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Contacts: 
Alejandra Soto  
Mayor’s Fund to Advance NYC  
OCVDmedia@city.nyc.gov  
Karyn Margolis  
Avon Foundation for Women  
(212) 282-5666  
karyn.margolis@avonfoundation.org  

NYC Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence Awarded $95,000 from the Avon Foundation for Women Speak Out Against Domestic Violence Grant

Avon Foundation for Women Program Awards Grant to Fund a Career Mentoring Program for Domestic Violence Victims in New York City

New York, NY/August xx, 2012 – The Avon Foundation for Women awarded a $95,000 grant to the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City in support of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence to expand domestic violence survivors’ career options through a new Advanced Volunteer Opportunity Network (A.V.O.N.) Mentoring Program with New York professionals.

This 2012 grant brings the total funding to more than $700,000 that the Avon Foundation has awarded the Mayor’s Fund designated for the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence. This grant is part of the Avon Speak Out Against Domestic Violence program, which launched in 2004 to help end the cycle of domestic violence. Through the end of 2011, the Avon Foundation for Women has provided more than $28 million for domestic and gender violence programs in the United States, including support for awareness, education, direct service and prevention.

“We are proud that the Avon Foundation for Women shares our mission and has chosen to support our A.V.O.N. Mentoring Program,” said Yolanda Jimenez, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence. “This grant will allow us to expand career options for clients of the City’s Family Justice Centers, improve their self-esteem and help guide themselves and their families towards a life without violence.”

“The Avon Foundation for Women is committed to helping end the cycle of domestic violence and is proud to support the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City in its work to help domestic violence victims in New York City,” said Carol Kurzig, President, Avon Foundation for Women. “It is through initiatives like the New York City Family Justice Center’s A.V.O.N. Mentoring Program that we can work to help survivors rebuild their lives and break the cycle of domestic violence, once and for all.”

The A.V.O.N. Mentoring Program will pair domestic violence survivors -- all of whom are graduates of the New York City Family Justice Center’s specialized onsite programs or those who have acquired comparable self-sufficiency knowledge and skills -- with professional men and women from both traditional and non-traditional work settings. Survivors will be assisted with job skills, provided with networking opportunities and exposed to an array of career paths based on their strengths and interests. Research shows that mentoring programs like A.V.O.N. not only enhance mentees’ careers, but also improve valuable psychosocial functions including self-esteem and personal fulfillment.
To implement the program, the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence will partner with the New York City Commission on Women’s Issues and the Avon Foundation for Women, among other organizations, to recruit professionals to serve as mentors to 50 domestic violence survivors for a minimum of six months. Each mentor and survivor will be carefully matched based on screenings conducted at the New York City Family Justice Centers (FJCs).

Since 2005, domestic violence victims in New York City have been provided a range of centralized services including essential advocacy, case management and legal and housing assistance by the New York City Family Justice Centers located in Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx. Services are provided with the involvement of partner agencies including non-profit organizations, city and state agencies, District Attorney’s Offices, and faith-based organizations.

Around the world, at least one in every three women has experienced some form of partner violence or abuse during her lifetime. Although research shows most victims are women, men can also be domestic violence victims. Initiatives such as the A.V.O.N. Mentoring Program help ensure that all victims have access to services that will help them rebuild their lives and break the cycle of domestic violence for themselves, their families, and future generations.

The Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City
The Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to facilitating innovative public-private partnerships that enhance the lives of New Yorkers. The Fund serves as an important vehicle for foundations, corporations and individuals to contribute to public programs and support continuous development as well as emerging needs throughout the city.

The Avon Foundation for Women and Speak Out Against Domestic Violence
The Avon Foundation for Women, an accredited 501(c)(3) public charity, was founded in 1955 to improve the lives of women, and brings this mission to life through focus on two key issues: breast cancer and domestic violence. Through 2011, Avon global philanthropy has donated more than $860 million in more than 50 countries for causes most important to women. The Avon Foundation’s flagship programs include the Avon Breast Cancer Crusade and the Speak Out Against Domestic Violence program, which supports domestic violence awareness, education, direct services and prevention initiatives. Through the end of 2011, in the U.S. alone, the Avon Foundation for Women has provided more than $28 million for the domestic violence and gender violence causes, including support for awareness, education, direct service and prevention programs. Fundraising projects include special products sold by Avon Sales Representatives and at avonfoundation.org. The Speak Out Against Domestic Violence program has expanded globally to more than 50 countries to help save lives worldwide.

For more Information
To learn more about the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, visit www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence. For more information about the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, visit http://www.nyc.gov/html/fund/html/home/home.shtml.
To learn more about the Avon Foundation for Women Speak Out Against Domestic Violence program, visit www.avonfoundation.org, where you can also access a free printable Domestic Violence and Dating Abuse Resource Guide in English and Spanish.

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