



October 6, 2005

## **The Allstate Foundation Awards \$250,000 to Domestic Violence Organizations; Grants to Promote Economic Empowerment of Domestic Violence Survivors Given Through New SAFE HANDS Domestic Violence Program**

NORTHBROOK, Ill. – (BUSINESS WIRE) – Oct. 6, 2005 – On Sept. 29, 2005, The Allstate Foundation, through its newly formed program, SAFE HANDS: The Allstate Network for Empowering Women, awarded a total of \$250,000 in grants to five state domestic violence coalitions to extend support to survivors of domestic violence. In alliance with the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) Fund and its membership of domestic violence coalitions, SAFE HANDS offers resources related to financial security and economic empowerment to aid survivors of domestic violence.

"Domestic violence is a pervasive and often overlooked social issue that impacts women of all ages, ethnic, racial, religious and socioeconomic groups. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, one-in-four women will experience physical or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner in her lifetime," verifies NNEDV President Lynn Rosenthal. "Through these grants from The Allstate Foundation, domestic violence coalitions will help further support front-line service providers who assist thousands of survivors every day."

"At Allstate, we believe in the importance of protecting a person's financial future. Many domestic violence victims struggle with life's basic needs, such as shelter, transportation and medical care," said Thomas J. Wilson, president and chief operating officer, The Allstate Corporation. "SAFE HANDS is about addressing and having a positive impact on the financial independence of survivors, so that they can prepare for futures of economic autonomy and opportunity."

Five new grants of \$50,000 each were awarded to the following domestic violence coalitions to enhance economic empowerment programs throughout their respective states:

- Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence: Together with two metro-Atlanta-area partners, Project Safe and Partnership Against Domestic Violence, the Coalition operates a transitional housing program that provides long-term housing for 15 victims of domestic violence and their children. The grant will make transportation options available for the

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program residents, enhancing their ability to access the metro-Atlanta job market and better provide for the needs of their families. SAFE HANDS funds will extend reliable transportation to these families by covering costs such as car down payment, monthly car payments, car maintenance, insurance coverage and gas.

- Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence: With the SAFE HANDS funding, survivors of domestic violence impacted by Hurricane Katrina will be provided with emergency grants of up to \$2,000 to help them relocate. Damage from the hurricane closed the doors of four domestic violence shelters and two non-residential domestic violence programs in the New Orleans area alone, and many survivors have been forced to seek shelter elsewhere. The grants will be used for moving costs, rent or utility payments, and down payments and security deposits for housing as the survivors rebuild their lives.
- Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence: The SAFE HANDS grant will be used in partnership with two Michigan domestic violence service providers – AWARE, Inc. and SIREN/Eaton Shelter Inc. – to create a micro-loan program to support the economic needs of domestic violence survivors. The partners will create a pilot program to provide 20 survivors of domestic violence with economic support as they transition out of abusive relationships. The micro-loans granted with the new funding will cover up to \$2,000 per person for various expenses, including: rent, security deposits, professional clothing for new jobs, transportation, relocation, repairing credit, access to educational opportunities, home ownership and utilities.
- New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence: The grant will be divided among three domestic violence programs across the state to provide long-term support to survivors of domestic violence: Circulo de la Hispanidad, Inc., Vera House, Inc., and Victim Resource Center of the Finger Lakes, Inc. The organizations will each use SAFE HANDS funding to provide job training and job-readiness programs, financial management skill building, economic advocacy, and emergency assistance for housing and other expenses. The New York State Coalition will use best practices from these programs to create an economic justice manual that will be distributed to domestic violence advocates throughout the state.
- Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence: The SAFE HANDS grant will be used to help four domestic violence programs in the state advance their economic empowerment work. The Forks Abuse Program will collaborate with the local business community and other service providers to offer classes for domestic violence survivors –in both English and Spanish – on credit, budgeting, housing and how to start-up a small business. The YWCA of South King County will provide support services and incentives to approximately 90 adult victims of domestic violence. By attending weekly economic literacy classes, survivors will learn skills including saving and budgeting, overcoming bad credit, and how to feed their families nutritious meals while on a limited budget. The Family Resource Center will help survivors become self sufficient in purchasing and maintaining their own homes and vehicles. Alternative to Domestic Violence will present tailored economic literacy courses to approximately 300 victims of domestic violence.

The path to a survivor's economic well-being often includes searching for a job, participating in job-readiness programs, continuing educational goals, finding affordable housing and childcare,

repairing credit damaged by an abusive partner, and all the while trying to keep herself and her family safe from harm. With more than 1.35 million American women accessing domestic violence support services each year, SAFE HANDS provides knowledge and skills – particularly those related to financial security and economic independence – to help survivors connect to resources that can lead to safe and secure lives.

For a downloadable high-resolution image please call the media hotline at 847-402-5600 or visit [www.allstate.com/media](http://www.allstate.com/media).

### **About the National Network to End Domestic Violence Fund**

The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) Fund is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt social change organization representing state domestic violence coalitions. The NNEDV Fund is dedicated to creating a social, political, and economic environment in which violence against women no longer exists. The NNEDV Fund accomplishes these goals through capacity building for coalitions, public education, training, and technical assistance to maintain and develop the professional expertise of advocates. The NNEDV Fund strives to strengthen advocates as organizers and activists in the tradition of social change movements. For additional information, visit [www.nnedv.org](http://www.nnedv.org).

### **About The Allstate Foundation**

Founded in 1952, The Allstate Foundation is an independent corporation funded by contributions from subsidiaries of The Allstate Corporation. The Allstate Foundation consistently invests millions of dollars annually in communities and issues crucial to protecting and preparing Americans for a better life. In 2004, The Allstate Foundation donated \$14 million to non-profit organizations, including \$450,000 in scholarships. For additional information, visit [www.allstate.com/foundation](http://www.allstate.com/foundation).

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