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**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# National Sexual Violence Resource Center Recognizes Leaders in Sexual Violence Prevention With 2020 Visionary Voice Awards

*Honorees include lawmakers, survivor activists, longtime advocates, nurse examiners, law enforcement and more*

**Harrisburg, PA** – The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) announced today 24 recipients of its 2020 Visionary Voice Awards — a diverse group of honorees from across the country who represent a wide range of disciplines and were selected for their outstanding work toward ending sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse.

This year's recipients include **Maine State Senator Erin Herbig**, who sponsored bills to increase the statute of limitations, increase funding for services and expand anonymous sexual assault kit storage time; **West Virginia State Senator Mike Woelfel**, who worked to help survivors seek relief, first as an attorney and then as a state senator; **South Dakota State Representative Tim Reed**, who introduced legislation to fill the gaps in medical care for victims; and **Sydney Brun-Ozuna**, a journalism student and activist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who has used her experience to help change the system for other students.

“As the COVID-19 global pandemic heightens the risk of sexual and domestic violence in our communities, the hard work and perseverance of this year's Visionary Voice honorees can inspire each of us to do our part to protect one another and support survivors during Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April and beyond,” said NSVRC Executive Director Yolanda Edrington. “It is an honor to recognize this year's awardees who are turning the tide in communities across the country through their unwavering commitment to supporting survivors.”

The Visionary Voice Awards are presented annually by NSVRC, the leading nonprofit in providing information and tools to prevent and respond to sexual violence, in conjunction with [Sexual Assault Awareness Month \(SAAM\)](#). SAAM is a national campaign held each April to raise awareness about preventing sexual violence. This year's SAAM theme, “I Ask,” highlights how to practice consent online and in everyday life.

— MORE —

Nominated by state, territory and tribal sexual violence coalitions across the U.S, the following is a complete list of this year's Visionary Voice Award recipients:

- Kelsey Lansing (Nominated by Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault)
- Rolanda C. McCall (Nominated by D.C. Rape Crisis Center)
- Cheri W. Will (Nominated by Sexual Assault Network of Delaware)
- Susan Rubio Rivera (Nominated by Florida Council Against Sexual Violence)
- Melissa Gilpin (Nominated by Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs)
- Lt. Darren Zachary (Nominated by Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault)
- State Senator Erin Herbig (Nominated by Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault)
- Heather Hanline (Nominated by Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault)
- Nicole Matthews (Nominated by Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault)
- Lisa Saylor (Nominated by Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence)
- Sydney Brun-Ozuna (Nominated by Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence)
- Cristina Hernandez (Nominated by Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence)
- David A. Berry Jr. (Nominated by New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence)
- Jonel Beauvais (Nominated by New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault)
- Amy LaGesse (Nominated by Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence)
- Erika Brosig (Nominated by Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape)
- Luisa Seijo Maldonado (Nominated by Coordinadora Paz Para La Mujer)
- Felicia Smith (Nominated by Day One)
- Representative Tim Reed (Nominated by South Dakota Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault)
- Annette Burrhus-Clay (Nominated by Texas Association Against Sexual Assault)
- Kristine Rae Hall (Nominated by Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance)
- Mervin T. Mills (Nominated by Virgin Islands Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Council)
- Lorena Ault (Nominated by Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs)
- Senator Mike Woelfel (Nominated by West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services)

To learn more about the 2020 Visionary Voice Award recipients, please visit: <https://www.nsvrc.org/saam/visionary-voice-awards>.

## **ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH**

Sexual Assault Awareness Month is an awareness and prevention campaign observed every April. This year's theme is "I Ask" and highlights the importance of consent. Join the campaign by accessing free resources at [nsvrc.org/saam](https://www.nsvrc.org/saam). Resources are available in Spanish at [nsvrc.org/es/saam](https://www.nsvrc.org/es/saam).

## **ABOUT NSVRC**

NSVRC is the leading nonprofit in providing information and tools to prevent and respond to sexual violence. NSVRC translates research and trends into best practices that help individuals, communities and service providers achieve real and lasting change. The center also works with the media to promote informed reporting. Every April, NSVRC leads Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), a campaign to educate and engage the public in addressing this widespread issue. NSVRC is also one of the three founding organizations of RALIANCE, a national, collaborative initiative dedicated to ending sexual violence in one generation.