans on Wednesday, April 29, 2015, to raise awareness about sexual assault and show support for victims. We received an overwhelming response from the community including Orange County Government, the City of Orlando, local colleges and universities, and a multitude of local businesses.

Denim Day was originally triggered by a ruling by the Italian Supreme Court where a rape conviction was overturned because the justices felt that since the victim was wearing tight jeans she must have helped her rapist remove her jeans,

thereby implying consent. The following day, the women in the Italian Parliament came to work wearing jeans in solidarity with the victim.

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## **Join a Support Group**

VSC offers many opportunities for empowerment. Join one of our support groups to continue your growth and healing.

If you are interested in learning more information please do not hesitate to schedule an appointment (407) 254-9415.

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## **We Are All Over Town!**



As part of our Awareness Campaign, you will be spotting Lynx Buses all over town! Recently, we were awarded the Orange County Safety Grant to increase awareness of VSC Programs and Services in our community. You will find our confidential, 24/7 Crisis Hotline on buses, bus shelters near local colleges, and in the interior of 1/3 of the bus fleet.

Be sure to mention us on social media when you see one!

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## Mark Your Calendars

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### Volunteers Orientation:

Wednesday - May 27, 2015

4:00pm - 5:00pm

RSVP by calling (407) 254-9415 or e-mail [Cynthia Coutard](#).

### Lunch & Learn:

Wednesday - May 27, 2015

12:00pm - 1:00pm

RSVP by calling (407) 254-9415 or e-mail [Rhonda Wilson](#).

Held the Last Wednesday of Every Month

at

Victim Service Center Offices  
2111 E. Michigan St., Suite 210  
Orlando, FL 32806

By attending, you will learn about our history, mission, services, goals, and ways to get involved. To attend the Volunteer Orientation or our Monthly Lunch & Learn, you must RSVP. Space is limited and lunch will be provided. We hope to see you there!

Victim Service Center of Central Florida

[Contact Information](#)

Hours: Monday - Friday (8AM-5PM) | Office: (407) 254-9415

2111 E Michigan St, Suite 210  
Orlando, Florida 32806

24-Hour Sexual Assault Hotline: (407) 497-6701  
Toll Free: 1(866) 757-2046

[VictimServiceCenter.org](http://VictimServiceCenter.org)

