



IDVAAC
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Institute on Domestic Violence In
The African American Community

Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORGANIZATION TO CONVENE COMMUNITY FORUM IN DETROIT

Forum will unveil documentary on domestic violence in Detroit's diverse racial and ethnic communities

DETROIT, MI – The [Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community](http://www.dvinstitute.org) (IDVAAC) (St. Paul, MN) and Transformation Detroit (MI), a collaborative of local advocates, representatives from state agencies, and other stakeholders, will host a community forum on Monday, November 24, 2008, to discuss and prioritize an action plan for mobilizing the community to address domestic violence in metropolitan Detroit. IDVAAC will also present a screening of a documentary that addresses domestic violence in Detroit's diverse ethnic communities. The meeting will be held at ACCESS, 6450 Maple Road in Dearborn, Michigan, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ET.

“Detroit is an ethnically diverse city that is also faced with severe economic challenges, which creates additional complexities when addressing domestic violence,” said Shelia Hankins, Co-chair of Transformation Detroit and Project Director for the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board. The grim reality and dire consequences of intimate partner violence continues to vex the city, as evidenced by recent fatal incidents covered by local and national media. The problem is especially severe among the area's African American and other ethnic communities. “As we look at how to address domestic violence effectively,” Ms. Hankins explained, “we must find culturally relevant approaches that promote safety and well-being for battered women and their families in ways that are meaningful to them, while also considering the overwhelming economic challenges that are pervasive in this area.”

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The community forum is part of IDVAAC's **Domestic Peace Initiative**, which aims to build the capacity of local communities to engage stakeholders in efforts to effectively address intimate partner violence and intersecting issues. Specifically, the forum seeks to raise awareness around the issue of domestic violence in metro Detroit; promote cohesion among domestic violence advocates and advocates for related social issues, such as substance abuse, homelessness, HIV/AIDS, child abuse, and mental health; and cultivate leadership in mobilizing community efforts toward expanding and sustaining culturally relevant responses to assist battered women and their families. Discussion will build upon recommendations presented at Transformation Detroit's May 2008 symposium, *Revolutionary Steps: Engaging Communities to End Violence against Women*.

Forum participants will also view and receive a copy of ***Domestic Violence and Culturally Diverse Communities in Detroit***. This documentary explores how four of Detroit's racial and ethnic communities – Arab American, African American, Asian American, and Latino American – are approaching the issue of domestic violence within their respective groups. Gail Lloyd, the director and editor of the film, will be recognized.

The event is free and open to the public, but space is limited. To register, contact [Janese Thelen](mailto:Janese.Thelen) by e-mail at thelenj1@michigan.gov, or by fax at 517.241.8903. Questions concerning the forum should be directed to [Shelia Hankins](mailto:Shelia.Hankins) at 313.887.1866 or hankinss@michigan.gov.

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About IDVAAC

IDVAAC is a pioneering national organization focused on the unique circumstances of African Americans as they face issues related to intimate partner violence, child abuse, elder maltreatment, and community violence. IDVAAC's mission is to enhance society's understanding of and ability to end violence in the African-American community. Within this context, IDVAAC works with families, individuals, and organizations serving the target population; legal and criminal justice systems; faith- and community-based organizations; researchers; and policymakers toward building the knowledge base regarding African Americans and domestic violence and to develop strategies to meet the service needs of this population.

About Transformation Detroit

Transformation Detroit is a grassroots collaborative of individuals, community-based organizations, state officials, and other stakeholders who are committed to ending domestic violence in the greater Detroit community. The organization leverages the capabilities of local advocates, state-based resources, and national organizations to promote strategies for engaging the community in efforts toward creating culturally relevant approaches and a coordinated community response aimed at preventing violence against women and providing effective services to battered women and their families.



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