



*The lifeline for victims of family violence*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Celebration of Hope Luncheon to Benefit Local Domestic Violence Shelter

**Columbus, GA (August 23, 2017) – Georgia is ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the nation for females killed by males.** From 2003 through 2016, at least 1,671 Georgia citizens lost their lives due to domestic violence – 50 victims of domestic violence were killed during this time frame in Muscogee County. The most dangerous time for a victim is when they are leaving the relationship or when they have left the relationship, often victims leave their homes with nothing and turn to domestic violence shelters for safety and support.

Local domestic violence shelter Hope Harbour is excited to announce **Celebration of Hope**, a fundraising event that will take place at the Columbus GA Convention & Trade Center on Thursday September 21, 2017. “This annual luncheon helps tell Hope Harbour’s story. Our speaker this year will be Mildred Muhammad. Ms. Muhammad is a victim who became a survivor and is now a warrior on the issues of abuse. Her ex-husband, John Allen Muhammad, was the convicted and now executed DC Sniper. The horrific crime that took place in the Washington, D.C area in 2002 resulted in innocent people being killed. This was a crime of domestic violence and child custody because what the public did not know was that she was the intended target. Ms. Muhammad will share her story with hopes to encourage and empower others” says Board President West Pryor. “It is going to be a great way for the community to help raise money for our local domestic violence shelter and support those in need.”

Lindsey Reis, Executive Director of Hope Harbour, said, “Hope Harbour’s shelter and crisis line give thousands of individuals and families affected by domestic violence the critical support and resources to help them rebuild their lives. We have increased the beds in the shelter from 33 to 43 so that we will be able to provide a safe place for even more victims. Events like **Celebration of Hope** help drive funds so desperately needed to help victims of domestic violence move toward safe futures.”

The event is open to the public. The luncheon begins at 11:30 AM and will conclude at 1:00 P.M. Reservations are required. Tickets can be purchased now through September 15<sup>th</sup> for \$40 each or \$320 for a table of eight. Large baskets filled with wonderful items will be raffled off. Tickets are \$1 each available for purchase from any Board or Auxiliary member or at the luncheon with all proceeds benefiting victims of domestic abuse. For ticket or event information visit [www.hopeharbour.org](http://www.hopeharbour.org) or please call Lindsey Reis at (706) 256-0238.

### About Hope Harbour

Columbus Alliance for Battered Women, Inc. d/b/a Hope Harbour, a state certified domestic violence shelter, has served Muscogee County and the surrounding area for over 38 years. We offer crisis intervention through our 24-Hour Crisis Hotline and emergency shelter, as well as counseling and support for victims and their children. We also provide education and professional trainings on domestic violence and teen dating violence in schools, the workplace, churches, and throughout the community.

If you would like to make a donation to Hope Harbour, please mail your check to P. O. Box 4182, Columbus, GA 31914.

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