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## **Governor Walker Presents Outstanding Achievement in Domestic Abuse Issues Awards**

(MADISON) — Governor Scott Walker presented awards honoring three individuals for their contributions in the fight against domestic violence during a special ceremony held at the State Capitol today. The Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse hosted the ceremony as part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, a statewide effort to raise awareness about the effects of domestic abuse.

"Wisconsin is united in our efforts to prevent domestic abuse and stop the violence from destroying families and communities," Governor Walker said. "Today, we recognize three advocates who have demonstrated outstanding dedication to helping those affected by the trauma of physical or emotional abuse."

Since 1991, the Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse has selected recipients for annual Awards of Outstanding Achievement in Domestic Abuse Issues.

At the ceremony, Governor Walker and the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) Secretary, Eloise Anderson, presented awards in three categories:

- **Justice Award** - Alice Skenandore of Green Bay received the Justice Award, which honors an individual or organization for outstanding accomplishment in promoting safety, empowerment, and justice for victims of domestic abuse and their children. Alice is the founder and director of Wise Women Gathering Place in Green Bay, a nonprofit organization that provides intervention services to the Oneida and Green Bay community. She has served as a Traditional Midwife for more than 27 years and has provided a safe house for survivors who have been harmed by domestic abuse and sexual assault.
- **Courage Award** - Sue Perry, a retired Registered Nurse from Woodruff, was honored with the Courage Award, which recognizes a survivor of domestic abuse who has turned adversity into triumph by creating positive change within their community to end domestic abuse. As a survivor, Sue has worked throughout her career to raise awareness and teach nursing students about addressing the needs of patients who were victims of domestic violence.
- **Patricia J. Waschbisch Lifetime Achievement Award** - Diane Wolff of Madison received the Patricia J. Waschbisch Lifetime Achievement Award, which honors an individual who has provided exceptional services to many survivors of domestic abuse over the course of a career and who has promoted a vision of ending violence and achieving social justice. The award is named for and commemorates the legacy of an advocate who lost

her life in a domestic homicide in 2013. Diane currently serves as Director of Advocacy for End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin: the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She began her career in domestic abuse services nearly 30 years ago. Her achievements include establishing rural programs for outreach and technical assistance and serving as a batterer's treatment program facilitator to help abusers develop positive behaviors in their relationships. Diane established the first Hmong Advocacy Program in Marathon County for domestic abuse victims. She also helped formulate Wisconsin's domestic abuse programs' homicide response and has advocated for many years to make a difference in the lives of domestic abuse survivors.

In 2015, 58 people lost their lives as a result of domestic violence, 48 of whom were victims of homicide. Domestic violence affects tens of thousands of women, children, and men in Wisconsin every year, with around 2,500 victims having to seek lifesaving assistance and shelters.

"Children who witness domestic violence often experience long-term trauma that, left untreated, can lead to them becoming victims or abusers themselves," said DCF Secretary Eloise Anderson. "By taking a two-generational approach to help parents and children overcome their traumatic experiences, DCF is working to end the cycle of domestic violence."

Protecting the citizens of Wisconsin has always been a top priority for Governor Walker, and in 2014, he signed three bipartisan bills into law enhancing protections for victims of domestic violence. In the 2015-17 biennial budget, Governor Walker reinforced his commitment to ending the cycle of domestic violence in Wisconsin and assisting domestic violence victims by increasing domestic abuse grants by \$5 million, a 50 percent increase in state funding.

In the spring of 2016, Governor Walker also signed several bills into law protecting victims of domestic abuse in Wisconsin to ensure they receive the care and support they need. The legislation aligned state laws with federal laws for protection orders, created an address confidentiality program, and improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the Crime Victim Compensation Program.

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