

"Rally For Hope" with Detroit Police Department, Deputy Mayor Ike McKinnon, MSU Coach Tom Izzo, Detroit Lions Running Back Ameer Abdullah, Community and Business Leaders, Raises Awareness of Domestic Violence
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SOUTHFIELD, Mich., Sept. 29, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Verizon, along with the City of Detroit's Deputy Mayor Ike McKinnon, the Detroit Police Department, Michigan State University Men's Basketball Coach Tom Izzo, Detroit Lions Running Back Ameer Abdullah and representatives from YWCA of Metropolitan Detroit, Jewish Women International and American Axle & Manufacturing, gathered together at Campus Martius Park in Detroit on Tuesday, Sept. 29 for the first ever Rally For Hope. The event served as a kick-off for the month-long HopeLine Drive in October, in which the public is invited to help Verizon reach 1 million phone donations for domestic violence education and prevention. In addition, Verizon announced that nine Michigan domestic violence agencies will receive a combined total of more than \$100,000 in HopeLine from Verizon grant money -- including a grant through the YWCA of Metropolitan Detroit to provide domestic violence training to the Detroit Police Department in November.

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Remarks from community leaders include:

- "Domestic violence impacts our families, our friends, our coworkers and our community -- one in three women, one in four men and more than 3 million children in the United States are hurt by it," said **Aimee Novak, Verizon's Director of Strategic Sales**, who spoke on behalf of the company at the Rally. "We encourage the public to join us in raising awareness and helping us reach 1 million donated phones by the end of 2015. This is an incredible opportunity to band together to make a real difference in the lives of domestic violence survivors by raising awareness and providing support and education through the donation of no-longer-used phones."
- "Domestic violence is a nuanced and complex problem, and the Detroit Police Department is dedicated to learning as much as we can about its causes, how to prevent it and how to identify and protect community members experiencing it," said **Detroit Police Chief James Craig**. "This training will help us do that, and will ensure we are optimally working with our community and municipal leaders to provide the best possible care, support and protection to the citizens of Detroit."
- "I am encouraging not only MSU fans, students, alumni and staff, but also the entire state of Michigan, to join me in supporting the statewide HopeLine drive launching today," said **Michigan State University Basketball Coach Tom Izzo**. "And for fans attending the October 24 MSU football game versus Indiana, you can make a fast and important difference by bringing your no-longer-used phones and accessories to donate to Verizon and MSU Safe Place volunteers at the entrance gates."
- "The City of Detroit has an energy and a passion unlike any other. Today we ask you to harness that passion and come together to support survivors of domestic violence through HopeLine from Verizon," said **Detroit Lions Running Back Ameer Abdullah**. "It's simple -- all it takes is cleaning out your junk drawers at home and dropping off your no-longer-used phones, in any condition and from any carrier, at any Verizon retail store."
- "American Axle & Manufacturing is proud to once again partner with Verizon to support and empower survivors of domestic violence through the HopeLine from Verizon program," said **American Axle & Manufacturing Director of Marketing and Communications Chris Son**. "This drive will help to make sure that survivors have the resources and help they need at their most critical hour and that the community's attention is drawn to this widespread issue."
- "Each year, YWCA's Interim House staff and volunteers handle nearly 5,000 crisis calls. Additionally, nearly 1,600 women and children are admitted to the YWCA Interim House program for an average stay of 65 days -- and our shelter has been at capacity for more than six months," said **Emma Peterson, President and CEO of YWCA of Metropolitan Detroit**. "By supporting the only domestic violence shelter in the city of Detroit, which offers programs like our 24-hour crisis help line, shelter, counseling, support groups, victim advocacy, childcare services and more, this \$30,000 HopeLine from Verizon grant will be an incredible source of relief and strength for our survivors in Detroit."
- "Jewish Women International is committed to protecting the fundamental rights of all girls and women to live in safe homes, thrive in healthy relationships and realize the full potential of their personal strength," said **Lori Weinstein, CEO and Executive Director of Jewish Women International**. "We are grateful to have the opportunity to partner with the YWCA of Metropolitan Detroit through the HopeLine from Verizon program to ensure that Detroit's women and children have safe access to necessary resources."
- "As someone who grew up in a home that could erupt violently at any point, I know how critical it is to provide a lifeline to women and children who are impacted by domestic violence," said **Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (MI-12)**. "This HopeLine funding from Verizon will ensure organizations in my district and throughout the State of Michigan can continue to give hope to survivors and provide life-saving services and support systems for women and children in need."

In conjunction with announcing the month-long HopeLine Drive, Verizon also announced at the Rally For Hope that the following Michigan-based domestic violence agencies are receiving a combined total of \$100,000 in HopeLine from Verizon grant money:

- YWCA of Metropolitan Detroit
- Jewish Women International
- Goodwill Industries of Detroit
- HAVEN of Pontiac
- Alternatives For Girls of Detroit
- First Step of Wayne County
- Ruth Ellis Center of Highland Park
- MSU Safe Place of East Lansing
- ACCESS of Dearborn

The YWCA of Metropolitan Detroit's \$10,000 grant is funding domestic violence training for more than 400 Detroit Police officers during a two-day training event in November. Mark Wynn, a retired police officer and internationally renowned domestic violence prevention expert, will lead the sessions. Wynn has performed training in all 50 states and more than 10 countries to train thousands of police executives, patrol officers, dispatchers, prosecutors, judges, legislators, health care professionals and advocates on domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse prevention. In addition to his educational career, Wynn, who is a survivor himself, has served as an advisor to state, national and international leaders to help guide and shape law and policy on this important issue and helped form the largest police domestic violence investigative unit in the United States.

HopeLine offers the public an opportunity to help prevent domestic violence by donating no-longer-used wireless phones and accessories in any condition from any carrier. Wireless phones given to HopeLine are refurbished and recycled in an environmentally sound way generating proceeds going toward financial support of domestic violence awareness and prevention programs. Verizon also donates phones through HopeLine – complete with service – to local domestic violence agencies or law enforcement agencies for use by domestic violence survivors. To participate, the public can take any old, no-longer-used phone or accessory to any Verizon retail location.

Since 2001, more than 11.4 million phones have been collected nationwide, more than \$29 million cash grants have been provided to domestic violence organizations and more than 190,000 phones have been donated to domestic violence survivors.

For more information, visit <http://www.verizon.com/about/responsibility/hopeline>.

About Verizon

Verizon Communications Inc. (NYSE, Nasdaq: VZ), headquartered in New York, employs a diverse workforce of 178,500 and generated more than \$127 billion in 2014 revenues. Verizon Wireless operates America's most reliable wireless network, with 109.5 million retail connections nationwide. Verizon also provides converged communications, information and entertainment services over America's most advanced fiber-optic network, and delivers integrated business solutions to customers worldwide. For more information, visit www.verizon.com/news/.

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