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Photos available upon request.

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## **Longtime MOCSA Volunteer Honored with Statewide Award**

Topeka, KS, February 9, 2012 – A statewide domestic and sexual violence advocacy organization honored Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault volunteer Kathy Bagby with its Volunteer of the Year Award on February 8.

The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence tapped Bagby, who has volunteered for MOCSA for more than 12 years, with the honor at its ninth annual Safe Homes, Safe Streets reception in Topeka.

“Volunteers like Kathy are more valuable than gold,” says Joyce Grover, KCSDV executive director. “So many survivors positively touched by this one woman – it’s breathtaking.”

Although Bagby officially started volunteering with MOCSA in 2000, her journey to becoming a volunteer advocate for survivors of sexual violence began more than 30 years ago.

“It was in the 1980s and Kathy was standing in her friend’s kitchen during a party. That is when she heard her friend’s story of rape for the first time. As she tends to do, Kathy sprang into action and supported her friend by helping her to contact MOCSA,” MOCSA Director of Community Services Angie Blummel said. “As Kathy puts it, ‘We called MOCSA and a wonderful person talked with us. She was very helpful.’”

Although her volunteer services have provided help to MOCSA and its clients in a variety of ways, Bagby has been an especially vital aid to MOCSA’s 24-hour crisis hotline, Blummel said. Since taking her first crisis line call, Bagby has assisted more than 5,000 callers to MOCSA’s crisis hotline and provided more than 20,000 hours of volunteer service.

“It feels like a huge responsibility and almost something sacred to be with callers as they process what they have experienced,” Bagby said. “People always told me I was a good listener ever since I can remember. I had this to offer and I became passionate about helping women after learning about the ways in which women can be harmed, crushed, their spirits shattered. As I became more involved in the work I began to understand sexual violence can be just as devastating to men.”

MOCSA is a non-profit social service agency, serving victims of sexual assault and child sexual abuse in the greater Kansas City area. From its beginnings in 1969 as an unincorporated coalition of law enforcement, prosecutors, mental health and medical professionals and rape victims, MOCSA It exists to lessen the ill effects of sexual assault and abuse through prevention, education, intervention, treatment and advocacy.

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