



**Purple
Purse**

ALLSTATE FOUNDATION

Out of the Shadows
Making the Invisible...Visible!

An analysis of Allstate Foundation's Purple Purse Campaign
2016 Arthur W. Page Society Case Study Competition

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Executive Summary

One in four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime—that's more than breast cancer, ovarian cancer and lung cancer combined (PurplePurse, n.d.). Yet, it's a taboo subject. *Purple Purse* is an initiative of the Allstate Foundation to financially empower domestic violence survivors. With an average of nearly 10,000 domestic violence survivors requests for help going unmet because of underfunded local organizations, Allstate Foundation partnered with Zeno Group to bring more national attention to domestic violence that would have a tangible impact on the essential work of local organizations (Renfree, 2015).

Over 160 national and local nonprofits that support domestic violence survivors raised nearly \$3.1 million for the Purple Purse Challenge in just one month (AllstateFoundation, 2015). Given that domestic violence and financial abuse is such a taboo subject, this case study will answer the following questions: How did the organization communicate this sensitive issue with survivors and the public? And, how did the campaign creatively and strategically generate support from other organizations? Overall, this case study examines how the *Allstate Foundation Purple Purse* leveraged their relationships and boldly inserted itself into this conversation by creating alliances with national and local organizations to break down barriers and bring domestic violence and financial abuse out of the shadows.

Overview: Domestic Violence & Purple Purse Challenge

Domestic violence is a national crisis. The United States Department of Justice defines *domestic violence* as “a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person” (US Dept. Justice, n.d.). Research has shown that a lack of financial knowledge and resources are the main reasons why victims of domestic violence return to or remain in relations with their abusers.



2 million injuries and 1,300 deaths
are caused each year as a result of domestic violence.¹²¹

According to the article, *Let's Change the Conversation From Blaming Victims to Empowering Survivors* from the Huffington Post, “A lot has changed since YWCA hosted the first Week Without Violence in 1995. Domestic violence may still be considered a dark, ugly issue, but today, it's no longer a private issue to be kept locked inside the home, behind closed doors.” The Allstate Foundation Purple Purse is making the invisible visible by bringing financial abuse out of the shadows and sharing the power of financial empowerment to break the cycle of domestic violence (AllstateFoundation, n.d.). To encourage public donations, the Allstate Foundation strategically created a campaign timeline in which their organization would invest \$500,000 in challenge grants and contests throughout the month of the Purple Purse Challenge. This created an opportunity for local programs to receive funding from the Allstate Foundation that will benefit survivors.

The Purple Purse Challenge is a unique and empowering fundraiser that starts the conversation regarding domestic violence and financial abuse among the public and survivors, reassuring them that they are not alone and Allstate is dedicated to helping them break free. According to a [study](#) by the Center for Violence Against Women and Children at Rutgers University, abused women who participated in the [financial education curriculum](#) developed by the Allstate Foundation and the National Network to End Domestic Violence were twice as likely to take the financial steps necessary to rebuild their lives.

Allstate Foundation

Established in 1952, the Allstate Foundation is an independent, charitable organization made possible by subsidiaries of the Allstate Corporation (NYSE: ALL). Through partnerships with nonprofit organizations across the country, the Allstate Foundation brings the relationships, reputation and resources of Allstate to support innovative and lasting solutions that enhance people's well-being and prosperity. With a focus on building financial independence for domestic violence survivors, empowering youth and celebrating the charitable community involvement of



Allstate agency owners and employees, the Allstate Foundation works to bring out the good in people's lives. For more information, visit www.AllstateFoundation.org (MarketWatch, 2015).

Allstate Foundation Purple Purse

The Allstate Foundation has been addressing issues of domestic violence and financial abuse since 2005. Allstate Foundation and their partnership with the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), provides survivors with access to the financial education and tools they need to stay safe and stand on their own. With Allstate's expertise in financial services, they give domestic violence survivors the financial skills and support to break free and build a brighter future (AllstateFoundation, n.d.).

In 2011, the Allstate Foundation Purple Purse was founded to make it more "fashionable" to talk about domestic violence and the financial control, sabotage and exploitation that trap women in abusive relationships. Purple Purse is a public awareness and fundraising campaign designed to ignite awareness around domestic violence and financial abuse. The Allstate Foundation commissioned a national study "*Silent Weapon: Domestic Violence and Financial Abuse*" looking into how Americans think and talk about financial abuse that affects victims in 98 percent of domestic violence cases. They found that within the scarcely talked about subject of domestic violence, too many millennials didn't consider a lack of access to funds to be a form of domestic violence. To change the way younger generations thought about this devastating aspect of domestic violence, Allstate Foundation and Zeno Group (global, integrated communications agency) used a bold fashion icon to make a big social statement on a national stage, while at the same time driving the issue home on a local level where real help was available (Renfree, 2015).

In 2014, Allstate Foundation Purple Purse became a fashion statement with an amped-up message of hope and action (Allstate, 2015). Kerry Washington, actress and activist, became the program ambassador and spokesperson by lending her voice and passion for women's rights; ultimately bringing domestic and financial abuse out of the shadows. In addition, Washington designed a limited edition purple purse to represent the center of a woman's financial freedom and inspire women to reclaim their financial independence. The purse is sold exclusively at Saks Fifth Avenue and twenty-five percent of the proceeds benefits Allstate Foundation Purple Purse. A Purple Purse charm was also developed and distributed to make a woman's everyday purse a symbol of financial freedom and a beacon of hope for victims of financial abuse.

While Washington's mass appeal allowed Purple Purse to enter the pop culture lexicon, the organization turned to local community partners to create a groundswell of grassroots support (Renfree, 2015). The foundation created the Purple Purse Challenge, in 2014, and hosted it on CrowdRise (an online fundraising platform) in an effort to raise money to help fund the domestic violence services of nonprofit organizations across the country. The campaign also garnered more than 23,000 placements and reached over 1 billion people through media and social impressions. Because of the ingenuity and success of the campaign, PR News awarded the partners with a 2015 Nonprofit PR Award (Renfree, 2015) and the organization won the PRSA 2015 Silver Anvil Award in the Community Relations category. More recently, in just one month (October 2015) more than 160 community partners joined together to raise nearly \$3.1 million, breaking the record of the 2014 Purple Purse Challenge.



Kerry Washington's 2015 Purple Purse PSA: <http://bit.ly/1Qvzvvg>

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Allstate Foundation's *Moving Ahead Through Financial Management* curriculum, helps survivors learn important strategies to help regain control of their finances and leave abuse behind. This corporate social responsibility program is directly correlated with the Allstate Foundation's *Moving Ahead Grant Programs* which help nonprofits provide critical services to help survivors build financial independence by addressing their unique financial needs. The grant program provides funds to state domestic violence coalitions to provide innovative financial empowerment programs for survivors including matched savings programs, job readiness and job training, and micro-enterprise programs (PurplePurse, 2015). Also, the Allstate Foundation's *Career Empowerment* curriculum was designed to help survivors feel safe and confident throughout the process of getting a job, elevate their thinking from "just getting a job" to "starting a career" and to do so in a way that fully acknowledges the particular challenges that survivors often face (ClicktoEmpower, n.d.).

Purple Purse Challenge

The Allstate Foundation Purple Purse Challenge is a fundraising competition for eligible organizations to participate on their own behalf to (1) gain awareness and exposure; (2) raise funds for their cause; and (3) win cash "Challenge Grants." 20 Challenge Grants are available to the top twenty charities to raise the most dollars during the challenge period (CrowdRise, 2015). Though the 2015 campaign, more than 160 community partners joined together to raise a record breaking amount of nearly \$3.1 million with contributions from the public.

Campaign Timeline

October 1: Allstate will match the first \$250 raised today!

October 1-6: Raise at least \$500 online and get entered for a chance to win \$2,500 (10 winners).

October 6-13: I: The three charities to raise the greatest amounts of money win \$10,000 each. 3 winners. II: Get at least ten donations and get entered for a chance to win \$10,000 (3 winners).

October 13-20: Top 50 Charities that raise the most this week get \$1,000.

October 20-27: Get at least ten donations for one entry to win \$10,000 and every additional ten donations gets you an additional entry to win (5 winners).



**The
PURPLE PURSE
CHALLENGE**

Domestic Violence affects 1 in 4 women in her lifetime

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

That's more than breast, ovarian and lung cancer combined

lack of financial resources

#1 reason survivors stay

Get Help

One of the most powerful ways to keep a victim trapped

When we talk about Domestic Violence, most people only think of physical abuse, yet Financial Abuse happens in 98% of all cases of Domestic Violence.

The 2015
Purple Purse Challenge
HAS ENDED

NEARLY
**\$3.1MM
RAISED**

SEE THE WINNERS

Campaign Prizes

1st Place gets \$100,000 (Grand Prize)

2nd Place gets \$75,000

3rd Place gets \$50,000

4th Place gets \$25,000

5th Place gets \$20,000

For a complete overview of the challenge rules, please visit:

<https://www.crowdrise.com/purplepursechallenge>.

Campaign Products



Purple Purse: retail, \$350 at Saks Fifth Avenue
purplepurse.com



Purple Purse Charm: retail, \$10 at

Campaign Results



Purple Purse Challenge
Allstate Foundation

NEARLY
\$3.1 MILLION
RAISED FOR SO MANY AMAZING CHARITIES

Congratulations to **WINGS PROGRAM** for winning
the Allstate Foundation Purple Purse Challenge

\$3,070,095
MONEY RAISED

DONATE
TO A CHARITY

DONATE
TO ALL CHARITIES



Purple Purse
Allstate Foundation

#PurplePurse Top Ten Winners

WINGS Program, Inc. • YWCA Evanston/North Shore
• YWCA of Northwest Georgia • YWCA Metropolitan
Chicago • Florida Coalition Against Domestic
Violence • YWCA Greenwich
• Samaritan House • Jenesse Center
• House of Ruth • YWCA Yakima

Public Engagement

Interactive Experience

For perspective, in addition to the challenge, Allstate Foundation Purple Purse engaged the public with an online interactive experience. The organization created “Why Don’t You Just Leave?” where viewers are able to experience what it’s like to go from victim to survivor and see how domestic abuse escalates by visiting purplepurse.com (Afrobella, 2015). The beginning of the visual starts by virtually putting the viewer into a survivor’s situation. Immediately the viewer hears a glass shatter as she washes dishes and the screen asks: You’re a 33-year-old, stay-at-home mom, married since the summer after college. In the past few years, financial troubles have pushed your husband’s temper from jealous to controlling to physical. You no longer feel safe in your own home. Do you want to stay or leave?

The viewer is then navigated through steps she would take if she decides to leave, and a few issues she would encounter, such as not having the financial means to get out of the relationship. Do you call a friend? Turn to a family member? Run off to a hotel?



The video proves that although it’s easy for bystanders to ask, “Why don’t you leave?” many women may not have the financial means to do so. And, that is where the Purple Purse initiative comes in (Nichole, 2015).

PURSEonal Voices

Also, in an effort to reach more of the millennial generation, the Allstate Foundation Purple Purse in 2015 brought the fight against domestic violence and financial abuse to a larger audience with the introduction of PURSEonal Voices. This team of highly influential bloggers and social movers worked closely with Allstate Foundation Purple Purse to share thoughts and experiences through their own unique perspectives and expertise with their followers (PurplePurse, 2015). The five influential PURSEonal Voices included:

- Pili Montilla: Entertainment Reporter and Producer
- Patrice Grell Yursik: Beauty Blogger at Afrobella
- Stefanie Mullen & Theresa Hissong Seid: Mom Bloggers at Momsmack
- Ana Flores: Lifestyle Blogger at MadreVida
- Meaghan Mahoney: Fashion Blogger at PurseBlog

Social Impact

The Allstate Foundation launched their social media campaign in September 2015 using hashtags #PurplePurse and #EndAbuse in order to evoke the public attention of the upcoming Purple Purse Challenge and share with everyone how they could get involved to combat domestic violence.

Earned Media

Kerry Washington announced during the highly publicized 2015 Mercedes-Benz New York Fashion Week that she would continue to share her voice as the ambassador of Purple Purse Challenge for the second year in a row and debuted the new purple purse that she designed that's sold exclusively at Saks Fifth Avenue. She explained during a media interview that the purple purse is a metaphor, purple is the color of domestic violence. "Abuse is hard to talk about, so we thought a purse is a beautiful object that can get the conversation started," Washington says. "It is a symbol of a woman's financial domain" (People, 2015).



Various traditional media outlets covered Kerry Washington and her involvement with Allstate Foundation Purple Purse. [CBS News](#) mentioned the Purple Purse during a feature interview with Kerry Washington: “Despite landing on countless ‘best dressed’ lists, the fashion aficionado says her outfit choices are less about the competition, and more about feeling great about what she is wearing. Which is why she’s using fashion to bring attention to an important issue.”

Time Magazine reported: “The purple purse bears the color of domestic violence awareness and will be sold at Saks. She (Kerry Washington) designed it to support a campaign against financial abuse.”

ABC27 reported the Purple Purse challenge during an interview with Karen Nordsick, a domestic violence survivor:



Fox28 reported this challenge as a social issue. From informative clippings, a change in the public attitudes about domestic violence from being taboo to the public showing a concern to take action.

The YWCA of North Central Indiana, one of the non-profit organizations who participated in the purple purse challenge was covered by *Fox News* saying, “The shelter nearly shut down last

year, but YWCA is fighting to keep it up and running. The group says our community can't afford to lose a women's shelter, and it's stories like Angie's (a survivor) that remind them why."

Social Media

Twitter

On September 30, 2015, the Allstate Foundation officially launched the 2015 Purple Purse challenge via social media using the hashtags #PurplePurse and #EndAbuse for everyone to use throughout the month of October, domestic violence awareness month. In Appendix A, it shows that on October 1st approximately 200 posts regarding Purple Purse Challenge were shared. Also, in Appendix A during domestic violence awareness month there were 1,455 posts on Twitter and 169 on Facebook, while News and Blog posts were 114 and 94 respectively.

In Appendix B, there were a total of 3,740 retweets and 1,554 mentioning Purple Purse during October 2015. On October 17, a tweet specifically regarding the Allstate Foundation interactive experience garnered 152 retweets and 212 likes.



In Appendix C, the graphic shows that the campaign garnered a total of 13 million potential impressions in October 2015, with a peak of about 3.1 million potential impressions on October 27. Allstate Foundation Purple Purse and its publics were active social media during the campaign, especially on Twitter. The majority of the Purple Purse Campaign followers posted positive comments about the initiative. Many survivors and their supporters made a big impact on Twitter evoking a greater concern about domestic violence and financial abuse as well as the role of the Purple Purse campaign. See below:





Periscope

Allstate Foundation also utilized ephemeral marketing via Periscope to reach a larger audience. The Purple Purse hosted one Periscope session and garnered approximately 12, 276 followers.





Allstate Foundation Purple Purse

@PurplePurse

♥ 12,276

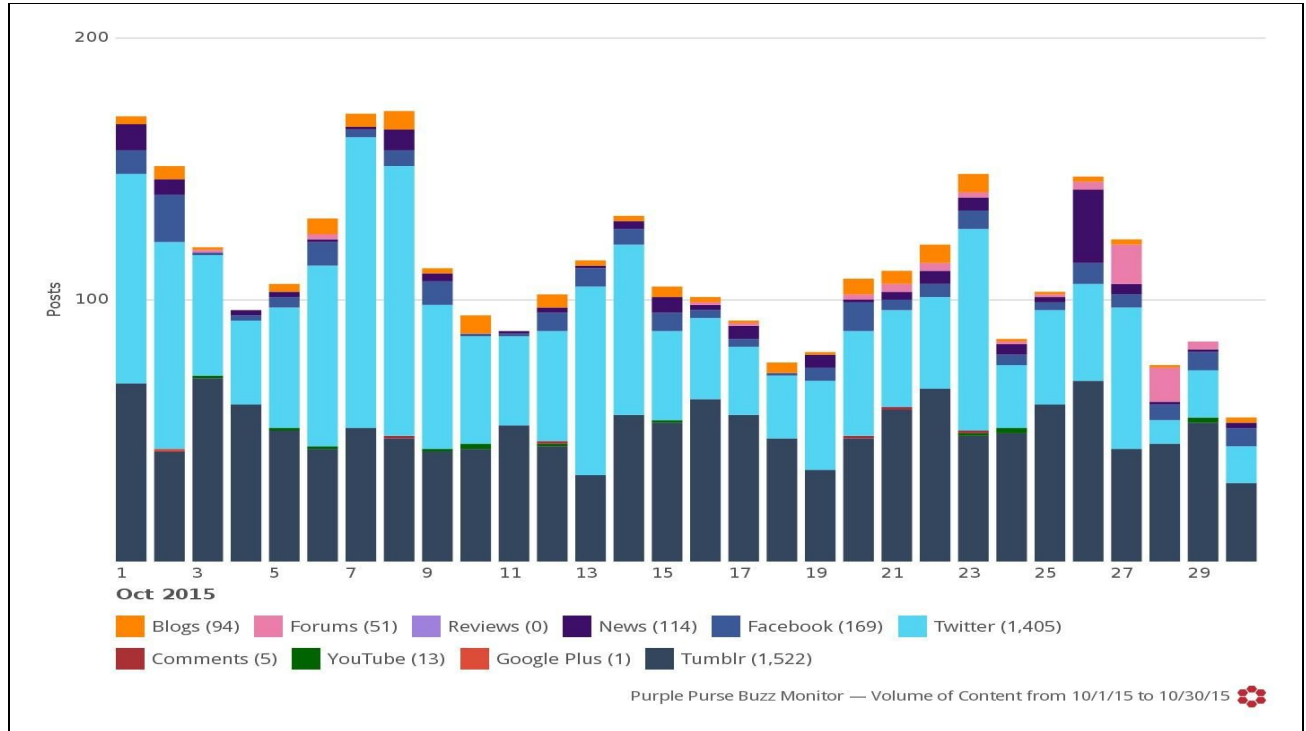
Purple Purse is an initiative of The Allstate Foundation to financially empower domestic violence survivors.



What's Next?

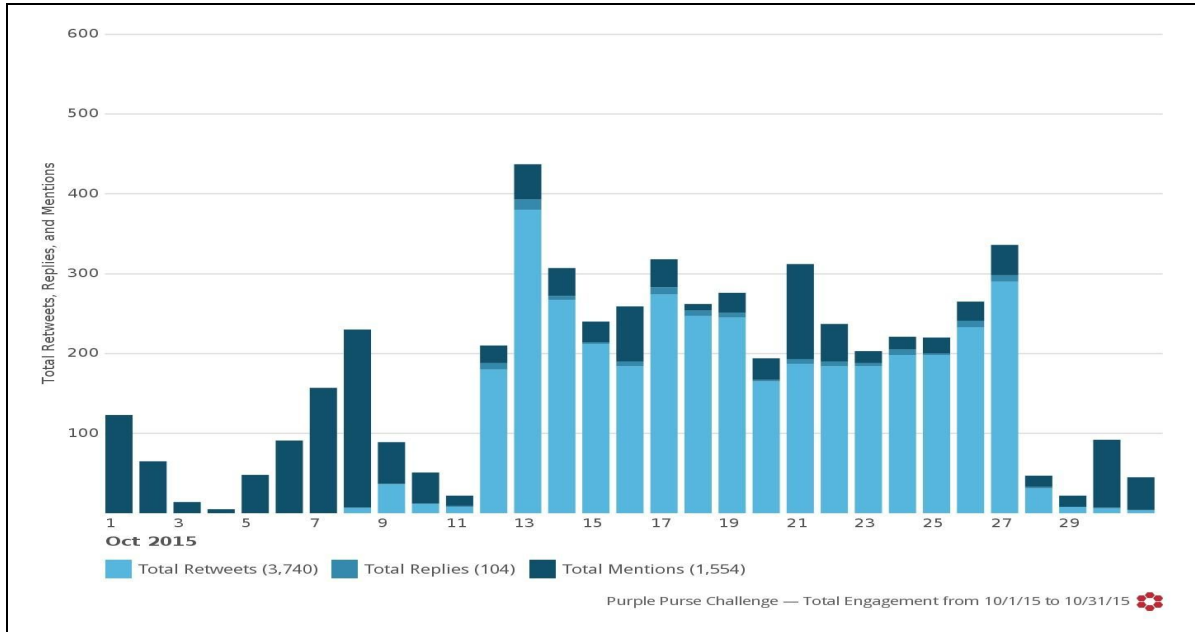
The 2015 Purple Purse campaign was a success and the Purple Purse Challenge exceeded Allstate's Foundation expectations by raising a record-breaking \$3 million. The Allstate Foundation is commended for its work in this area and for bringing a taboo subject out of the shadows. The Purple Purse Challenge explores a new way via leveraging relationships and social media to make fundraising easy to accept and understand. The Allstate Foundation Purple Purse continues to make the invisible, visible as the organization continues to support and promote financial stability of survivors worldwide.

Appendix A: Volume of Content



Source: <http://bit.ly/1LvYMAv>

Appendix B: Engagement (Twitter)



Source: <http://bit.ly/1Hizj2B>

Appendix C: Impressions



Source: <http://bit.ly/1N9AKkt>

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