

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 24, 2016

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ANNUAL FUNDRAISER FOR CT'S LARGEST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGENCY MORE IMPORTANT THIS YEAR THAN EVER

HARTFORD – On April 2, Interval House's *Step Up and Step Out 2016 Gala* will bring more than 220 people to the Society Room to support the nonprofit that has helped victims of domestic violence for nearly 40 years.

After more than \$250,000 in recent state budget cuts to all of Connecticut's domestic violence agencies, the annual gathering is more vital than ever before, said Cecile Enrico, Interval House's longtime executive director.

"The cuts we received last week affect our programs directly," Enrico said. "We are looking at cost-savings where we can, but that money is directly connected and has been earmarked for programs that allow us to save and change lives on a daily basis. It's a real crisis for us."

The annual black-tie event attracts hundreds of area supporters, local television celebrities and dozens of notable public officials like: US Sen. Richard Blumenthal, State Attorney General George Jepsen and State Commissioner of Public Safety Dora B. Schriro.

Interval House's gala is the organization's largest fundraiser, and allows past clients, staff and volunteers to thank supporters, said Rosemary Padin, Interval House's Development Director and gala co-chairwoman. But the cuts have forced her to ask supporters to give more this year.

"The need is imminent, we know we now have a shortfall of nearly \$20,000 from today until the end of June," Padin said. "On gala night, more than ever, we are asking the community we serve to Step Up and I know they won't disappoint us."

There are plenty of opportunities for gala guests to contribute to this unexpected need via the gala auctions and appeal. But for those unable to attend the gala, and wish to make a monetary donation, or perhaps hold a community fundraiser to benefit Interval House, can contact Padin at 860-246-9149, Ext. 337.

In 2015, Interval House provided services to more than 6,000 people (mostly women and children) that found themselves in some type of domestic violence or abusive relationship.

Since 1977, Interval House has helped more than 210,000 victims of domestic violence. The agency operates a 24-hour crisis hotline, 20-bed emergency shelter and provides counseling for victims and advocates in both the criminal and civil court system. Anyone looking for help in a domestic violence situation should call the hotline at: 860-527-0550. More information can be found on Interval House's website: intervalhousect.org.

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