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Mayor

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**Health Department** Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

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## **QUARTERLY REPORTS TO PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS OF 2007 JULY 1, 2007- DECEMBER 31, 2007**

The purpose of the Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault is to increase the safety for victims of domestic violence and their children and for the victims of sexual assault, and to hold abusers accountable for their violent behavior. As a means to support this purpose, the Commission continues to respond to community members on several fronts including responding to over 100 calls for resources and referrals from community members from July through December of 2007.

The Commission continues to support educational outreach and activities including the purchase of a Public Service Announcement (PSA) package highlighting October as Domestic Violence Awareness month. The ads were developed and distributed by the Family Violence Prevention Fund and local television time was purchased to showcase the ads.

The Commission continues to support the work of community partners in planning and hosting events that educate and raise awareness on matters of domestic violence and sexual assault. The Commission provided in-kind services in the form of design and printed materials for the Wings of Faith annual Faith Leaders Domestic Violence Awareness Workshop held October 25, 2007. The Commission also provided historical background and community resources to Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church on the Take Back the Night event. The event held in October of 2007 focused on healing from sexual assault and included survivor art borrowed from The Counseling Center of Milwaukee an agency that works with survivors of sexual abuse.

Commission staff continues to be an active member of committees that support the work of local domestic violence and sexual assault agencies. Commission staff has worked on the Brides Walk planning committee which serves as a fund raiser for Latina Resource Center, an agency that works with Latina women who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The Brides Walk was held in conjunction with the Mexican Independence Parade on September 16, 2007. In keeping with the Brides March tradition, dozens of women paraded through the streets of Milwaukee in wedding gowns to honor the memory of Gladys Ricart, the young Dominican woman who was killed on her wedding day, in New Jersey, in 1999.

Commission staff remains an active member of a number of other committees that are promoting prevention of domestic violence and sexual assault including Hmong American's Friendship Association's **Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances Project (DELTA)** and Milwaukee's **Domestic Violence Homicide Review Commission**.

Commission staff also has worked with the planning committee of Walk A Mile In Her Shoes a fund raising event that takes place in May and is sponsored by Jewish Family Services, the Task Force on Family Violence and Sojourner Truth House and ask men to support women by walking a mile in high heel shoes as a means to show solidarity on the prevention of domestic violence.

The Commission continues to support legislation that empowers victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and holds perpetrators accountable such as the proposed legislation that would allow child videotape statements for children in need of protection services (CHIPS) trials. The Commission has also supported in theory the proposed strangulation legislation and will develop a position on any future bills relating to Human Trafficking.

Several key members of the Commission include the Task Force on Family Violence and Independence First. The Task Force on Family Violence is the agency that supports community members in their quest to obtain and maintain orders of protection. The Task Force sees between 4,800 -5,300 clients each year in their restraining order clinic

Independence First a local agency that works with disabled community members has supported the development of a Disabled Abuse Response Team (DART). DART is now a subcommittee of the Commission. DART members represent many area agencies including the Task Force on Family Violence, Social Security Administration and Community Advocates. The purpose of DART is to advocate for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault who are disabled. Independence First secured a grant that supported the development of a house that would service disabled victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault until appropriate housing could be located. The DART House served 18 women in 2007 at a total cost of \$ 55,232. Funds were spent to cover the cost of housing assistance in the form of moving expenses, security deposits, households' goods, food, medications, transportation and furniture.

### **Outside Community Affiliations**

- ◇ **Jewish Family Services**
- ◇ **Latina Resource Center/UMOS**
- ◇ **Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault**
- ◇ **Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence**

- ◇ **LGBT Community Center**
- ◇ **Sexual Assault Treatment Center**
- ◇ **UWM's Women's Resource Center**
- ◇ **Task Force on Family Violence**
- ◇ **Sojourner Truth House**
- ◇ **The Counseling Center of Milwaukee**
- ◇ **The Healing Center**
- ◇ **Asha Family Services**
- ◇ **Hmong American Friendship Association**
- ◇ **The Parenting Network**
- ◇ **Bureau of Child Welfare**
- ◇ **Legal Action on Wisconsin**
- ◇ **Independence First**
- ◇ **The Alma Center**
- ◇ **Daystar, Inc**
- ◇ **Children's Hospital- Child Protection Center**
- ◇ **Various law enforcement and judiciary- Milwaukee Police Department, Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, Circuit Court judges, Department of Corrections- Probation and Parole – Sexual Offenders Registry**
- ◇ **10:34 Wisconsin, Inc**
- ◇ **Department on Aging**
- ◇ **Alzheimer's Association**

