WCASA VOC Awards Highlight Outstanding Work To End Sexual Violence

Madison — On Tuesday, May 3rd, the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA) will present the 2011 Voices Of Courage Awards at the State Capitol. Since 1999, WCASA has presented these awards to coincide with Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). They recognize and honor the outstanding work of Wisconsin individuals and organizations that have exceeded the very highest standards in their dedicated efforts to end sexual violence and support survivors. This year’s ceremony will commence at 11:00 a.m. in the Assembly Parlor room.

Sexual violence is pervasive in Wisconsin as well as across the nation. The numbers are quite sobering; every hour and a half, a sexual assault is reported to Wisconsin police. Over this past year an estimated 15,000 Wisconsin women, men, and children became victims of sexual violence. One national survey found that one in three women, and one in six men, are sexually violated during the course of their lives.

“This Awards Ceremony is our opportunity to celebrate the courageous efforts of those doing superlative work to end sexual violence,” said Jeanie Kurka Reimer, Executive Director at WCASA. “Through their work and deep commitment to ensure a compassionate response to sexual assault victims in all systems around
the state, victims have a greater opportunity to heal. They are at the forefront of collectively challenging behaviors. WCASA is excited to be part of a movement that has so many dedicated, talented, and caring people around our state who are making it their life legacy to care for those impacted by this horrific crime and to end sexual violence.”

This year the Annual awards are given in nine categories, and the Voices of Courage recipients are:

- **Carolyn Nash**, Director, Pediatric Abuse and Neglect Center in the Health and Human Services category
- Pastor **Philip Allen Jr.** of the Dayster Christian Fellowship in the Community Support category
- The **Fox Valley Voices of Men** in the Prevention Education category
- **Wade Newell**, Chippewa County Assistant District Attorney in the Criminal Justice category
- **Joe Parisi**, Dane County Executive, and **Sara Finger**, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Alliance for Women’s Health, in the Public Policy category
- **Sandy DeWalt**, Volunteer Advocate with Sexual Assault Services of Lutheran Social Services, in the Victim/Survivor Advocacy category
- **Maija Cruz** of Milwaukee in the Courage category
- **Susan Lockwood**, Director of the Sexual Assault Center and Child Advocacy Center of Family Services, and **Linda Schroeder**, with Manitowoc County Human Services – Child Protection, in the Lifetime Achievement category

In addition, **Gina Barton** of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, will receive the first Reveille Award for journalism, and **Sara Lewis**, Milwaukee Assistant District Attorney, will receive one of the Visionary Voice Awards bestowed by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), based in Pennsylvania, and given by WCASA on their behalf.

WCASA invites advocates, allies, supporters, and members from the community at large to join them on May 3rd to celebrate the work of these recipients.

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