

For Immediate Release
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PEACE OVER VIOLENCE HONORS HUMANITARIANS AT ITS 38TH ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER



LOS ANGELES (Nov. 6, 2009)— More than 450 supporters attended Peace Over Violence's 38th Annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner and Silent Auction, which recognized the contributions of leaders across sectors in the fight against sexual and domestic violence. The event raised more than \$300,000.

"Recessionary times like these are tough on those traumatized by violence or who are forced to live with violence," POV Executive Director Patti Giggans said in her speech delivered to a packed ballroom at The Beverly Hills Hotel. "Many women have to stay with their batterers because there are fewer economic opportunities."

Because of the overwhelming demand for POV's services, its staff and volunteers have had to dig deeper, learning to do more with less, Giggans said.

"Our staff and volunteers have stepped up to make sure that no victim or survivor is turned away from our emergency services," she said. "If you had visited our downtown offices recently, you would have had to enter carefully, stepping over women and children in our waiting area, filled to overflowing. The other day, our administrative offices were being used by our case managers because we had run out of counseling rooms."

In her acceptance speech, Mariska Hargitay, who received the Empowerment Award along with the Joyful Heart Foundation, vowed to strengthen her relationship with Peace Over Violence to help survivors of sexual violence heal. Hargitay, who plays Detective Olivia Benson on the NBC hit series "Law and Order: Special Victims Unit," is the founder and president of the foundation.

The other honorees were Eric Garcetti, president of the Los Angeles City Council, who received the Public Service Award; Human Rights Watch and U.S. Program Researcher Sarah Tofte, who received the Justice Award; Keely and Pierce Brosnan, who received the Activism Award; and Union Bank, which received the Verizon Wireless Hopeline Corporate Award.

In addition to the honorees, other distinguished guests spoke at the event, including Calista Flockhart, POV's national spokesperson; Rene Russo; Neal Baer, executive producer of "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit"; Connie Rice of the Advancement Project; Elva Lima of Verizon; Tim Wennes of Union Bank; and Melodie Kruspodin, a youth graduate of POV's "In Touch With Teens" programs. LAPD chief nominee Charlie Beck also attended.

About Peace Over Violence

Formerly known as the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women, Peace Over Violence is a social service agency dedicated to building healthy relationships, families, and communities free from sexual, domestic, and interpersonal violence. For more information visit www.peaceoverviolence.org.

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