Snow, Sleet, & Stilettos?!: In Her Shoes Gala

Winter weather advisory alerts and a white, wintry mix of snow and sleet covering the roadways less than three hours before the scheduled start of The Women’s Safe House In Her Shoes Gala, did not stop supporters from slipping and sliding down the highways and byways to gather together in an effort to raise funds on behalf of local women and children escaping domestic violence. On February 21, 2015, more than 170 supporters traded stilettos for snow boots and covered their chic ensembles with fur and leather coats galore to brace the cold, and travel to The Chase Park Plaza Hotel for the In Her Shoes Gala, in support of the 38th Anniversary of The Women’s Safe House.

Though the weather outside was frightful, the attendees of the Gala were so delightful as they mixed and mingled for more than three hours, bidding on silent auction items, purchasing chances of luck with raffle tickets, and placing bids for shelter and hope—raising more than $34,000 towards safe shelter and advocacy for the clients who would need services within the upcoming year. Emcee Bonita Cornute, Fox 2 News Consumer Reporter, ushered in hundreds of bids as she expounded on the testimonial stories shared by three former residents of The House.

Shortly after testimonials were shared and tears were shed, checks for tens of thousands of dollars were signed, sealed, and delivered to the registration table. Musicians from the band, Uncut Productions, summoned every attendee—whether wearing snow boots or stilettos to the dance floor to boogie the night away. It was in that moment, that despite winter weather outdoors, there was a group of generous individuals with warm hearts on the inside of The Plaza making a tremendous difference in the lives of those who would have the courage to flee to safety in the upcoming year—one bid, one raffle, one donation at time!

The Women’s Safe House offers special thanks to the 2015 gala committee members, donors, sponsors and attendees whose generous support made the event a major success!
FROM THE FRONT LINE
Executive Director
Sylvia J. Jackson

In 2014, The Women’s Safe House began envisioning a new shift toward the implementation of a trauma-informed care service delivery system within a domestic violence shelter. There is an increasing focus on the impact of trauma and how service systems may help to resolve or exacerbate trauma-related issues. Domestic violence advocates, directors, and staff have expressed a growing awareness of the need for services appropriate for women with mental health issues, substance abuse problems and histories of abuse that are present in emergency

Men in High Heels Hit the Pavement at SLU

Saint Louis University (SLU) students of Beta Theta Pi Fraternity held a Walk A Mile event on Sunday, March 22, 2015 engaging both faculty and students to rally for the victims and survivors of violence against women. The event was held in an effort to raise awareness of domestic violence and to raise funds to support the programs and services of The Women’s Safe House.

Participants began gathering near the clock tower at 10:30AM to register and rent red pumps in time for the 11:00AM march time. Jamella Brown, Community Relations and Volunteer Manager for The Women’s Safe House, provided the initial kickoff speech to rally participants for the cause and to thank students for their support and efforts to raise awareness.

SLU’s Walk A Mile event was unlike any other as hundreds of male students marched throughout the campus wearing a pair of red pumps. The men in 3-inch heels complained about the pain, but the adrenaline of marching for a great cause overshadowed their foot spasms. Over $500 dollars raised will aid TWSH in providing transportation to shelter for women and children fleeing intimate partner violence.

Archway Chapter Links Show TWSH Residents Love On Valentine’s Day

Volunteers from the Archway Chapter of The Links, Inc. planned a night of red roses, chocolate treats, and arts-and-craft activities this Valentine’s Day to help women and children in shelter feel the love!

Volunteers gifted each resident with a red rose and helped each child craft their own rendition of Hallmark messages of love on their hand-crafted cards addressed to their mothers.

Can’t Go Bored with Board Games

The Saint Louis Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. visited The Women’s Safe House—and they were not empty handed when they arrived. Ten volunteers carrying snacks and classic board games—Life, Chutes and Ladder, Trouble, and several other classic board games joined the women and children for Family Game Night on March 19, 2015.

Once the rules of each game were spelled out, it was each woman and child for themselves as they competed for the first place title on the game of their choice. However, after one trip around the Monopoly board and one too many times down the Chutes and Ladder board, it wasn’t long before residents and volunteers entered into a Nintendo Wii dance competition with the Michael Jackson Dance Experience.

Volunteers brought fun and laughter to the shelter environment, and for one night within what seemed to be another ordinary week, residents were made to feel right at home!
Take Back the Night with Harris Stowe State University Students

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. This year, in an effort to raise awareness about sexual and domestic violence—particularly on college campuses, The Women’s Safe House (TWSH) joined forces with Harris Stowe State University (HSSU) to make their unified voice and message loud and clear—“Read My Lips, Until I Consent, ‘NO’ is what I Said, And ‘NO’ is what I Meant.”

On Wednesday, April 22, 2015, The Women’s Safe House, in collaboration with Harris Stowe State University, launched its first “Take Back the Night” event. The campus-wide event engaged tens of hundreds of students within a three-day project to educate college students to recognize, flee, report and most importantly, prevent, the chances of becoming the latest college statistic of surging sexual and domestic violence reports. For four hours on the first two days of the three-day event, staff from The Women’s Safe House worked with students to create their very own campus-wide Clothesline Project. Students joined TWSH staff in the lobby of the Residence Hall during their lunch hour to paint anti-domestic and anti-sexual violence messages on white t-shirts that would later hang on public display in the Quad to keep the anti-violence against women message forefront and center in the minds of each HSSU student.

The three-day project ended with a “Take Back the Night” rally and march on Wednesday evening. HSSU students, faculty, and TWSH staff and volunteers gathered underneath the HSSU arches at the campus entrance, and marched around the perimeter of the campus—carrying teal and purple candles and chanting messages of empowerment. The march ended in the Quad, with the Clothesline Project display as the backdrop, as participants paused for a moment of silence and listened to the testimonial of a former resident along with remarks by Sylvia Jackson, TWSH Executive Director. Once dismissed, participants engaged in conversation, posed for pictures, and wrote messages of empowerment with chalkboard art. This year’s “Take Back the Night” event marks the first of many future collaborations with HSSU.

FROM THE FRONT LINE Cont’d

shelter. While our agency is one that focuses on and advocates for women, our services delivery system needs to address trauma, and identify a public health approach that includes education and awareness, prevention, early identification and effective trauma-specific assessment and treatment. Over the course of the next two years, The Women’s Safe House plans to align its efforts towards a trauma-informed care framework that: 1) Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential pathways to recovery; 2) Recognizes signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff and others involved in the system; 3) Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices; and 4) seeks to actively Resist Re-traumatization. We believe the timing is right to implement this important and necessary shift in order to build agency capacity at The Women’s Safe House and position the agency for continued success.
Missouri Tax Credit Information

What gifts are eligible?
In case you didn’t know—Individual, Business, and Corporate Contributions to The Women’s Safe House of $100 or more in cash, stocks, or other securities are eligible for Missouri Tax Credits.

How tax credits work?
With most of the charitable donations, the donor may claim a federal and state income tax deduction. With Missouri Tax Credits, the donor may also take a 50% state income tax credit up to the limit of his/her taxable income. Donors have up to five years to utilize all of the tax credits. In addition, with gifts of stock, the donor does not owe capital gains tax on any appreciation. As with any gift, how much is deductible for tax purposes will depend upon the donor’s unique financial circumstances.

How to make a gift?
Send your contribution to The Women’s Safe House, P.O. Box 63010, St. Louis, MO 63163. We will send you an acknowledgement letter with brief instructions on how to complete the tax credit form. After you have completed and returned the form with proper documentation to TWSH, you will receive a certification letter directly from the State of Missouri indicating approval.

For more information, contact the Development Office at 314.772.4535.

Join the Team! Volunteer With Us!

For a detailed list of all volunteer positions, please visit the website: www.twsh.org. Email your volunteer interest, schedule of availability, and contact information to the Community Relations & Volunteer Manager: volunteer.coordinator@twsh.org

Please Note: Volunteers who provide direct service to residents must pass a background screening with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.