

PRESS RELEASE

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THE DIRECTOR OF THE STATE'S LARGEST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORGANIZATION WILL RETIRE AFTER NEARLY 40 YEARS OF HELPING VICTIMS OF ABUSE

HARTFORD -- Cecile Enrico, the longtime executive director and founding member of Interval House announced her retirement this week, ending her nearly 40 years of service in the cause against domestic violence.

Enrico, herself a survivor of domestic violence, helped create the nonprofit organization in 1977. She worked her way up from a volunteer, victim advocate and eventually leading the agency since 1988 as its director. It's estimated during her time at Interval House, the organization has helped more than 225,000 people -- mostly women and children -- with domestic violence and relationship abuse problems.

"I don't think there's anybody in the cause against domestic violence in Connecticut that has had more of a positive impact," said Gloria Gery, former board president and longtime Interval House supporter. "She's been there right from the beginning and her legacy is one of great achievements. Not only for herself as a survivor, but also all those others she's helped over the decades."

Interval House's board of directors has hired an interim director, Catherine Bradshaw. Bradshaw comes to Interval House through Third Sector New England and has extensive experience in working with nonprofits transitioning to new leadership. She will oversee the day-to-day operations of Interval House and work to prepare for the incoming new executive director.

Thanks to funding from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the board of directors is contracting with another Third Sector New England consultant to guide the search and transition process of finding a new director.

"We can't thank Cecile Enrico enough for all she has given Interval House," said Cheryl Pytel, board president. "Now the search begins to find the next director to take Interval House into the future, like Cecile did all those years ago."

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Finding a replacement will be no small task and could take as much as six months, Pytel said.

News of Enrico's retirement was greeted with heartfelt words of accolades and appreciation from ardent supporters. US Senator Richard Blumenthal, co-founder of Men Make a Difference, Men Against Domestic Violence™ and a longtime Interval House supporter, said Enrico's impact will be long-lasting.

"Having worked with Cecile, I have seen firsthand her extraordinary dedication to domestic violence survivors, providing vital shelter and services and leading critical programs to prevent abuse," Senator Blumenthal said. "She has truly made a difference."

Enrico's achievements in the cause against domestic violence over the years have been numerous. In 1985, she was honored by President Ronald Reagan and received an award at the White House for her service to victims of abuse.

Other awards include: The 1998 National Council of Jewish Women Award; the 2005 Hartford Courant Women of Character Award; and the 2007 National Organization of Women (NOW) Award.

Interval House is planning a retirement celebration in the fall and will establish "The Cecile Enrico Fund" to honor and celebrate the work of one of Interval House's founders.

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