The year 2006 has been productive for New Visions. It was full of excitement, enthusiasm, and new endeavors. New Visions has welcomed new partners and members, developed innovative prevention strategies, and expanded into a stronger and more active organization. As we come to the end of the year, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you, our members, collaborating organizations, and funders for all your hard work, support, and passion in helping to make our communities safe and violence-free.

Here are some highlights of our activities and accomplishments this year:

January: Interactive theater workshop on domestic violence at the annual health fair sponsored by the United Asian American Medical Students Association at the University of Michigan (UM).

March: Presentation about women activists around the world in celebration of International Women’s Day (March 8th) at the UM School of Social Work; A workshop on domestic/dating violence with Kappa Phi Lambda, an Asian sorority on UM campus.

April: Participation at the Take Back the Night Rally/March.

May: A thoughtful dialogue with the Chinese community on domestic violence.

July: Forum Theater Training II; Received funding from Michigan Women’s Foundation’s Young Women for Change Grant to develop and implement a youth camp in spring/summer 2007 to cultivate young leaders using the arts.

August: Film previews with community members; a forum theater workshop with youth at the Korean Church of Ann Arbor; Launched a monthly newsletter, Monthly Visions, as a medium to share news, reflections, and accomplishments with members, and to expand outreach efforts to the community at large.

October: Participation at Marshall’s Shop ’Til It Stops Day in honor of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

November: Arts & Activism Community Action Team’s presentation at NAASCon 2006 (National Asian American Students Conference).
Real, Honest, Raw
By Fazeela Siddiqui, UM School of Social Work student

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is an international campaign originating from the first Women’s Global Leadership Institute in 1991. Since 1991, approximately 1,700 organizations in 130 countries have participated in the campaign. The campaign commences each year on November 25th, which is the International Day Against Violence Against Women, and ends on December 10th, which is International Human Rights Day.

On December 5, 2006, UM Social Work students, in collaboration with Men Against Violence Against Women, invited a diverse group of spoken word artists to flow about violence against women, at a local night spot called LIVE at PJ’s, while jazz music played in the background. The event was attended by high school students, undergraduate and graduate students, professors, poets, bartenders, and DJs. The theme of the event was ‘Real, Honest, Raw’ and audience members were engaged and moved by the words of the artists.

Partnering with nightclubs and bars can be extremely beneficial in the fight to end violence against women. We should be infiltrating every bar, sports arena, etc., with our message that violent behavior is not condoned in any of those places. The safe space and community that was created on this night is a testament to the fact that violence against women is a male issue, a community issue, and a mainstream issue.

Recommended Readings Over the Holidays
1. A Patchwork Shawl: Chronicles of South Asian Women in America (Edited by Shamita Das Dasgupta) a collection of essays by and about South Asian women in America.
3. Theatre of the Oppressed (By Augusto Boal): History of the Theatre of the Oppressed and offers techniques and games that may be used in activism.

Holiday Giving
Financial support is always needed and welcomed in order to sustain our community efforts and fulfill our mission. New Visions is a non-profit organization under title 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. All contributions to New Visions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. For donations, please make checks or money-orders payable to the University of Michigan and mail to New Visions: Alliance to End Violence in Asian/Asian American Communities, UM School of Social Work, 1080 S. University, Mailbox 182, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1106.

Monthly Visions is a collaborative project between New Visions and authors. The views of the authors may or may not reflect the views of New Visions. We encourage submissions (poetry, artwork, articles, short stories, prose in English or your native language) to further the mission and philosophy of New Visions. Submitters will work with New Visions staff to ensure content is consistent with its philosophy and mission. For more information about the newsletter, please e-mail us at monthlyvision@umich.edu.

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