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National award honors Wichita advocate as leader in sexual violence prevention

TOPEKA, KS, April 9, 2014 — April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month. In observance, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center's (NSVRC) annual Visionary Voice Award recognizes creativity and hard work of individuals around the country who have demonstrated outstanding work to end sexual violence.

Mary Stolz-Newton of Wichita was honored as the recipient of the 2014 Visionary Voice Award by NSVRC in partnership with the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV). Stolz-Newton was among 29 individuals recognized for their efforts to address sexual violence and promote safe, healthy communities. Stolz-Newton, assistant director of the Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center (WASAC), has advocated on behalf of survivors and to end sexual violence for almost a decade.

"The Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center is honored to have one of our staff recognized nationally for her work," said Kathy Williams, WASAC executive director. "Mary and other advocates offer the support and hope that sexual assault survivors need for rebuilding their lives."

Stolz-Newton facilitates yoga groups and develops creative ways to help survivors heal from the sexual violence they have experienced. She trains other professionals and works on other sexual violence intervention and prevention efforts within the Wichita community and across Kansas. Stolz-Newton is a graduate from Kansas State University and holds a Master of Social Work from Wichita State University.

"The impact of these individuals and programs is vital to sexual violence prevention," said Karen Baker, NSVRC Director. "Celebrating these successes and honoring voices on a national level reminds us we can all play a role in positively changing our communities."

"There is great work happening in Kansas communities to address sexual violence," said Joyce Grover, KCSDV executive director. "Mary is part of that work and the Coalition is honored to partner with NSVRC and WASAC to recognize her dedication and creativity during Sexual Assault Awareness Month." KCSDV nominated Stolz-Newton for the award.

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Founded in 1982, the purpose of KCSDV is the prevention and elimination of sexual and domestic violence through a statewide network of programs providing support and safety for all victims of sexual and domestic violence and stalking, with primary focus on women and their children; direct services; public awareness and education; advocacy for victims; comprehensive prevention; and, social change efforts. Learn more at kcsdv.org.

The Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center is a member of KCSDV and provides services to victims of sexual violence in Wichita and Sedgwick county. Learn more at wichitasac.com.