

MASSACHUSETTS
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VICTIM & WITNESS
ASSISTANCE BOARD

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ELIZABETH FREEMAN CENTER'S MONEY SCHOOL WINS "INNOVATION AWARD" AT STATE HOUSE

BOSTON – Elizabeth Freeman Center's (EFC) Money School was presented with MOVA's Innovation Award at a ceremony at the State House today, in recognition of its ground-breaking work to advance financial independence for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

During Victim Rights Month in April, Attorney General Maura Healey and the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) recognize individuals and agencies that have made notable contributions to victim rights and services.

EFC's Money School puts survivors of abuse or sexual violence on a path toward economic security and well-being. The program, developed by the American Institute for Economic Research (AIER) and EFC, promotes long-term paths to financial independence coupled with short-term budgeting, resource maximization and savings measures. It combines an in-depth workshop series with ongoing, individualized, wraparound supports, advocacy, and resources as participants progress on their plans. It is grounded in robust evaluation and impact measurement by AIER that drives improvement.

Because when it comes to financial resources, 'who you know' is often as important as 'what you know,' Money School pairs participants with individual financial coaches from local banks, and connects participants with presenters from local colleges, employment, entrepreneurship, legal aid, and micro-grant resources to expand their access to opportunity. The program has a holistic approach to participants' long-term stability and recovery and ensures participants receive ongoing victim services from EFC as needed.

EFC has offered Money School to over 80 survivors over the past two years, and will be offering its first series for Spanish-speaking survivors this spring.

“I leave so juiced when I visit Money School workshops,” said Janis Broderick, EFC’s Executive Director. “This program is a community effort – survivors, AIER, our regional economic security task force, program graduates, colleges, banks, other non-profits – everyone has come together to create a program that is making a real difference in survivors’ lives. You see it in the energy participants bring to the room, and in the number of graduates who find housing, enroll in school, find jobs, increase their credit score, and find support and wisdom in each other. We are thrilled to be receiving this award and thankful that MOVA understands financial initiatives like Money School to be integral components of safety and healing.”

“As a member of the Victim and Witness Assistance Board, it was a special pleasure to present the Award personally to the Elizabeth Freeman Center, a long-standing partner in ensuring safety and assistance to victims of domestic and sexual violence in Berkshire County. Money School is an innovative program that deserves this recognition, and I applaud EFC for taking on this challenge and implementing it successfully.”

“During Victim Rights Month we have an opportunity to recognize those who help some of the most vulnerable and innocent among us. These individuals provide critical services to victims, and we are proud of the work they do in our communities,” said Attorney General Maura Healey.

“Economic stability and financial independence are critical tools for survivors to achieve lasting recovery and safety for themselves and families,” said Liam Lowney, MOVA’s Executive Director. “EFC’s Money School provides access to financial literacy, planning, and economic opportunities that truly empowers survivors of domestic and sexual violence to be economically self-sufficient. This innovative programming builds upon strong partnerships to promote the independence of survivors and we are thrilled to recognize their efforts with this award.”

To learn more about EFC’s Money School or other victim services offered, please visit www.elizabethfreemancenter.org or call (413) 499-2425.

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