

SURVIVORS RISING

AMPLIFYING SURVIVOR'S VOICES SINCE 2016



NEWS:

Meet Karen Abrams, Executive Director

Karen was hired February 1, 2020 to be our first, full-time Executive Director. A month and a half later, COVID-19 threw us all for a loop. So, Karen took a deep breath from behind her mask and has been working non-stop with the whole Survivors Rising team to find innovative ways to connect with our supporters and keep our organization healthy and strong in spite of this pandemic.



SEQUESTERED AT HOME, by Karen Abrams

Sequestered at home during this pandemic, my 14-year-old has been glued to the screen.

She has been binge-watching "13 Reasons Why," the not-so-new series that explores themes of sexual predation, suicide, and more. It's heavy stuff. But, the timing for my daughter – on the cusp of high school – is perfect.

Watching "13 Reasons Why" with her has got me thinking about many things. Like rape culture, narcissism, and male privilege (especially white male privilege). And looming, existential questions like "How did it get this way?" and "How will it ever change?"

But more than anything it has me scrambling to figure out how to talk to this young person in my life about all of the above without getting the "Aw, MOM" moan, groan, roll of the eyes, and subsequent tune-out.

It's our job at Survivors Rising to elevate survivors' voices in order - ultimately - to move the needle on the cultural norms and values surfaced in "13 Reasons Why." These are the norms at the dark and despicable end of the spectrum, those norms in our community and across our nation that allow the proliferation of rape, sexual exploitation, and all forms of sexual coercion, violence and abuse.

I depend on all the survivors in my life to help lead us away from that dark and dangerous end of the values spectrum. And, the survivors in my life also teach me how to talk to my daughter in a an accurate, supportive, trauma-informed way to help her learn the signals and the red flags of rape culture.

Together we will make change happen. Together we will agitate and cogitate and just plain work hard every day to cultivate and nurture healthy norms and values, and advocate for new policies and practices, so that all young people like my daughter can avoid the trauma a rape culture perpetuates.

UPDATES:

Team Work at Survivors Rising

- Posting thought-provoking videos
- Interviewing board members
- Designing virtual workshops to meet your needs
- Planning a fall fundraiser
- Learning new techniques to amplify our voices using technology and social media
- Connecting with supporters
- Advising area service providers on policies and practices
- Revamping our website



SURVIVOR: Someone who knows how to BE even while overwhelmed by a tidal wave of uncertainty, fear, anxiety, and exhaustion.

We can't see you face-to-face right now. So we're innovating with social media, blogging, vlogging, and podcasting. Ensuring our diverse and always unique survivor voices are represented...**and amplified!**

TAKE SPACE, GIVE GRACE, by Leontyne Evans

A lot of you know me. We've worked together. I'm Leontyne Evans, Survivor Engagement Specialist at Survivors Rising.

I miss you! I miss your faces, I miss being able to connect.

This is a special time for all of us, but for survivors it's an even more special time. Once we get into "survivor mode," we want to help people, to pull people up with us. But right now we can't.

That might feel like a negative thing. But, instead of it being negative, we can think of this as a time to save

ourselves. Many of us take on too much, are burdened down by so many tasks, are worrying about so many people. I want to encourage you, during this special time, to take space and give grace.

Yes, take space. Take some time to re-evaluate where you are, what you want, what you're doing. Take a break. Take some time and space to figure it out. And, if you get absolutely nothing done but to save your sanity, that's okay too.

And, give grace. Understand we're all going through something we've never experienced before. So, we don't know how to experience it. Think before you act, before you speak.

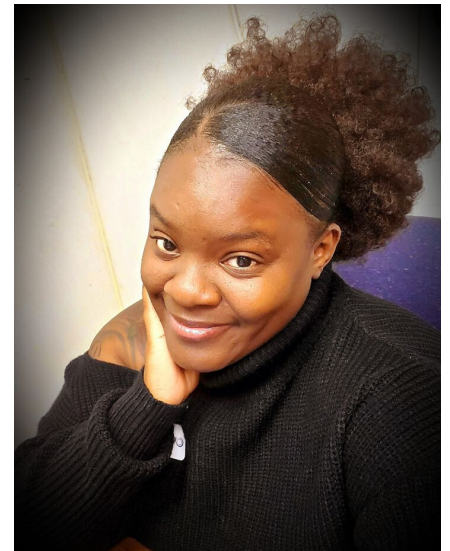
Take this time to be a little selfish. It's okay to think about yourself. Because if you're not taking care of yourself, you're really no good to anybody else.

I've been a part of Survivors Rising for more than four years now. I know from personal experience that this organization gives survivors the opportunity to be at the table, to be at the forefront, to have our voices heard, to be part of the changes we'd like to see.

We can do that while finding ourselves and creating new lives for ourselves. We can do that while finding self-sufficiency and finding out what things look like in this new season of life.

I want you to know I'm still here with you, we are all here with you, even when we're not face-to-face. Survivors are still rising and thriving.

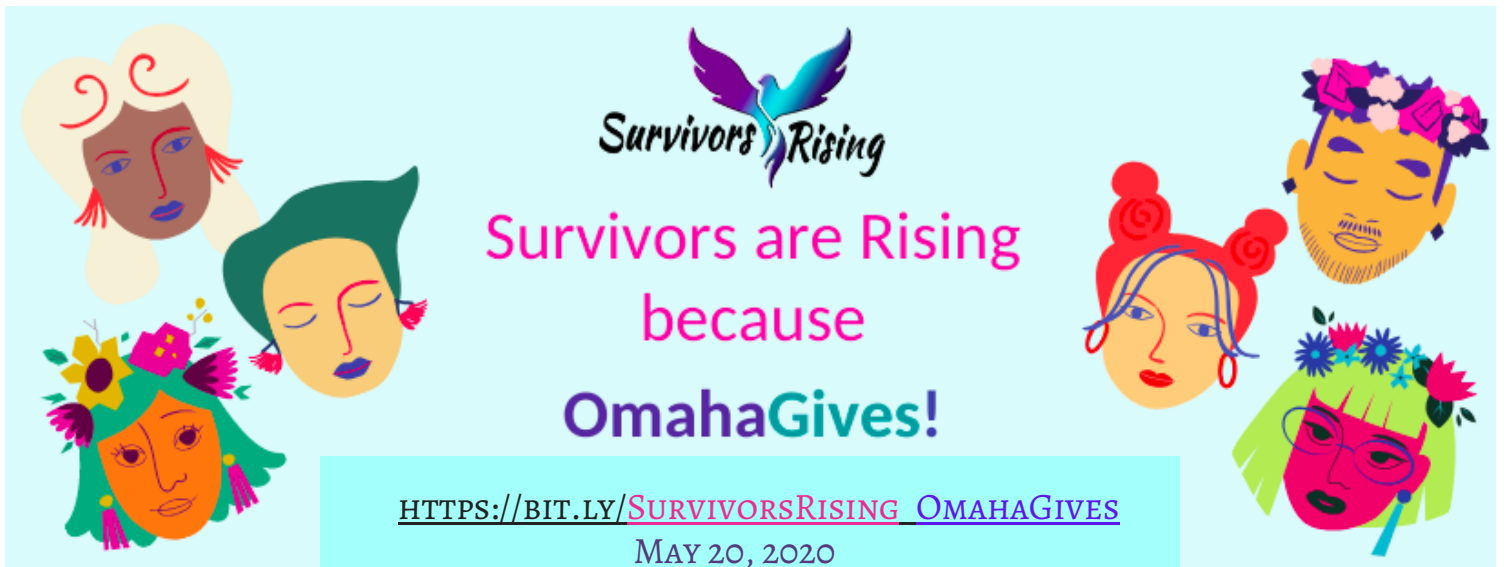
If you need extra support, please reach out. In the meantime, take care of YOU! Do what is needed for you and everything else will fall into place.



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Survivors Rising is a unique, survivor-led nonprofit that expands the capacity and amplifies the voices of survivors of sex trafficking, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking, through outreach, advocacy, education, and interpersonal support.



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