

Date: May 30, 2000  
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.  
Location: 2-36, University Extension Centre  
8303 – 112 Avenue, Edmonton

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **UNIQUE WEB SITES OFFER HELP TO VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

The Legal Studies Program, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta in collaboration with the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters and Changing Together – a Centre for Immigrant Women officially launch two new web sites which provide "on-line" assistance and information to women experiencing violence in intimate relationships.

VIOLET: Law and Abused Women  
[www.violetnet.org](http://www.violetnet.org)

And

ROSENET: Law and Abused Immigrant Women  
[www.rosenet-ca.org](http://www.rosenet-ca.org)

These sites were developed to provide women with legal and referral information. The VIOLET web site is a plain language, woman-friendly, safe space on the Internet providing passive and interactive services for this audience. Status of Women Canada, Office of Learning Technologies and the Alberta Law Foundation through its operating grant funded the project.

RoseNet is a site "for" immigrant women developed "by" immigrant women. Immigrant women have specific legal information needs and their experiences are different, so the resource materials had to be designed and written in a culturally relevant context. Funding for RoseNet is provided by Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund and the Alberta Law Foundation.

The participating agencies are looking forward to promoting and assisting women in using these web sites to acquire information, develop relevant knowledge. Women can also use the web site to connect and dialogue with other women, thus building an on-line community.

*Arlene Chapman with the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters can be reached at (780) 456-7000 for the any questions.*

**ROSENET**  
**May 16, 2000 Meeting Minutes**

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Present:	Arlene Chapman	Pat Vargas
	Sonia Bitar	San San Sy
	Kathleen	Gerald

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- ◆ Launch for RoseNet
    - Violet will be the main one for community groups and government people (Human Rights, Status of Women Canada, Canadian Heritage, Health Canada, United Way funded agencies and multi-cultural agencies)
  - ◆ Lois will welcome
  - ◆ Arlene will speak about the use of Violet and the benefit to shelters
    - how great it came together etc,
    - introduce advisory committee and project staff
  - ◆ Photos to be taken
  - ◆ Arlene is the media contact for this event
  - ◆ Arlene to try RoseNet tomorrow and call San San
  - ◆ Arlene to write press release and email to San San
  - ◆ Six focus group meeting, three in Calgary
  - ◆ Build community capacity and have community use the technology
  - ◆ Gives reason for women to learn to use the technology
  - ◆ RoseNet is aimed at people with literacy skills
  - ◆ Lan will set up CBC radio and TV interview
  - ◆ Raj Pannu will be invited personally by Arlene
  - ◆ Pat to give Arlene paper for doing invitation and letter
  - ◆ Anyone else I think should be invited, send over to San San as she will compile list to avoid duplications
  - ◆ San San will send over invitation in black and white
  - ◆ Will need enough promo material for media launch
  - ◆ Convey that RoseNet was not an add on to Violet
  - ◆ RoseNet was truly grass roots and it is very different from Violet
  - ◆ RoseNet was chosen as it crosses all cultural and religious lines
  - ◆ Next steps:
    - look at the site
    - check for accuracy
    - check for what is missing
    - disclaimers
    - check for typo's, grammar
    - check to see if the information is relevant and understandable
    - How does it make you feel? Are you comfortable in the site?
    - Is it easy to navigate? Do you like the colors, etc.?
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Next Meeting:  
Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2000 at 2:00 p.m.

## ROSENET Advisory Committee Member Terms of Reference

The University of Alberta Legal Studies Program in partnership with Changing Together is developing a website with pertinent legal information for immigrant women who are abused.

Our experience in developing Violet: Law & Abused Women website have prompted the development of a website with pertinent legal information for immigrant women. Through a process of consultation with Cultural Brokers we learned the following:

- Immigrant women have other legal information needs such as immigration.
- The experiences of immigrant women are different.
- The website needs to be designed and written so that is culturally relevant.
- The website needs to begin at a grassroots level, with the guidance of stakeholders.
- The website needs to be promoted amongst leaders in the community.

We have begun the process of community consultation regarding the content and the design of the website. At the moment, the first approach for the site is for people who are uncertain as to what information is relevant. They can read Rose's story, and link through the bolded words. Each event in the story provides some avenues and related information.

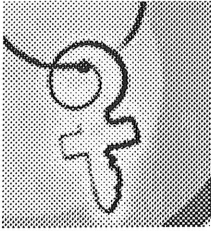
The Advisory committee member is the person who consults with the project team on the overall direction of the project.

### **DUTIES:**

- To provide guidance to the Rosenet with respect to its mandate.
- To provide assistance in the review of the work performed by Rosenet and provide feedback and share expertise to ensure the quality of the site.
- To share expertise of their knowledge of the needs of immigrant women in the community.
- To expend approximate 3 hours a month in a meeting and 1 hours preparation time.
- Most of the work for this committee consists in providing feedback and guidance with respect to the direction of the project.

### **CRITERIA:**

- Involved in the community.
- Have expertise in the delivery of services to women.
- Understand the needs of women in the community.



## VIOLET: LAW & ABUSED WOMEN

[www.violetnet.org](http://www.violetnet.org)

The VIOLET project has established an important outcome in a web site that presents three different learning approaches. Grounded by principles of adult education and instructional design for the Internet, the reader is guided to learn and develop her own knowledge based upon her own experiences and personal needs. It also encourages women to name their experience and by doing so, understand that they are able to plan successfully for the future. The learning adds to their repertoire of cognitive skills that transcend the level of being able to understand a legal definition and to build on knowledge with technology. Collectively, this type of learning allows for personal growth and self-empowerment.

This web site is a unique outcome of collaboration among the Faculty of Extension and community groups in Alberta. The web site relates to abused women as informal learners and presents legal information in a way that encourages and guides women to interact with the technology thereby learning about crucial legal information. The VIOLET web site is a plain language, woman-friendly, safe space on the Internet providing passive and interactive services for this audience.

Currently, the site has three entry points reflecting three different learning styles. Each entry point leads the user to the legal knowledge she needs, using methods she chooses. Based on the theory that knowledge is constructed through interaction with one's environment, the VIOLET web site has been developed using learning design principles that let each user choose how to acquire information. Each entry point is based on a different learning approach.

- **Just the Facts** presents the legal information in a book-like fashion. This approach is very didactic and sequential. The information is presented as in a reference book rather than as problem-solving. This approach assumes that the user knows what she needs and is already familiar with the terminology. There is no interaction with the user to confirm her understanding of the information. The assumption is that this approach will be used as a quick reference by those who are familiar with the issues or do not want to take the time for interaction. For those with limited time, the information can be printed for future reference.
- **Mary's Story** takes the reader through a discovery of legal information as told through the story of an abused woman. The developers hope that this will help the user relate the story to her own experience, learning pertinent legal issues as she reads. Throughout the story, links are provided to legal information and the user can choose to link to it as Mary encounters it. All the links are retrieved in a familiar narrative interface. The user chooses when to link to the legal content and when to come back to Mary's story. The site architecture is obvious and easily accessible.
- **It's Your Story** uses web-based learning design to assist abused women and their service providers in reviewing or learning about the most pertinent legal information. This interactive approach allows the user to choose a role to learn about the law in the fictitious situation presented. During the process, she makes choices to interact with the information by answering questions and comparing her answers with the site's answer. This approach encourages reflection and seeks to assist abused women toward self-affirmation.