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The staff of the Family Violence and Rape Crisis Services (FVRC) spends a great deal of its time working in anonymity to help those in need in Chatham County.

But on December 10, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), one of the world's largest pharmaceutical and healthcare companies awarded the FVRC with \$40,000 for their outstanding work in healthcare.

The honor was received by the FVRC, along with eight other non-profit organizations at GSK's first annual IMPACT Awards.

"It feels incredible to get recognition, not only because it is a necessity to do our job effectively under the radar, but because they are recognizing domestic violence as a health issue," FVRC Co-Executive Director Kathy Hodges said.

"Domestic violence is at the root of a lot of problems with women and children and is often unreported. So for a company like GSK to recognize is amazing," Hodges said.

Founded in 1982, the FVRC works to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault using a three-pronged approach: intervention, advocacy and prevention.

Last year, the FVRC served 582 victims of domestic violence and 155 victims of sexual assault.

The FVRC originally applied for the award earlier this year in May. From the initially applications, only 20 organizations were chosen for site visitations from the judges. The FVRC was also asked to give references from community partners for the contest.

In August, the FVRC had learned that they had been chosen as one of the winners of the IMPACT Awards, a secret Hodges said was hard to keep until December.

Hodges also said that the money could not have come at a better time.

"We had a very difficult financial year. We had some funding to get cut. Some of our donors made cutbacks and could not give as much this year," Hodges said.

Because the money has been awarded and not granted to the FVRC, they can now use the money for whatever they choose.

The use for the money has not officially been determined, but Hodges is still grateful for recognition.

"There were so many great groups who also won. And to be in the same category as them is gratifying," Hodges said.
