FORMER INTERVAL HOUSE CLIENT CLIMBS EVEREST...AGAIN!

Lhakpa Sherpa, a Hartford resident and former Interval House client, climbed Mount Everest in May, her seventh ascent of the world's tallest mountain.

“Lhakpa is a remarkable woman in so many ways,” said Jen Lopez, director of Interval House’s advocacy program.

“She was not only able to get help and come through the domestic violence in her life, but then she went on to complete this lifelong quest.”

In 2000, Sherpa became the first Nepalese woman to ever successfully climb and descend Everest, a grand achievement unto itself. Now, however, she’s climbed the 29,029-foot tall mountain seven times -- more than any other woman in history.

Sherpa was born and raised in the Himalayas. It was there she met her ex-husband, an American who moved her to Hartford. After several years of marriage and abuse, Lhakpa turned to Interval House for help.

“Before she even came to the United States she was famous for climbing Everest,” Lopez said. “Now, she’s really famous. She’s truly inspirational.”

Last year, Sherpa tried to climb Everest for the record-breaking 7th time, but the earthquakes that devastated Nepal and parts of the Himalayas forced her to turn back. This year she made it to the top and even raised an Interval House flag at the summit.

Sherpa’s life story has recently been recounted in newspapers and magazines in the last few weeks. Sherpa said she’s likely going try and climb Everest again, maybe next year.

INTERVAL HOUSE’S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RETIRES

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 long-time 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.”

(Continued page 2.)
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.”

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.

**CATLIN XL EMPLOYEES RETURN AGAIN FOR DAY OF CARING AT INTERVAL HOUSE!**

Thank you to XL Catlin and the employees who recently participated in the Annual Day of Caring at Interval House. The 20-plus employees helped clean and make repairs around the shelter. It was XL Catlin’s 7th Day of Caring. Thanks to all who helped.
In the late 1960s, Sharon Christman thought she was all alone. Not because she moved to New Mexico, far from her east-coast roots. It was because her husband was physically abusing her once they moved out west.

Christman said she lived in fear everyday and prayed for help, even though there was little or no help at the time. “When I was a victim there were no shelters and police did not want to get involved,” Christman said.

“They were not trained on how to handle these situations, to protect the victim. Thankfully things are changing.”

The last time, she said, her ex-husband hit her, her infant son was present, and it was at that moment she knew she was ready to get out. “He started to cry. He was about 9 months old and that last hit, in my mind, was going to be the last time he was ever going to hit me. I was determined to not bring my child up thinking this was ok.”

Today, Christman is not only a survivor of domestic abuse, she’s helping other victims -- and the community -- as a member of Interval House’s speakers bureau, a group of trained volunteers that help with community education and outreach. But Christman has been helping others for years. After leaving her husband and divorcing, she worked for a domestic violence program in North Carolina similar to Interval House.

“I did crisis counseling with victims, responded to hotline calls, and I did some public speaking, and media services.” So when Christman applied to be a volunteer at Interval House, Donna Andrini, the agency’s volunteer coordinator, thought she’s be perfect for the speakers bureau. “She had all this experience and when I interviewed her she was so enthusiastic about outreach and education,” Andrini said. “It was a perfect match.”

As a member of the speakers bureau, Christman has already attended several outreach events for Interval House.

In April, she attended the Partnership Day and services at the Asylum Hill Congregational Church. Forty years ago the Hartford church was instrumental in helping create what today is now Interval House.

“I can’t tell you how many times people who knew me asked why I didn’t just leave,” she said. “They didn’t understand the situation, the complex dynamics going on in an abusive relationship. That is one of my missions now, to educate those who do not understand and make them aware that this can happen to anyone.”

-If you are interested in volunteering for Interval House call: 860-246-9149, Ext. 350.
Thank you...

Cynthia Barlow and The Barlow Family for supporting Interval House East at Christmastime with their very successful annual toy drive for families in the Manchester community.

To The Community Renewal Team (CRT) for organizing the 7th Annual Tee Off For Women golf Tournament. The women’s golf tournament raises money and awareness for Interval House’s and CRT’s Domestic violence programs and services.

And thank you to our sponsors, donors and guests that made our 2016 Step Up and Step Out Gala a great success. Thanks to you, we’re able to continue our mission of Saving Lives, Giving Voice and Changing the Future of people trapped by domestic violence and abuse.

Leave a Legacy by making a bequest. Call 860-246-9146, Ext. 338.

INTERVAL HOUSE STAFF ACHIEVEMENT!

Congratulations to Interval House’s Terry Perez. She completed the Hartford Family Civics Initiative, Family Development Credential & Training Program, an 80-hour course. The strengths-based professional development model is used across Connecticut and in 18 states nationally.

Events!


TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS, WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE: