



Senator Dan Sullivan and his wife Julie Fate Sullivan to be Honorary Co-Chairs of AWAIC Expansion Capital Campaign

Safe Spaces Campaign will fund much needed expansion of domestic violence shelter, over capacity much of the year

Anchorage, Alaska — U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan and his wife Julie Fate Sullivan have agreed to be Honorary Co-Chairs of the Safe Spaces capital campaign being launched this month to support the expansion of AWAIC's at-capacity facility, and to increase the space used to offer clients and the larger community resources related to ending domestic violence.

The number of Anchorage-area women and children needing domestic violence safe shelter, crisis management, and intervention services, consistently exceeds the amount of available space at AWAIC's shelter. Last year, AWAIC provided more than 20,000 shelter nights to 436 women and 245 children, reaching or exceeding capacity 55 percent of the year. Forecast data indicates that the need for shelter from domestic violence will continue to increase measurably. The expansion will add 12 spaces to AWAIC's 52-bed shelter - along with additional room to accommodate the growing demand for nonresidential services AWAIC also provides.

"As the only domestic violence shelter in Anchorage, and from Kenai to Palmer, AWAIC is the one organization uniquely positioned to fill this need, as it has done for the past 40 years," said Senator Sullivan. "It is unfortunate that the need continues to rise. Julie and I are honored to chair this critical effort to expand the shelter."

Throughout his career, Senator Sullivan has made the fight against domestic violence and sexual assault a priority. During his tenure as Alaska Attorney General, he pioneered the "Choose Respect" campaign which urged young men to join the conversation against domestic violence, and found lawyers to voluntarily provide legal assistance to people in need. Continuing this work, as a Senator, he authored the Pro bono Work to Empower and Represent (POWER) Act, which mobilizes the Department of Justice to encourage pro-bono legal assistance to enable victims of domestic violence to become survivors. He has also engaged in the fight against human trafficking by authoring and co-sponsoring several pieces of legislation to provide resources to combat this scourge on our society.

Julie Fate Sullivan has served for nearly two years as Director of Communications and Advocacy at Covenant House Alaska, the state's largest shelter for at-risk youth experiencing homelessness, trafficking or abuse. Nearly 50 percent of girls at CHA are survivors of sexual abuse, and Julie has been humbled by her work with the courageous youth of Covenant House who choose to tell their stories. Covenant House Alaska partners with AWAIC, as well as STAR (Standing Together Against Rape), Priceless and the Alaska Native Justice Center in providing assistance and trauma-informed care to survivors of sexual assault, sex trafficking and family violence.

"We're so thrilled that Senator and Julie Sullivan have agreed to lead our expansion campaign," said Suzi Pearson, AWAIC executive director. "We applaud their efforts to combat domestic violence and know that with their leadership, our critical campaign to expand our shelter will be a success."

For more information on the AWAIC Safe Spaces Capital Campaign please contact AWAIC Executive Director Suzi Pearson at suzi_p@awaic.org or 907-743-5726.