

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 28, 2009

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PILLARS RECEIVES GRANT FROM THE CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST TO HELP WOMEN AND CHILDREN AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Trust's Unity Challenge addresses the economic crisis by supporting nonprofit organizations meeting basic needs

Pillars has received a \$10,000 grant from The Chicago Community Trust's Unity Challenge to support general operations of its Constance Morris House domestic violence shelter. In addition to a 24-bed shelter, Constance Morris House provides counseling, onsite healthcare, a 24-hour crisis line, and other supportive services to help women and children to build lives free of violence.

"We are so proud and grateful that The Chicago Community Trust has recognized our efforts to help battered women and children," said Lynn Siegel, Pillars Vice President of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services. "Domestic violence is not going away and deserves very serious attention. There is a critical need for innovative programs to help battered women and children in our community, and these programs require substantial financial resources."

The current economic crisis has not only caused a decrease in funding for domestic violence services but can also be attributed to an increase in the need for domestic violence services. In a May 2009 survey, three out of four domestic violence shelters in the U.S. reported an increase in women seeking assistance from abuse since September 2008, a major turning point in the U.S. economy. Of those surveyed, 73 percent attributed the rise in abuse to "financial issues." In addition, "stress" (61 percent) and job loss (49 percent) were also reported as contributing factors in the reported increase in domestic violence cases involving women.

The Trust organized The Unity Challenge to motivate additional donor contributions to increase the funds available to organizations providing critical support to the residents hit hardest by the economic crisis. The Trust matched \$2 to each \$1 donated to the challenge.

About Pillars and Constance Morris House

The Pillars Community Services and Community Care Options merged in 2006 to form Pillars, one of the Chicago area's most notable nonprofit social service organizations. Pillars provides quality mental health services, social services, and education for people of all ages. Our service area spans 36 communities in the west and southwest suburbs of Chicago. For more than 30 years, Pillars' Constance Morris House Domestic Violence Program has provided shelter, supportive services, and legal advocacy to thousands of women and children experiencing domestic violence, helping to rebuild their lives. To learn more about our services, please visit

the Pillars website at www.pillarscommunity.org. If you need domestic violence services and are in crisis, call our 24-hour hotline at 708-485-5254.

About The Chicago Community Trust

For 94 years, The Chicago Community Trust, our region's community foundation, has connected the generosity of donors with the needs of the community by making grants to organizations working to improve metropolitan Chicago. In 2008, the Trust made over \$100 million in grants. From strengthening community schools to assisting local art programs, from building health centers to helping lives affected by violence, the Trust continues to enhance our region. To learn more, please visit the Trust online at www.cct.org.

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