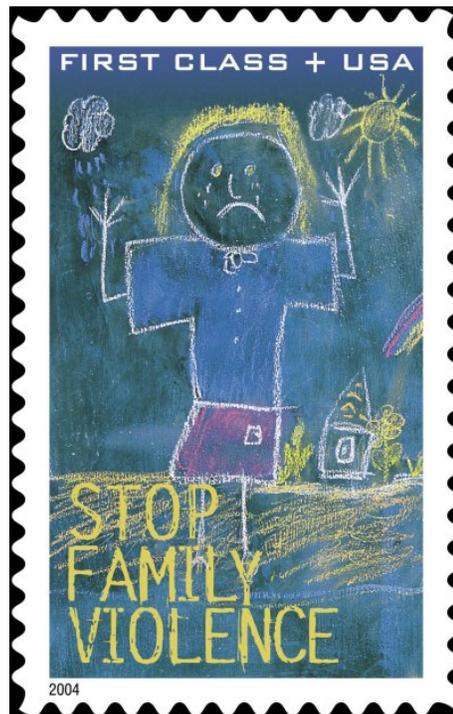

Violence Against Women



"Families are indispensable to a stable society, and they should be a place of support to instill responsibility and values in the next generation. When a family member is abused, it can have long-term damaging effects on the victim that leave a mark on family, friends, and the community at large. Our society must continue to work to prevent domestic violence and help create a loving and stable environment for our children and grandchildren."

President George W. Bush."

**Information compiled by
The Information Resource Center
Embassy of the United States of America**

December 4, 2007

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Introduction

The Information Resource Center (IRC) of the Embassy of the United States in Madrid has prepared this information packet for the digital video conference on *Violence Against Women* with Ivon Mesa, which will take place on December 4, 2007.

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1. Participant: Ivon Mesa's Biography.

Ivon Mesa was born in Cuba on December 9, 1968. In 1983, she moved to Spain where she lived for approximately nine years. In 1989, she moved to the United States, Miami where she permanently resides.

She has a Master Degree in Public Administration from Nova Southeastern University and a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Florida International University.

Ms. Mesa was hired as the Director of the Domestic Violence Intake Unit in 1993. She began working in the unit as an intern from Florida International University in 1992. The unit was in the midst of its creation and, as the only Spanish-speaking counselor, Ms. Mesa was responsible for interviewing all non-English speaking clients. Her commitment and her desire to help made her the perfect candidate to fill the position of intake counselor. At the end of her internship, she was immediately hired and later promoted to Director of the Intake Unit. Ms. Mesa was responsible for the creation and implementation of policies and procedures. She translated all forms and reading material into Spanish to help the Hispanic community better understand domestic violence issues. In 1993, she instituted a series of logs and tallies designed to keep statistical reports on the nationality of the population that the unit serves. In 1994, Ms. Mesa submitted a budget proposal to the local battered women's shelter requesting that funds be allocated to directly assist victims of domestic violence who seek court protection. The request was granted, and subsequently, Ms. Mesa implemented a procedure for victims of domestic violence to be transported to the court locations and for providing victims with a free meal while waiting for their injunction paperwork to be completed.

Also in 1994, Ms. Mesa was invited by the government of Venezuela as a guest speaker in the "Fourth International Family Congress". Ms. Mesa spoke about domestic violence issues to an audience from all South American countries and some European countries. In 1995, she was invited by Dade County Commissioner, Natacha Millan to go to Uruguay to speak about domestic violence, in conjunction with a team of four professionals. Ms. Mesa was responsible for translating the entire presentation into Spanish. Ms. Mesa was also asked by the Alliance Against Domestic Violence to host the "Zero Tolerance" television series in Spanish. In 1996, Ms. Mesa was selected as one of the two hundred participants in the Leadership Miami 1996-97 Program. The participants represented the next generation of leaders for Greater Miami. Also in 1996, Ms. Mesa was asked by City of Miami Commission on the Status of Women to be the Co-Producer and Host of eighteen television series which were aired every Wednesday at 8:00 p.m. This live production on channel 17 was in both English and Spanish. Also in 1996, Ms. Mesa requested that the Administrative Office of the Courts implement a system change based on an analysis that she conducted which suggested that the intake process be computerized. The change involved personnel becoming Public Notaries and some other drastic innovations. The implementation of the new re-engineering process was implemented throughout Dade County. It is estimated that this

implementation will save the Administrative Office of the Courts a great deal of time, but most importantly, it will allow a victim to obtain an injunction in three hours as opposed to five as it was prior to the re-engineering.

In January, 1998, the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence together with the Hispanic Women Alliance Against Domestic Violence coordinated what would be the first State-wide conference on domestic violence offered in Spanish in the state of Florida. Ms. Mesa was the person responsible for the coordination and planning of this event in addition to being the Master of Ceremony and a panelist as well. In April 1998, Ms. Mesa had the opportunity to work with one of the Dade County Public School Board Members, Mr. Renier De La Portilla to try to implement curricula on domestic violence in the school system. This effort was a success and a committee was created to materialize this pioneer initiative. In 1999, Ms. Mesa approached Miami-Dade County Commissioner Millan with regard to creating a County Ordinance that would address Domestic Violence and the Workplace. Soon after, an ordinance was created and implemented thanks to Ms. Mesa's efforts and vision. This ordinance is the first document of this nature in the country. Ms. Mesa has conducted various training sessions on Domestic Violence & the Workplace, the National Conference of Metropolitan Courts in Arizona being the most recent. Ms. Mesa is also the Founder and current Chair of the Latino Alliance Against Domestic Violence.

Ivon Mesa has also been the recipient of many awards and honors. In 1992, she was the recipient of the Dial Corp. Minority Scholarship in recognition of her academic achievements. Ms. Mesa was selected by the Chief Judge and the Court Administrator of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit as the 1994 Employee of the Year. In 1996, Ms. Mesa was appointed by the City of Miami Commissioner Plummer to the City of Miami Commission on the Status of Women. In 1997, she was appointed by Governor Lawton Chiles to the Human Rights Advocacy Committee. Furthermore, in May 1997, Ms. Mesa was appointed by Dade County Commissioner Souto to serve as a member of the Domestic Violence Oversight Board, and in October, 1997, Ms. Mesa was the recipient of the National Association of Public Administrators Community Service Award for being the Hispanic Public Administrator who served her community the most. Also in March, 2000, Ms. Mesa was awarded the Woman of the Next Century Award which was presented by the Miami-Dade County Women's Association. In addition to her career in Criminal Justice, she has also worked as a teacher for Dade County Public schools on a part-time basis for approximately five years. In January, 2000, she was hired as an Adjunct Professor by Florida International University in the Sociology Department to teach a class entitled "Intimate Violence". In 2004, Ms. Mesa was the recipient of the governor's Peace at Home Award in two separate categories, the Criminal Justice and the Overall.

Ms. Mesa has dedicated fifteen years of her life and her professional career to the elimination of domestic violence and, as the Director of the Domestic Violence Intake Unit since 1993, her accomplishments are many.

2. National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV). Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Mission Statement and Purpose

The Mission of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) is to organize for collective power by advancing transformative work, thinking and leadership of communities and individuals working to end the violence in our lives.

NCADV believes violence against women and children results from the use of force or threat to achieve and maintain control over others in intimate relationships, and from societal abuse of power and domination in the forms of sexism, racism, homophobia, classism, anti-Semitism, able-bodyism, ageism and other oppressions. NCADV recognizes that the abuses of power in society foster battering by perpetuating conditions, which condone violence against women and children. Therefore, it is the mission of NCADV to work for major societal changes necessary to eliminate both personal and societal violence against all women and children.

NCADV's work includes coalition building at the local, state, regional and national levels; support for the provision of community-based, non-violent alternatives - such as safe home and shelter programs - for battered women and their children; public education and technical assistance; policy development and innovative legislation; focus on the leadership of NCADV's caucuses and task forces developed to represent the concerns of organizationally under represented groups; and efforts to eradicate social conditions which contribute to violence against women and children.

Principles of Unity

NCADV is comprised of people dealing with the concerns of battered women and their families. We represent both rural and urban areas. Our programs support and involve battered women of all racial, social, religious and economic groups, ages and lifestyles. We oppose the use of violence as a means of control over others and support equality in relationships and the concept of helping women assume power over their own lives. We strive toward becoming independent, community-based groups in which women make major policy and program decisions.

Summary of Organization's History

NCADV was formally organized in January, 1978 when over 100 battered women's advocates from all parts of the nation attended the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights hearing on battered women in Washington, DC, hoping to address common problems these programs usually faced in isolation. NCADV, which will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2008, remains the only national organization of grassroots shelter and service programs for battered women.

In 1970, there was no such thing as a shelter for battered women. Today there are over 2,000 shelter and service programs, forming a national movement based on the belief that women and their children are entitled to a safe environment free from violence and the threat of violence.

Originally located in Washington, DC, NCADV opened a new office in Denver, Colorado in January, 1992. The Colorado office now serves as the central office, while NCADV maintains a public policy office in Washington, DC.

Currently, a working board of directors comprised of caucus representatives and at-large members across the U.S. who are themselves active in domestic violence programs in their own communities govern NCADV. NCADV represents both rural and urban areas of the nation. Our programs involve and support battered women of all social, racial, ethnic, religious and economic groups, ages and lifestyles. Active caucuses include Battered/Formerly Battered Women, Women of Color, Rainbow Pride, Jewish Women, Child and Youth Advocacy, Rural Women and Queer Persons of Color.

NCADV serves as a national information and referral center for the general public, media, battered women and their children, allied and member agencies and organizations. NCADV has a strong track record of providing programs with information and technical assistance, and has promoted the development of innovative programs, which address the special needs of all battered women, and the battered women's programs. NCADV has sponsored twelve national conferences on domestic violence, which provide a unique forum within the battered women's movement for networking, dialogue, debate, leadership development and celebration.

NCADV also serves to impact public policy and legislation, which affects battered women and their children. NCADV organized testimony for the Attorney General's Task Force hearings on Family Violence; worked with federal legislators to develop priorities for Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds for battered women's programs; supported the development and passage of the Violence Against Women Act (1994); and was active in the passage of the Domestic Violence Offender Gun Ban (1996).

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month evolved from the first Day of Unity observed in October, 1981 by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The intent was to connect battered women's advocates across the nation who were working to end violence against women and their children. The Day of Unity soon became a special week when a range of activities were conducted at the local, state, and national levels.

These activities were as varied and diverse as the program sponsors but had common themes: mourning those who have died because of domestic violence, celebrating those who have survived, and connecting those who work to end violence.

In October 1987, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was observed. That same year the first national toll-free hotline was begun. In 1989 the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month Commemorative Legislation was passed by the U.S. Congress. Such legislation has passed every year since with NCADV providing key leadership in this effort.

In October 1994 NCADV, in conjunction with Ms. Magazine, created the "Remember My Name" project, a national registry to increase public awareness of domestic violence deaths. Since then, NCADV has been collecting information on women who have been killed by an intimate partner and produces a poster each October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, listing the names of those documented in that year.

The Day of Unity is celebrated the first Monday in October. NCADV hopes that events in communities and regions across the fifty states will culminate in a powerful statement celebrating the strength of battered women and their children.

Source: NCADV <http://www.ncadv.org>

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3. National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, 2007: A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America. October 1, 2007.

Families are indispensable to a stable society, and they should be a place of support to instill responsibility and values in the next generation. When a family member is abused, it can have long-term damaging effects on the victim that leave a mark on family, friends, and the community at large. Our society must continue to work to prevent domestic violence and help create a loving and stable environment for our children and grandchildren.

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month is an opportunity to renew our commitment to preventing domestic violence and to assisting those who suffer from its devastating effects. My Administration is dedicated to helping victims of domestic violence. The Family Justice Center Initiative, announced in 2003, continues to work towards eradicating domestic violence in our Nation. This program provides assistance and services for victims of domestic violence by bringing professionals, advocates, law enforcement, and organizations together at centers nationwide. In 2006, I signed legislation that reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act to fight domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We also are working with faith-based and community organizations to assist victims in need. In addition, the Department of Justice's Domestic Violence Transitional Housing Assistance Program provides access to transitional housing services while working to move victims of violence into permanent housing.

As we observe National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we underscore our commitment to building an America where all citizens can live with dignity, work productively, and achieve their dreams. We encourage victims and their families and friends to seek assistance through Family Justice Centers and to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE. Together, we can help prevent, recognize, and stop domestic violence in America.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 2007 as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. I urge all Americans to reach out to those who have been abused and help educate people about the vital importance of ending domestic violence.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Source: The White House <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.

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4. Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). U. S. Department of Justice.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) is to provide federal leadership to reduce violence against women, and to administer justice for and strengthen services to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. This is accomplished by developing and supporting the capacity of state, local, tribal, and non-profit entities involved in responding to violence against women.

Overview

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, provides national leadership in developing the nation's capacity to reduce violence against women through the implementation of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Created in 1995, OVW administers financial and technical assistance to communities across the country that are developing programs, policies, and practices aimed at ending domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Currently, OVW administers one formula grant program and eleven discretionary grant programs, all of which were established under VAWA and subsequent legislation. Since its inception, OVW has awarded nearly \$2 billion in grants and cooperative agreements, and has launched a multifaceted approach to implementing VAWA. By forging state, local, and tribal partnerships among police, prosecutors, victim advocates, health care providers, faith leaders, and others, OVW grant programs help provide victims with the protection and services they need to pursue safe and healthy lives, while simultaneously enabling communities to hold offenders accountable for their violence.

In addition to overseeing 12 federal grant programs, OVW often undertakes a number of special initiatives in response to areas of special need, dedicating resources to develop enhancements in areas requiring particular attention or in communities facing particularly acute challenges. OVW special initiatives include, but are not limited to, the Judicial Oversight Demonstration Initiative, the President's Family Justice Center Initiative, the Safety for Indian Women from Sexual Assault Offenders Demonstration Initiative, and the National Protocol for Sexual Assault Forensic Exams. These special initiatives allow OVW to explore different innovations in the violence against women field and share knowledge that can be replicated nationwide.

Source: OVW, U. S. Department of Justice <http://www.usdoj.gov/ovw>

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5. Resources.

Online Directory of Crime Victim Services

<http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/findvictimservices/>

Looking for help in your community? The Office for Victims of Crime Online Directory of Crime Victim Services designed to help service providers and individuals locate non emergency crime victim service agencies in the United States and abroad.

Family Violence Prevention Fund

<http://endabuse.org/>

FVPPF develops strategies, programs, and resources to stop family violence. Its Web site offers a news desk, prevention toolkits and information on FVPPF's programs and services in public education, child welfare, immigration, public health, and criminal justice.

National Center for Victims of Crime

<http://www.ncadv.org/>

The center provides direct services and resources, advocates laws and public policies that protect victims, delivers training and technical assistance to victim service providers and allied professionals, and fosters thinking about the impact of crime and how individuals can help victims regain control of their lives.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

<http://www.ncadv.org>

NCADV is a grassroots membership organization providing technical assistance, networking, and support to programs and state coalitions serving battered women and their children. It also provides information and referrals to the general public and the media.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

<http://www.ndvh.org/>

1-800-799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233)

TTY: 1-800-787-3224

Staff provide callers with crisis intervention, information about domestic violence, and referrals to local programs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Telephone assistance is available in many languages, including Spanish.

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN)

<http://www.rainn.org/>

1-800-656-HOPE (1-800-656-4673)

The network is the Nation's largest anti-sexual assault organization and operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline.

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS): Domestic Violence
<http://ncjrs.gov/App/Topics/Topic.aspx?Topicid=86>

Access a list of domestic violence-related publications, frequently asked questions, and related links.

NCJRS In the Spotlight: Family Violence
http://ncjrs.gov/spotlight/family_violence/Summary.html

In the Spotlight is an online feature that provides comprehensive information on topics of great interest to the justice community. The Family Violence Spotlight presents a summary of the topic along with links to relevant legislation, funding, publications, programs, training and technical assistance, and resource organizations from federal, state, local, international, private, and public sources.

Legal Resources

Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000 [PDF 307K]
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/10492.pdf>

Full text of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and the Violence Against Women Act of 2000.

Violence Against Women Act of 1994
<http://www.usdoj.gov/ovw/laws/vawa/vawa.htm>

Excerpts from the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994

Access to HHS-Funded Services for Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence.
<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/immigration/bifsltr.html>

Fact Sheet from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) providing guidance on eligibility for programs and services funded by HHS. (Jan. 2001)

Other Related U.S. Legislation and Regulations

Higher Education Amendments of 1998 [PDF 918K]

Text of Aimee's Law, Division C of Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000

Source: Enditnow http://www.enditnow.gov/dv/resources.html State Department http://usinfo.state.gov
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