

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **HIGH-PROFILE MEN PLAY HOOPS FOR CAUSE AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE**

HARTFORD – State officials, television personalities and Connecticut business leaders will play basketball once again at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) Saturday to support Interval House and spread awareness in the cause against domestic violence.

The 8<sup>TH</sup> Annual Men Make a Difference, Men Against Domestic Violence™ Celebrity Half-Time Basketball Game takes place during the 3:30pm CCSU Men's Basketball game in Detrick Gymnasium in New Britain. CCSU is playing against Robert Morris University.

This year, joining **US Sen. Richard Blumenthal**, co-founder of Interval House's men's initiative, will be several local TV personalities including **Fox 61's Joe Furey** and **Rich Coppola** and **NBC Connecticut's Brad Drazen**, and many others. Senator Blumenthal will be the game's referee.

Interval House has collaborated with CCSU on the awareness event since 2009, the year former coach Howie Dickenman became a member of the men's group. Dickenman, who retired last year after more than 20 years as CCSU's head basketball coach, will return to Detrick Gymnasium for the celebrity game and be court-side to cheer the men on.

This year, Mary-Jane Foster, Interval House's new President and CEO, and Barbara Damon, Executive Director of New Britain's Prudence Crandall Center, will serve as the honorary coaches of the two celebrity teams.

Foster said February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month and using sports to educate students about the cause is just one way to help break the insidious cycle of violence and abuse.

"Domestic violence is a serious issue and problem plaguing our society as a whole," Foster said. "Through events like this, we hope to reach young men and boys and teach them that there's never an excuse for abuse and that most men are not abusers and can be part of a solution."

Since 1977, Interval House has served victims of domestic violence – mostly women and children who are or were psychologically or physically abused by their partner. The nonprofit organization is dedicated to providing services to prevent and break the cycle of family and intimate partner violence. Since it was founded, Interval House has provided services to more than 225,000 people.

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