



PRESS RELEASE
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**ANNUAL GALA RAISES MUCH-NEEDED FUNDS FOR
INTERVAL HOUSE AND CAUSE AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

HARTFORD – Interval House’s *Step Up & Step Out Gala* brought out hundreds of supporters Saturday in the cause against domestic violence, and raised thousands of dollars to help the nonprofit during a difficult financial year.

“We can’t thank everyone who attended our gala enough,” said Mary-Jane Foster, Interval House’s President and CEO. “This year has been really hard for our clients and our agency, and our supporters and sponsors really stepped up for us tonight!”

Foster said money raised Saturday will help offset several unexpected, costly incidents in the last year, such as the storm-drain flooding of the safe house. That event destroyed offices and a play area for children. It also forced the agency to temporarily relocate safe house residents and staff for several months.

More than 250 people attended the annual black-tie event at the Society Room in Hartford, including a who’s who of state television personalities and elected officials.

Former NBC Connecticut news anchor Brad Drazen served as head auctioneer. He was assisted by WTNH-TV News 8 Meteorologist Joe Furey, and Fox61 Sports Director Rich Coppola. Several elected officials, such as Senator Richard Blumenthal and US Rep. Joe Courtney, and State Rep. Dr. William Petit attended. Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin and the city’s First Lady, Professor Sara Bronin, served as honorary co-chairs and guests of honor.

But the large and at times boisterous ballroom fell silent when guest speaker, Barbara Nadal-Cristofaro, a survivor of domestic violence and former Interval House client, told her story of living with an abusive spouse for years and being homeless. Today, she has a master’s degree and is a social worker. She’s also a new member of the Interval House’s Board of Directors.

“The staff at Interval House offered us kindness and safety,” Ms. Nadal-Cristofaro said. “They protected my family and gave me hope.”

Since 1977, Interval House has provided services to nearly 250,000 people in its 24 city/town service area. As the State’s largest domestic violence agency, it operates a 25-bed safe house, support groups, safety planning counseling, advocacy programs in the courts, a children’s program and community education.

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