

STAND!

Against Domestic ViolenceSM

30 years of service

Options

FALL 2008

Catalina Torres

1964-2008

“If we don’t focus on changing society, we will never be free of violence.”



Catalina Torres, domestic violence survivor, longtime STAND! volunteer and outspoken advocate, was murdered on Saturday, September 6, 2008. In a sadly ironic turn of events, she was fatally shot by her cousin’s estranged ex-husband during a deadly domestic violence dispute that left a Martinez police officer, Sergeant Paul Starzyk, and the attacker dead as well.

Catalina had been protecting the gunman’s three children and a tenant when she was killed.

Catalina, a former STAND! client, was a powerful example of a woman who traveled the long road from victim to survivor and became an advocate.

“She was a remarkable woman full of compassion and sensitivity with an undeniable strength and resolve that was inspirational,” said Gloria Sandoval, STAND!’s Executive Director. “Anyone lucky enough to have seen her in action knows that she was a dynamic and empowering person. She will be missed terribly.”

Catalina came to STAND! fearing for her life and the lives of her two sons after a brutal, public beating by her partner. Catalina called STAND!’s Margaret Leshner Transitional Housing Program “a sanctuary. My time in transitional housing is a clear dividing line in my life.”

When Catalina graduated from the Margaret Leshner Center in 1999, she knew that she wanted to give back to the agency because of “what I have received through STAND!”

“When I left transitional housing, I knew that I was worthy to live a life free of violence, and it just seemed like the next logical step that all women are worthy of a society without violence,” Catalina said.

As a STAND! volunteer, Catalina bravely and passionately shared her family’s story of triumph over domestic violence at any and every opportunity from one-on-one situations to ballrooms full of people to County Supervisor’s meetings.

Please join us in sending your thoughts and prayers to her family and friends. We will always remember her strength and courage as we carry on the battle to end domestic violence and rebuild lives.

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from the Executive Director

BY GLORIA J. SANDOVAL

Dear Friends,

Six people have lost their lives to domestic violence over the last month in Contra Costa County.

A triple homicide broke the quiet on Saturday, September 6, in Martinez. Felix Sandoval was looking for his wife, Margarita, who had obtained a restraining order and was seeking a divorce. He was intent on killing her and their children. Instead, he fatally wounded her cousin, Catalina Torres, STAND! advocate and community activist. Felix shot and killed Martinez police officer, Sergeant Paul Starzyk. Officers returned fire and killed Felix Sandoval.



I knew Catalina Torres personally and considered her a friend. She was a vibrant, passionate and outspoken advocate for STAND!. I watched her tell her own story of survival and success to crowds of four to four hundred. Her grace, charm and intelligence warmed everyone within her radius. She was a shining example of everything we STAND! for at this agency. After years of abuse, she left her batterer after a brutal, public assault and rebuilt her life for herself and her two children with the help of STAND!'s Transitional Housing program. Catalina wasn't content to just to change her life—she wanted to change the world. She spoke and worked tirelessly on behalf of women's issues, and domestic violence in particular.

The loss of this brave, strong, compassionate soul is incalculable. She will be mourned by all who knew her.

Another tragedy just weeks before...

Gunshots rang out in a quiet Bay Point neighborhood on August 7, 2008. Javier-Franciso Valladolid murdered Graciella Gutierrez, his wife's cousin and shot Christian, his own son, in the head. Then, Javier turned the gun on himself and committed suicide. Four-year old Christian was airlifted by helicopter to Children's Hospital Oakland and was listed in critical condition following surgery. He lost his weeklong battle to survive on

August 15, 2008. Javier's rampage had claimed its final victim.

While the tragedy unfolded in Bay Point, Javier's estranged wife, **Maria was in a Martinez courtroom seeking protection for herself and her children through a renewed restraining order against him.**

For all apparent differences in these two stories, the commonalities are stark, sober realities:

- Children are left without mothers.
- People outside the abusive relationship lost their lives.
- Leaving the abuser did not guarantee safety for them or their families.

It is a cruel irony that both tragedies occurred when the abused women began to take action. Leaving is the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship. 75% of battered women killed by their abusers are murdered as or after they leave. Its not enough just to leave, they must have somewhere safe to go.

At STAND!, we support women with information about their options. Services like our crisis line and our shelter are absolutely necessary and life-saving resources. Our staff, supporters and volunteers never lose sight of that fact.

Join me in honoring the memory of these women, children and law enforcement that lost their lives, and the spirit of the survivors still with us by taking action. Plan an event during October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Donate to our shelter program. Come to STAND!'s luncheon. Talk to a friend about abuse. Write a letter to the editor. Take action. Catalina would have.

Sincerely yours,

Gloria J. Sandoval
Executive Director

P.S. As this newsletter went to press, SFGate reported that a Richmond postal worker was charged with the stabbing death of his pregnant girlfriend and her unborn child.

JOIN US FOR
**STAND! Against Domestic Violence's
16th Annual Rebuilding Lives
Luncheon**

Monday, October 20, 2008

**Concord Hilton • 1970 Diamond Boulevard • Concord, CA
Keynote Speaker: Denise Brown**

Fall is here and that means STAND! Against Domestic Violence's annual Rebuilding Lives Luncheon is around the corner!

Join hundreds of civic, business, and government leaders as well as staff, volunteers and donors as we celebrate the work of STAND! on Monday, October 20, 2008, at the Concord Hilton. Event registration begins at 11:30 a.m. with the luncheon program following from Noon until 1:30 p.m.

STAND! looks forward to the luncheon each year," says Gloria Sandoval, STAND!'s Executive Director. "It provides a unique opportunity for all our staff, volunteers, supporters and community partners to celebrate the life saving work that this agency does everyday. It is affirming and uplifting to look out across the Concord Hilton ballroom at a sea of STAND!'s friends, all there to STAND! up against family violence. The Rebuilding Lives Luncheon always leaves me full of pride and hope and reinvigorates everyone who works with us."

Excitement is truly mounting for this year's keynote speaker, Denise Brown, nationally renowned domestic violence activist. Denise sprang into action after the brutal and tragic murder of her sister, Nicole Brown Simpson in June 1994. We look forward to Denise's thought provoking and moving keynote speech.

Each year, STAND! proudly honors an individual or group whose work champions the cause of ending domestic violence with the prestigious Rollie Mullen Award. Named for the late Rollie Mullen who served as STAND!'s Executive Director for many years, the Award honors Rollie's radiant spirit, unwavering commitment to STAND!, and her passionate determination to reach families affected by domestic violence. Past recipients have included Senator Dianne Feinstein, Margaret Lesher, Elaine and Barry Taylor, Carole Haes Landon, Junior League of the Oakland East Bay, The Faith Task Force, Devorah Levine of Zero Tolerance for Domestic Violence.

This year's Rollie Mullen Award will be presented to the Contra Costa Office of Bay Area Legal Aid. Since 2001, BayLegal has aided low-income domestic violence survivors in Contra Costa County. BayLegal has assisted STAND!'s clients with restraining orders, child custody, immigration issues and a myriad of other needs.

STAND! will also honor slain domestic violence activist Catalina Torres and Martinez police officer Sergeant Paul Starzyk through a special posthumous Rollie Mullen Award that will be presented to their families.

Make certain to mark your calendar for Monday, October 20 and join us for this extraordinary afternoon of hope.

The Rebuilding Lives Luncheon is STAND!'s premiere fall event, and the seats fill rapidly. Please make your reservations today at 925-603-0138.

Sponsorships still available! Don't miss this outstanding opportunity to show your support for STAND!. Contact Patti Cawood at 925-603-0138 for details and benefits.



"I know he murdered my sister. Deep down in my heart I know it."

—Denise Brown

Born in Germany and raised in Southern California, Denise Brown led a life remarkable only in its normalcy until

June 12, 1994 when her sister, Nicole Brown Simpson, was murdered. If you were to ask Denise to describe herself prior to this tragic event, you would have heard, "I'm just a mom from Laguna Beach." Brown's life path dramatically altered, she would now tell you that along with her devotion to her son, Sean, she is also committed to raising awareness against domestic violence — a crime that kills three women every day in the United States.

Since early 1995 Denise Brown has traveled to various states speaking on the epidemic of domestic violence. She has addressed university student bodies, men in prison and in batterers' treatment programs, women at risk, church groups and various educational and legislative forums. Ms. Brown has helped raise funds for local shelters all across the country with her appearances, and has assisted in the success of a major project called the Vine System. This Program is an automated victim notification service of the release of batterers from jail or prison.

As part of her commitment, Ms. Brown has worked to help pass a variety of legislative solutions for domestic violence. One of her most important projects was to lobby on behalf of the Violence Against Women Act. Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania contacted Ms. Brown and asked for her assistance on a portion of the bill that was being stalled in committee in the U.S. Senate. With a potential slashing of its federal allocation to domestic violence services, Denise Brown testified to the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee for increased funding for the Violence Against Women Act. After her testimony, that portion of the bill's funding was increased from eighteen million to thirty-two million dollars. U.S. Senators Biden and Hatch have cited Denise Brown as "having done more for the issue of domestic violence than any other individual."

Denise Brown has made a life-long commitment to educate the public as well as improve the quality of living for women and children who have been victims of domestic violence. She is determined to banish the darkness and end the silence.

Taken from the Nicole Brown Foundation

STAND! Rolls the Dice and Wins Big—26th Annual Joie de Vivre Las Vegas a Success!

On June 2, The Round Hill Country Club debuted as the new venue for our fantastic Joie de Viva Las Vegas fundraiser. Master of ceremonies, John Sasaki of Fox KTVU Channel 2, and live auction ringmaster Dennis McCormack held court over almost a dozen getaway

packages, heirloom wines and one of a kind opportunities. The evening raised almost \$100,000 in support of STAND!'s life-saving outreach to victims of domestic violence.

In the midst of all the excitement and fun, our donors responded with tremendous generosity during the moving and inspirational "Build a Dream" portion of the evening. Donors opened their hearts and wallets with donations to our emergency shelter totalling an amazing \$19,500 on this offering alone.

This event was a high water mark for the annual fundraiser. From guest registration to the post dinner casino, the evening was infused with Vegas glamour.

Guests were treated to a decadent dinner served amid the electric décor that evoked the class and whimsy of the Rat Pack era while the musical mood was set by local spinmaster Kevin Kneafsey. A rich and varied pairing of wines flowed freely throughout the evening courtesy of Wilson Fleming Winery. After the auction festivities concluded, the attendees enjoyed a few hours of classic casino games including roulette, black jack and poker.

A warm thanks goes to the Joie de Viva Las Vegas committee, chaired by the incomparable Sue Rinetti. Her hard work and dedication brought together a wide cross section of businesses, both large and small, donors and volunteers and created an amazing, unforgettable evening!

A special thanks goes out to the dozens of volunteers who came together to make this fundraiser a reality. STAND!'s heartfelt gratitude goes out to all the volunteers involved. Your hard work and commitment made the evening a great success. Thank you!

Vanity For Charity

Once again STAND! Against Domestic Violence is lucky to have a supporter like Dr. Jerome Potozkin. For the second year in a row, Dr. Potozkin and *Vanity for Charity* raised over \$20,000 for STAND! programs and services. On May 6, more than 35 men and women came to the Walnut Creek office of Dr. Potozkin and got a little "refresher" with the knowledge that while doing for themselves, they were also doing for others.

As one patient, Carol A., said "it makes me feel good to know that the money from my procedure is going to help somebody to be safe, possibly for the first time in a long time." Dr. Potozkin's office manager Nesha said that as soon as their patients found out about this year's *Vanity for Charity* they began calling to make sure that they could get an appointment to once again take part in this great event.

On behalf of staff, clients, and our Board of Directors, STAND! would like to say a big THANK YOU to Dr. Potozkin, his wonderful staff, and all those who came and made this year's *Vanity for Charity* a resounding success. Without supporters like you, it would be impossible for STAND! to do the important work we do.



An Easy Way to Donate

If you shop with a grocery loyalty card, credit card, debit card or gas card, you could be donating hundreds of dollars each year to STAND! Against Domestic Violence. By registering your cards with eScrip you can easily contribute to STAND! throughout the entire year.



To enroll, donors simply register their existing cards online at www.escrip.com. When registering your cards with eScrip you will be asked for the Group ID, which is 5473847 for STAND!. After registering your cards, simply shop as usual. The eScrip program is automatic. Participating merchants make financial contributions to STAND! based on purchases made. STAND! receives contributions on a monthly basis, not quarterly, like many fundraising programs. Donors can even track their own purchases on the eScrip website allowing you to see just how much you are earning for STAND!

We hope that you will take a few moments to enroll in this beneficial program. If you have any questions about the eScrip program please contact Patti Link Cawood, Fundraising Manager at 925-603-0138 or pattic@standagainstdv.org

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

For the past 20 years, the United States has commemorated October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). During October, communities all across the country come together to celebrate survivors of domestic violence and to mourn those who have died due to domestic violence. National and local media feature the work of individuals and agencies working to end family violence.

It is with special sadness that we at STAND! mark this October. This summer has seen the loss of eight lives to domestic violence in our community. Three deaths including a four-year-old boy in the August Bay Point shooting. Just days ago a domestic dispute turned deadly claimed the lives of domestic violence activist Catalina Torres and Sergeant Paul Starzyk along with the shooter in Martinez. The very next day a Richmond postage worker stabbed and killed his pregnant girlfriend and her 8-month-old unborn child.

How will your business or community group observe Domestic Violence Awareness Month this October? There are numerous ways that we can raise awareness in our communities. Here are just a few ideas that STAND! can help you with.

- **Purple Ribbons** – A team of volunteers can pass out purple domestic violence awareness ribbons to employees and customers during lunchtime, at a large meeting or any time convenient for your business or community group.
- **Tabling Event** – STAND! volunteers can staff a table supplied with newsletters, flyers, ribbons and other material in your lobby, courtyard, or meeting space.

- **Speaking Engagement** – STAND! can provide a volunteer to speak to your employees or members about domestic violence during lunchtime, at a meeting, whenever is convenient for your company or group. It is a compelling, personal way to create awareness and educate your group not only about the effects of domestic violence, but also about the life-saving services that agencies like STAND! provide.

- **Dining Out Against Domestic Violence** – Restaurants can make a unique contribution by designating one day “Dining Out for Domestic Violence Day” and donating a percentage of an evening’s sales to STAND!. STAND! will acknowledge your restaurant in a special section of Options, our quarterly newsletter with distribution to over 5,000 STAND! supporters. This can help you expand your customer base and enhance your public image.

- **Rebuilding Lives Luncheon** – Join over 400 STAND! supporters at our 16th Annual Rebuilding Lives Luncheon on Monday, October 20th, at the Concord Hilton. It is always an inspiring afternoon. Single tickets, tables and sponsorships are available. Call 925-603-0138 for details.

- **Other Ideas** – Groups have organized bake sales, EScript drives, showers for the emergency shelter, walks, races, supply drives for client needs, and many other types of celebrations. We are open to any other suggestions you may have.

Please call Patti Cawood at 925-603-0138 to reserve any of the materials above or to find out how STAND! can provide assistance with your own ideas to commemorate Domestic Violence Awareness Month this October!



DAY OF HEALING: Creating Places of Hope and Peace

Sunday, October 19, 2008, 3:00 to 6:00PM
Senior Center, Baldwin Park, Concord

Have you or has someone you love been a victim of violence? Are you searching for a way toward healing? Join STAND! Against Domestic Violence and other community organizations and faith communities for a day of healing. Participate in prayer, music, ritual, and community as part of your own journey of healing or your work to help others. For more information, contact Jennifer Joslyn-Siemiatkoski at 925-603-0103 or jenniferjs@standagainstdv.org.

24-Hour Crisis Line: 1-888-215-5555

Donor Recognition Report 2/01/08 – 6/30/08

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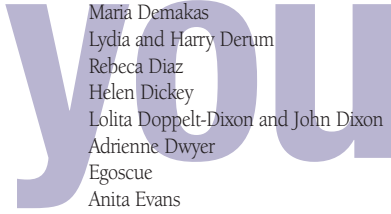
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for the
16th Annual

Rebuilding Lives Luncheon

Tribute to Catalina Torres and Sergeant Paul Starzyk

Monday, October 20, 2008

Concord Hilton
1970 Diamond Boulevard, Concord
12:00 Noon to 1:30 PM

**Keynote address by Denise Brown, DV Advocate,
Sister of the of the late Nicole Brown Simpson**

Tickets are \$100.00

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