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**CONTACT:**

Eileen Doran (YWCA Center for Safety & Empowerment), 785-354-7927, [EileenD@ywcatopeka.org](mailto:EileenD@ywcatopeka.org)

## **Topeka woman receives statewide Advocate of the Year honor**

**TOPEKA, KAN., FEBRUARY 21, 2011** — A dedicated advocate working on behalf of victims and survivors of sexual and domestic violence has been recognized by a statewide advocacy organization. Becky Dickinson of Topeka received the Juliene Maska Advocate of the Year Award from the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) during its 8<sup>th</sup> annual Safe Homes, Safe Streets reception in Topeka on February 9.

“We honor Becky for her above-and-beyond commitment on behalf of victims of domestic violence,” said Joyce Grover, executive director of KCSDV. “The Advocate of the Year award is given in recognition of efforts that often go unrecognized, but are transformative and in many cases are life-saving.”

Becky Dickinson has been an advocate for the YWCA Center for Safety & Empowerment in Topeka for 12 years. Becky has been an instrumental member of the Center for Safety & Empowerment’s staff, having served in numerous roles, including working as a Public Educator and as a Sexual Assault Advocate before assuming her current role as the Director of Victim Services. As the Director of Victim Services, Becky manages all of the direct service staff and supervises the shelter staff and operations. Becky provides educational outreach to nursing students, and she supervises the interns and volunteers.

“Becky Dickinson serves as a role model to our staff by always putting survivor’s needs above all else in the office,” said Eileen Doran, program director of the Center for Safety and Empowerment. “She is the first person that I turn to for advice and counsel when I need it, and the same is true for the rest of our staff.”

Since 1977, the YWCA of Topeka has served victims of domestic and sexual violence in Shawnee, Jackson, Osage and Wabaunsee counties. The YWCA Center for Safety & Empowerment offers services in three areas: safety, support and prevention.

Since 1995 KCSDV has been recognizing outstanding advocates and allies who are working to enhance victim safety, to increase perpetrator accountability, and to prevent and eliminate sexual and domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking in Kansas. In addition to the Advocate of the Year award, Nicole MacMillan, community coordinator for the Center for Safety and Empowerment, was honored for five years of service working to end violence against women.

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