

## **Mayor Coleman Announces Successful Capital Campaign and Launch of Construction of Domestic Abuse Service Center in Saint Paul**

*Resource center to increase safety and support for victims of domestic violence*

**(Saint Paul, MN)** – Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman today announced the successful completion of a \$700,000 capital campaign to renovate office space in Saint Paul’s City Hall for a domestic abuse service center with a projected opening in May 2008. Mayor Coleman and Leigh Ann Olson, a representative of adult and child victims of domestic violence, joined hands to ceremonially strike a wall with a sledgehammer to officially launch the construction of the new center.

The Partnership for Domestic Abuse Services is a collaborative effort of more than 25 domestic violence advocacy, civil legal, prosecution, law enforcement, court, and social service agencies. At its centrally located service center, victims will receive orders for protection, culturally-relevant advocacy services for themselves and their children, law enforcement and civil legal services, medical services, and consultations with prosecutors. The center will also offer a designated area where children can play while their parent receives services. Additional services, such as employment counseling, housing assistance, mental health, and chemical dependency counseling will be available through a referral network to victims who access the center.

“Our community is taking an important step in ending the violence that has tragically touched the lives of thousands of women, men, and children in Saint Paul and Ramsey County,” said Mayor Coleman. In the last 10 years, 36 women and 23 children in Ramsey County were murdered as a result of domestic violence. Each year the St. Paul Police Department receives more than 8,000 domestic violence-related calls for service and more than 1,300 orders for protection are filed in Ramsey County.

“The center will bring together critical support services needed to prevent harm, provide safety, and promote justice for domestic violence victims in our community,” said Mayor Coleman. The City of Saint Paul has provided office space in City Hall to the Partnership for Domestic Abuse Services.

Shelley Johnson Cline, executive director of the St. Paul Domestic Abuse Intervention Project and member of the Partnership for Domestic Abuse Services Governance Committee, thanked the funders and in-kind donors that made the capital campaign a success. “We are thrilled that the business, corporate, and foundation communities have joined with the Partnership for Domestic Abuse Services to make our community’s dream of a domestic abuse service center come true,” Johnson Cline said. “This day would not be a reality without the support of The 3M Foundation, The F.R. Bigelow Foundation, The Hardenbergh Foundation, The Minneapolis Foundation, The Mardag Foundation, The Otto Bremer Foundation, The Saint Paul Foundation, and The Securian Foundation.”

Cline also noted, “We are extremely grateful for the generous in-kind donations of Briggs and Morgan Law Firm, BWBR Architects, the City of Saint Paul, Henricksen Furniture, Knutson Construction, and Nelson, Tietz and Hoyer. The tremendous support of our Capital Campaign funders and donors sends a clear message that our community is united in ending domestic violence.”

“Knutson Construction is delighted to contribute to the Partnership for Domestic Abuse Services’ vision of ending domestic violence,” said Bob Garner, director of corporate services at Knutson Construction, which donated its general contracting services to the Partnership for Domestic Abuse Services. “It is critical for Minnesota’s business community to invest in the safety of our residents.”

“While we celebrate the Partnership for Domestic Abuse Services’ successful capital campaign and the launch of the construction of their new domestic abuse service center today, we recognize that our work has just begun,” said Mayor Coleman. “To provide safety for domestic violence victims in Saint Paul and Ramsey County, the Partnership for Domestic Violence Services must be financially sustainable. We invite Minnesota’s business, corporate, and foundation leaders, as well as every resident in the state, to partner with us to invest in the safety of battered women and their children. Together, we can make domestic violence a thing of the past and enable thousands of families to live safely in peace.”

To learn more about the Partnership for Domestic Abuse Services and how all Minnesotans can invest in ending domestic violence, please go to [www.pdasminnesota.org](http://www.pdasminnesota.org)