LIPSTICK
LADIES INVOLVED IN PUTTING A STOP TO INNER-CITY KILLING

PROGRESS REPORT
NOV 2015 – DEC 2016

LIPSTICK FEATURED IN PEOPLE MAGAZINE
46.6 million readers worldwide – the largest audience of any American magazine

Where did the gun come from?
www.johnmccain.com/passesongun

Citizens For Safety
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info@citizensforsafety.org
www.operationlipstick.org
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LIPSTICK joins Louis D. Brown Peace Institute Annual Mother’s Day Walk for Peace
MEET RASHANDRA RILEY
The Woman Who Inspired LIPSTICK

Who was she?

At 21 years old Rashandra Riley was an Ohio college scholar on the dean’s list and a cheerleader.

What did she do?

In 2002, she was arrested after straw purchasing 40 guns from an Ohio gun store for a classmate who could not buy the guns himself.

What did it cost her?

She was convicted of a FELONY.

Rashandra Riley testifies before Congress.

Rashandra Riley is now a LIPSTICK Lady.

Today Rashandra is LIPSTICK’s Director of Outreach to Incarcerated Women.

She helps women turn a painful past into a way to protect other women and girls.
What is a straw purchase?

A straw purchase is a criminal act in which a person buys a gun (or guns) on behalf of someone legally prohibited from owning guns. Straw purchasers are usually people hired by trafficking rings, or friends, relatives, spouses or girlfriends of people who cannot pass a criminal background check. Straw purchasers break the law when they answer "yes" to this question on purchase forms: "Are you the actual transferee/buyer of the firearm(s) listed on this form? Warning: You are not the actual buyer if you are acquiring the firearm(s) on behalf of another person."

“Women might not be pulling the trigger, but by providing the gun, they could be contributing to someone’s death. We will no longer allow ourselves to be used this way.”
ABOUT LIPSTICK

“LIPSTICK is a public health initiative that reduces the willingness of women to engage in straw purchases using peer-to-peer education. As women have helped reduce drunk driving, they can mobilize to reduce firearm violence.”

—David Hemenway
Director
Harvard School of Public Health
Injury Control Research Center and
LIPSTICK board member

For women in high-crime communities, stopping gun violence is a top priority. It’s the difference between marking a child’s birthday in person, in prison, or standing over a grave.

It’s no surprise women are profoundly affected by gun violence. What’s surprising is that they are also a major contributor to the problem.

Men are pulling the trigger, but women are supplying many of the guns.

Men who can’t pass a criminal background check often use women to “straw purchase,” smuggle and store guns for them. Men manipulate women through fear, sweet-talk, threats, bribery, abuse and intimidation.

Researchers at the University of California and the University of Maryland found women play a significant role in the illegal gun trade. According to the Chicago Crime Lab, 25% of Chicago’s crime guns come from women. One woman is capable of putting hundreds of crime guns on the streets.

LIPSTICK transforms women from being part of the problem to being part of the solution. Boston District Attorney Dan Conley credits LIPSTICK with a 33% drop in gun crime charges of women.

LIPSTICK empowers women through peer-to-peer education, social service intervention, public awareness and community organizing to prevent women from being used as gun mules.

LIPSTICK teaches women how to protect themselves. When a man tells a woman, “buy this gun for me,” she will say no. When he says, “hide this gun for me,” she’ll know she would enable violence and risks going to jail. When he says “you’d do it if you loved me,” she’ll know that’s not what love looks like.

LIPSTICK gives women the power, knowledge, peer support, tools, resolve and confidence to make the right choice, and help other women do the same.

“Women might not be pulling the trigger, but by supplying the guns, we could be contributing to someone’s death. We are no longer going to allow ourselves to be used this way. We refuse to be used to take a life.”

—Pastor Kim Odom
Boston community leader
Mother of gun violence victim Steven Odom
LIPSTICK leader

“LIPSTICK is a program of Citizens for Safety, a 501(c)3 nonprofit. Learn more at: www.operationlipstick.org

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In many urban shootings, men might be pulling the trigger, but women are supplying the guns.

No one has addressed this problem—until now.

LIPSTICK is the first program in the country to shine a light on women as enablers — and powerful disrupters — of gun trafficking pipelines.

One woman is capable of putting dozens of guns in the wrong hands. LIPSTICK transforms her from being part of the problem to being part of the solution. Rashandra was an honor roll college student who straw purchased 40 guns. She is now working with LIPSTICK to warn other women of the dire consequences of straw purchasing, and she is leading a new initiative to recruit more former straw purchasers like herself.

Women like Rashandra are part of LIPSTICK’s growing army of informed, confident, civically engaged women and girls who refuse to be used to buy, hide or hold guns illegally. They are breaking cycles of exploitation and violence, educating peers, empowering new leaders, and changing cultural norms for this generation and the next.

This report chronicles their stories, challenges and triumphs as part of the LIPSTICK movement.

Courtney has committed to work with LIPSTICK when she is released from jail for straw buying a gun that killed 33 people. Ada took the stage with former Attorney General Eric Holder to tearfully recount her arrest for harboring her boyfriend’s gun. Ruth honored a new wave of LIPSTICK leaders as “Champions of Change.” Judy recruited women in beauty salons, schools, and community centers. Shante convinced women to sign pledges vowing not to buy, hide or hold guns for their boyfriends. Kim presented LIPSTICK as part of an international women’s conference at Lincoln Center with Tina Brown and Meryl Streep. Rashandra told her story to People Magazine.

These are just some of LIPSTICK’s leaders who have helped educate thousands of women, kept countless guns off the street, and saved untold lives — all on a shoestring budget. Their actions demonstrate that LIPSTICK’s approach works, the message resonates, and our vision for safer communities is within reach.

“On TV, you want to solve gun crime. In the real world, you want to prevent crime from occurring in the first place. I support LIPSTICK because they empower regular people to take heroic action.”

–LIPSTICK donor David H.

LIPSTICK Ladies are making remarkable progress on one of the most pressing and intractable problems of our day. This report demonstrates the value of LIPSTICK to urban centers struggling with gun violence. The conclusion is clear: women must be part of a comprehensive strategy to combat gun crime.

Contact info@citizensforsafety.org to start a LIPSTICK program in your city.
This report shows LIPSTICK continued to make great strides in 2016. We did what we set out to do:

1. **Empower** women to prevent their peers from straw purchasing, hiding, carrying or storing guns for people who can’t get guns lawfully

2. **Change** the public discourse on gun violence to recognize straw purchasing as a major contributing factor

3. **Expand** LIPSTICK’s educational programs and organizing strategies

Empower women in high-crime communities to become part of the solution

LIPSTICK helps women discover the power to make their neighborhoods safer through trainings, storytelling and community organizing with a specific purpose: convince women and girls not to straw purchase, hide or store guns illegally. LIPSTICK supported Rashandra, a former gun trafficker, when she told her story to People magazine and warned millions of vulnerable women and girls not to straw purchase weapons. Another LIPSTICK leader, Ada, appeared with former Attorney General Eric Holder at the American Justice Summit and recounted what happened when police found her boyfriend’s loaded gun in her car. “Ladies,” she said to an audience of 1000+ “don’t listen to your boyfriends, or you could go to jail and lose your home and custody of your children like I did.” LIPSTICK Ladies from five states were celebrated as “Champions of Change.” These are just some of the ways LIPSTICK empowers women around the country.

Develop effective tools for activists

LIPSTICK makes it easy for activists to understand how guns get into the wrong hands. We show them how they can break the chain of transmission. We offer tools, strategic consultation, educational training and support to mothers who have lost children to gun violence, domestic violence victims, female straw purchasers, youth, public housing residents, public health and safety experts, elected officials, law enforcement and more. Our core workshop curriculum has been recommended to the White House. We are developing the first trainings for health professionals to identify and counsel women susceptible to straw purchasing. Thousands of women and girls have taken the LIPSTICK pledge not to straw purchase, hide or hold guns—and they’ve convinced their friends and family to take the pledge too. Young people are leading “pop up” mini-workshops called “The Iron Pipeline.” These and other tools are helping thousands of activists channel grief, trauma and outrage into practical, everyday steps to keep guns out of the wrong hands.

INTRODUCTION
“I began working to prevent gun violence more than ten years ago because of a promise I made to the father of a seven-year-old boy.”

–Nancy Robinson
Executive Director
LIPSTICK

“I began working to prevent gun violence more than ten years ago because of a promise I made to the father of a 7-year-old boy. I met Ruett Foster not long after he buried his son Evan, who was gunned down while sitting in the backseat of his mother’s car. Ruett was the headliner of a press conference to urge Congress to pass better gun laws. He took the stage and said he had three talking points. He held up a photo of Evan. He held up a photo of Evan’s surviving brother, Alec. He held up a photo of his family. And then he sat down. He had said it all while silently holding up 3 precious pictures.

Since that day, I have met hundreds of grieving families like Ruett’s from communities in crisis. I’ve seen Congress fail to provide leadership again and again.

Like many breakthroughs, LIPSTICK was born out of the frustration, outrage, and defiance I know many of us share. How can any of us tacitly condone this state of affairs and act like we don’t see what’s going on? How can we continue to tolerate the mass slaughter-by-gunfire and incarceration of a generation of black and brown young men? If Congress is unwilling to act, what can WE do to stop the bloodshed?

We started looking at the problem of urban gun violence differently, and things changed.

Where did the gun come from?

We started by asking a basic, central yet overlooked question: where do crime guns come from? How is it that young people growing up in urban environments have such easy access to so many guns? We wanted to examine the crime-before-the-crime: the transactions that typically occur before a shooting that put the gun in the wrong hands.

LIPSTICK provides an answer. The majority of crime guns, according to federal law enforcement, are trafficked into inner cities via a “straw purchase,” where someone who cannot pass a criminal background check recruits someone else to buy guns for them. It turns out, women are straw purchasing many of the guns used in inner-city killings.

The good news is that we can, and are, turning this around. LIPSTICK taps into something magical that happens when a woman finds her voice and discovers her power to lead change. It started in a room in a library that was too small to contain the passion, vision, and love of a group of women who refuse to give up until their children have a safe place to grow. Their sisterhood, strength, generosity, compassion, and can-do spirit is LIPSTICK’s mojo. It is contagious and unstoppable.

I am grateful for the brave women and girls I get to work with every day. They show me the beauty that is possible when people come together to do the right thing.

I ask you to stand with us. React to the death of Evan Foster as though he were your child. Join us on this journey to insure every child has the chance to grow up in peace. Refuse to give up, pledge to do your part, until we get there.

That is the promise I made to Ruett. I need your help to fulfill it.
MILESTONES

2017
• Expanding into Harlem
• Expanding on West Coast-San Francisco Bay Area
• Launching programs for incarcerated women and men
• Partnership with Emerson College, Boston Medical Center and Boston Children’s Hospital, PICO Network (largest association of black churches in the country)
• Developing training tools for physicians, social workers, domestic violence counselors and public health advocates
• Spring fundraiser gala with Emerson College
• Conference at Apollo Theater in New York
• Develops first-of-its-kind training curriculum for youth, by youth to prevent them from straw purchasing, hiding and holding guns illegally
• Rolls out issue-area trainings on public speaking, social media organizing, community organizing, and more
• LIPSTICK workshops train 1,000+ activists in Boston; 90% of workshop attendees say workshops taught them new ways to reduce gun violence; 85% sign up to stay involved; thousands of women and girls sign LIPSTICK pledge
• Boston Globe calls LIPSTICK a “crime-fighting force”
• Featured in People Magazine
• Appears on stage at Lincoln Center for “Women in the World” international conference and again with former Attorney General Eric Holder at “American Justice Summit”
• Meryl Streep urges support for LIPSTICK; calls leaders “fearless and undaunted”
• Featured presenter at White-House sponsored conference: “Advancing Justice for Women and Girls of Color”
• LIPSTICK gains news coverage in Ohio, Florida, Kansas, California, Pennsylvania, and more
• Partnering with Harvard Kennedy School
• Receives expansion grant to bring LIPSTICK to Harlem and West Coast
• Begins outreach to incarcerated women and men

2016
• Launches “His Crime Your Time” public awareness campaign with City of Boston, Boston Police Department, Suffolk County District Attorney, and 20+ community partners
• Suffolk County District Attorney announces LIPSTICK responsible for 33% drop in gun prosecutions involving women
• Expands workshops to multiple Massachusetts communities
• Boston Globe publishes LIPSTICK op ed “How Women Can Help Stop Gun Violence” by Boston City Councilor Ayanna Pressley
• Establishes volunteer steering committee with 20+ members
• Introduces new events: “Taking Care of Each Other,” “Bridging Urban-Suburban Divides,” and more
• City of Boston makes LIPSTICK official part of violence-prevention strategy
• LIPSTICK leaders receive 25+ community service awards
• Lands media coverage in Atlantic Monthly, Gawker, Boston Herald, Cosmopolitan Magazine, CNN, National Public Radio, Boston Magazine

2015
• LIPSTICK launches with grant from U.S. Dept. of Justice and Massachusetts Dept. of Public Safety and Security
• Unveils LIPSTICK Pledge: “I refuse to be used to take a life”
• Introduces workshops and leadership trainings in partnership with City of Boston, Boston Public Library and Suffolk County District Attorney
• Holds first educational events in Boston beauty salons
• Community organizations including YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, Dept. of Children and Families, local middle school and high schools request LIPSTICK trainings
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OUR IMPACT/OUTCOMES

Empowered women leaders

- LIPSTICK Ladies led hundreds of workshops, trainings and presentations
- Converted former female traffickers into spokeswomen and workshop facilitators
- Enlisted beauty salon owners and patrons, domestic violence survivors, youth leaders, faith community and more
- Doubled database of supporters
- Formed leadership team of LIPSTICK Ladies from five states
- Leaders featured on NPR as “Activists Who Aren’t Waiting for Politicians to Stop Gun Violence”

“Ladies – Don’t listen to your boyfriends.
I held guns for my boyfriend because I thought I was in love. LIPSTICK gives me the chance to tell my story and keep other girls from making the same mistake.”

Ada Pantoja
at the American Justice Summit, NYC
January 2016
OUR IMPACT/OUTCOMES
Empowered women leaders

Operation LIPSTICK at the Beauty Salon
OUR IMPACT/OUTCOMES

2. Changed the public discourse and awareness

- Reached millions through coverage in People Magazine, National Public Radio, New York Times, Huffington Post, and more
- Featured presenter at international Women in the World Conference, American Justice Summit, White House sponsored conference at Wake Forest University, annual conference of state legislators
- NPR and Metro News covers LIPSTICK public statement on President Obama’s executive actions
- LIPSTICK’s “Women and Crime Guns” database cited by reporters, researchers, and nonprofits
- LIPSTICK “His Crime Your Time” public awareness campaign serves as model for new NYPD subway campaign
OUR IMPACT/OUTCOMES
Changed the public discourse and awareness

LIPSTICK featured in People Magazine
46.6 million readers worldwide
the largest audience of any American magazine
Remember these fearless, undaunted, relentless women. Remember them. Support them.

MERILY STREEP
ACADEMY AWARD WINNING ACTRESS

Operation LIPSTICK takes the stage at the WOMEN IN THE WORLD Summit
LIPSTICK is a life-affirming and innovative campaign to empower women to be a part of the solution in ending violence on our streets. If we only focus on the men and boys pulling the trigger, we miss a huge piece of the puzzle. For too long, we have been in denial about the role girls and women play in trafficking. LIPSTICK is an important, necessary, innovative and bold violence-prevention tool to make our streets safer.

AYANNA PRESSLEY
BOSTON CITY COUNCILOR-AT-LARGE

Ayanna Pressley
Boston City Councilor-at-Large supports LIPSTICK
IMPACT/OUTCOMES

Developed innovative educational and organizing tools

• Launched new program for incarcerated women
• Produced first database of criminal cases involving women straw purchasers
• Developed curriculum and training toolkit for Harlem leaders
• Developed training curriculum for public health professionals
• Launched a crowd funding site

• Created new sealed with a kiss campaign and pledge cards
Launched Operation LIPSTICK – HARLEM

Iesha Sekou
New York Director
LIPSTICK

Launched new program for incarcerated women

Hi,

I know this may seem weird coming from a federal prison camp but my name is Courtney Davis and I am currently incarcerated in Payson, TX. This last week at mail call my roommate got a People magazine and was nice enough to share it with me. I read an article inside about “Operation Lipstick” and I wanted to know more. Since I have no access to internet I emailed a friend to look yall up and give me your information.

Here is why I wanted to know more. Your mission hits home for me. I am serving a sentence for purchasing a firearm for a friend (male) who sold the gun and it was ultimately involved in a shooting where 34 people were killed. I regret making that decision that inadvertently endangered so many lives. I am to be released from BOP custody Dec 2017, and I will be residing in Houston, TX. I know right now yall are serving the Boston area and I would love to get involved.

Upon my release and back in Houston for yall. I think it’s remarkable what yall started and the difference you are making, and I would love to be apart of it. I know first hand the consequences that come to saying “yes” to someone giving me to buy a gun for them. Upon being investigated I was completely honest but it still cost me time away from my newly married husband and young daughter.

I thank you for reading this.

God Bless,

Courtney
LIPSTICK is an urban women’s movement solving the gun crisis. We take an oath not to straw purchase, hide or carry guns for any man. We’re successful because we’re keeping guns out of the wrong hands today and every day, without waiting for Congress to act.

SHANTE LEATHERS
OPERATION LIPSTICK
# NEW FUNDERS

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<th>American State Legislators For Gun Violence Prevention</th>
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## NEW PARTNERS

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<td>We Are Better Together</td>
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NEW MEDIA COVERAGE

People
The New York Times
The Boston Globe
abc 7
City Paper
metro
THE TRACE
NECN
New England's News Station
BNN Boston Neighborhood Network
90.9 Wbur
THE LIPSTICK BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THE LIPSTICK STAFF

NANCY ROBINSON
Executive Director

RASHANDRA RILEY
Director of Outreach to Incarcerated Women

JUDY ROSE
Program Director

IESHA SEKOU
New York City Field Director

SHANTE LEATHERS
Outreach Director

CHET WHYE, JR.
Communications Director
FACTS AT A GLANCE

**Gun violence is the leading cause of death for African American males ages 12-24**

**More than 50% of gun trafficking cases involve a straw purchase**

**Risk of gun being recovered from crime scene 57% higher for handguns purchased by female buyers**

**Women are disproportionately involved in the sale of guns that end up in the hands of criminals**

**Women buy fewer guns than men do, but guns they buy are more likely to be recovered from a crime scene**

**Research shows guns purchased by women are more than twice as likely to be used to commit a crime**
## LIPSTICK PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

### November 2015
- LIPSTICK research report covered by The Trace magazine: “Four Reasons Women Are Such Common Straw Gun Purchasers”
- Attends Washington, DC national gun violence prevention summit
- Featured guest speakers at “Survivors of Homicide Victims Awareness Month” in New Bedford, MA

### December 2015
- Record-breaking attendance at LIPSTICK workshop
- New Funding Partners: Association for a Better New York, Ben & Jerry’s Foundation
- Emerson College reports on LIPSTICK: “How Boston Communities Cope with Gun Violence”
- LIPSTICK rolls out new SWAK pledge cards

### January 2016
- LIPSTICK has featured role in American Justice Summit with Attorney General Eric Holder: “Ada Pantoja Tells Her Story”
- LIPSTICK is focus of Huffington Post blog, featured in Pittsburgh news article on gun tracing
- New Allies: San Francisco YMCA, Tina Brown Live Media, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
- Launches 1st database in country of straw purchasing cases involving women
## LIPSTICK PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

### February 2016
- NPR Radio Boston and Metro Newspapers cover LIPSTICK
- Joins Black Lives Matter event in Boston
- Issues public statement in response to President’s executive actions
- Presents to Boston Ten Point Coalition
- Presents to Rosie’s Place Homeless Shelter
- New Ally: Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson

### March 2016
- Wins competitive grant to appear at White House sponsored conference: “Advancing Justice for Women & Girls of Color”
- Holds first public meeting in Harlem featuring “His Crime Your Time;” everyone signs a pledge
- The Trace covers LIPSTICK in article on Kansas City shooting
- Recruits teen leaders at Burke High School Resource Fair
- Former trafficker and LIPSTICK spokeswoman has public housing restored due to her work with LIPSTICK
- New Partners: Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Wake Forrest University and Street Corner Resources New York
**LIPSTICK PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS**

**April 2016**

- LIPSTICK is featured onstage at New York’s Lincoln Center and is acknowledged by Meryl Streep at the International Women In The World Conference
- New York Times writes about LIPSTICK
- Leads workshop at Wake Forest University: “Know Her Truths: Advancing Justice for Women and Girls of Color”
- Attends Young Philanthropists Conference with board member Boston City Councilor-at-Large Ayanna Pressley
- Quoted in Boston University article on Mayor Walsh and gun trafficking

**May 2016**

- LIPSTICK bridges urban-suburban divides at educational event in Sudbury, MA
- Holds successful presentation/fundraiser with White Plains Unitarian Universalist Church
- New Allies: Former Philadelphia DA Lynne Abraham and Boston Resiliency Chief Atyia Martin
- Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation renews grant
- LIPSTICK supporters march in Louis D. Brown Mother’s Day Walk for Peace
## LIPSTICK PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

### June 2016

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<tr>
<td>Leads roundtable with San Mateo, CA District Attorney, Sheriff’s Dept. and County Board of Supervisors</td>
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<td>Participates in White House sponsored conference: United State of Women</td>
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<td>Presents to Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms at headquarters in Washington, DC</td>
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<td>Joins with Moms Demand Action for Boston event</td>
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<td>New Ally: In the Public Eye</td>
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<td>Equity Residential renews grant</td>
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### July 2016

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<td>Successful donor drive with Universalist Unitarian Congregation in Westchester, NY</td>
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<td>Featured on panel at PICO Network event in Oakland, CA</td>
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<td>Joins working group at Boston Medical Center and Boston Children’s Hospital</td>
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<td>Radio Boston features LIPSTICK in segment “Activists Who Aren’t Waiting for Politicians to Stop Gun Violence”</td>
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# LIPSTICK PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

## August 2016

- Workshop reunites past and present LIPSTICK Ladies in 5 states
- LIPSTICK leaders receive “Champions of Change” Award
- Featured on panel at state lawmakers annual policy summit
- Holds 1st in series of beauty salon “pop up” events
- Appears on Boston Neighborhood Network
- New Partner: American State Legislators to Prevent Gun Violence

## September 2016

- Featured speaker at The Concert Across America to End Gun Violence
- Headlines event with League of Women Voters
- Holds 1st multi-state meeting with LIPSTICK Ladies
- Crowdfunding site goes live
- LIPSTICK directors appear on Boston Neighborhood Network
- New Partner: Harvard Kennedy School of Government
LIPSTICK PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

### November 2016

- ABC news in Fort Myers, FL covers LIPSTICK
- People Magazine runs 2nd story on LIPSTICK
- Presents to Amnesty International
- Makes presentation to students at Roxbury Community College
- Presents for 1st time to incarcerated men at MCI Norfolk prison
- Launches new program for incarcerated women
- Boston Mayor issues proclamation honoring LIPSTICK

### December 2016

- Announces partnership with Boston Housing Authority
- Boston leader Mrs. Julia Martin donates the Julia Martin House for LIPSTICK’s use
- Wheelock College honors LIPSTICK director Shante Leathers
- LIPSTICK works with Empowerment Christian Church to provide coats and care to the homeless
- CBS Boston covers LIPSTICK
- New Partner: Emerson College
- CBS Cleveland does a story on LIPSTICK