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## **DOVE Center Gala celebrates 25 years of supporting survivors of domestic abuse, sexual assault**

ST. GEORGE, UTAH – Over 250 guests gathered at the SunRiver Community Center on Saturday, March 2 to celebrate DOVE Center’s 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Gala, entitled “LOVE THE DOVE.” By the end of the evening, DOVE had raised a grand total of \$125,603 – more than any previous gala.

“With 2019 being DOVE’s 25<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, we wanted to use this gala to celebrate and give recognition to the community partners that have made the organization what it is today,” Lindsey Boyer, Executive Director of DOVE Center said. “We are so grateful for the ongoing support that has allowed us to continue to grow and serve the community more fully.”

Fundraising portions of the evening included a live auction, silent auction and “Fund a Need.” All in all, a record breaking \$55,000 was raised on the night of the gala alone, in addition to \$49,500 from organizational sponsors’ contributions. Entertainment was provided by St. George Musical Theater’s ‘The Marvelous Wonderettes.’

All gala expenses were covered from the more than \$20,000 that was raised in ticket sales, allowing DOVE to dedicate 100% of sponsor contributions to victim services and community education programming.

“This will be our goal moving forward,” Boyer said. “...to dedicate sponsor contributions to programming, making them ‘organizational’ sponsors, and continue to celebrate these supporters at our event each year.”

Nearly half of DOVE’s funding and support comes from local community donors, Ruth Weniger, President of the Board of Directors said.

The organization relies heavily on their annual fundraising gala to continue offering support to some of the most vulnerable members in the community.

“Domestic abuse and sexual assault are serious issues and we honor survivors every day,” Weniger said. “They often face their future with uncertainty and fear and we work hard to give them hope for a more certain, secure future.”

Also in attendance at the Gala were two founding members of DOVE House, now called DOVE Center, Sheila Curl and Russ Gallian – both of whom were featured in a video tribute created by Salt Lake City based non-profit Spy Hop: Phase 2 Productions.

The video can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODGvvBoUD9I&feature=youtu.be>

These founders, with the help of the community, recognized the need for a place where victims of domestic abuse could find refuge and safety and opened the doors to a safe shelter in 1994.

DOVE services and programs include crisis intervention, advocacy, emergency shelter and housing assistance, pet safety services, relocation assistance, and trauma recovery counseling. They serve primarily Washington and Kane counties.

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Note for the editor: DOVE Center is a 501.c.3 not-for-profit organization committed to cultivating an informed community free from domestic and sexual violence. Our mission is to empower survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault through education and resources to increase safety and promote healing from trauma.