

Camp Hill Woman Wins First Ever Harrisburg Volunteer Citizen of the Year Award

Nancy Chavez wins inaugural award for her dedication to the fight against domestic violence

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (May 21, 2012) – In its first year, Direct Energy and The Patriot-News' 2012 Harrisburg Volunteer Citizen of the Year award is honoring Nancy Chavez of Camp Hill, PA. Chavez founded Randi's Race: A 5k Run and Walk for Courage" in honor of her beloved daughter, after her daughter was tragically murdered in 2003 as a result of domestic violence.

Since its inception in May 2005, Randi's Race has raised over \$245,000 for Domestic Violence Services of Cumberland and Perry Counties and most recently Randi's House of Angels. All proceeds go to providing counseling, emergency shelter, and legal advocacy and outreach programs for domestic violence victims.

Nancy, a survivor of domestic violence herself, has since then devoted her life to raising money, creating awareness and speaking on behalf of victims of domestic violence.

Nancy created Randi's House of Angels in 2011 not only to help cope with her own healing, but to provide a healing place for children who are exposed to and/or are victims of domestic violence. Randi's House of Angels will offer support, therapy and counseling to victims.

In February of 2007, Chavez formed a group called "Restoring Our Souls" (ROS), a support group for mothers and other family members who have lost a loved one to domestic violence. ROS is the first group of its kind in the Harrisburg area. Chavez uses her own personal experience to help others get through and cope with their loss. Continuing her crusade against domestic violence, she also established Randi's Camp for Hope, an organization specifically for children who are affected by domestic violence in their homes. Through educational, interpersonal and fun activities, children engage in activities designed to increase their self-esteem, self-concept and confidence in their own abilities. Randi's Camp of Hope empowers children to believe that their thoughts, feelings and actions are important, worthy of expression and that they are valuable contributors to the whole family unit.

By winning the Harrisburg Volunteer Citizen of the Year Award, Nancy will receive a \$1,000 cash prize and a \$5,000 donation to Randi's House of Angels. The donation will be used to hire licensed therapists that specialize in working with children who are victims of domestic violence or have had a family member murdered as a result of domestic violence. Additionally, for adult victims, attorneys will be hired to provide legal representation in custody and divorce hearings.

"Nancy has been through a horrific tragedy that no parent should ever have to face. Her perseverance to overcome and honor her daughter's memory and help her community is truly remarkable," said Cory Byzewski, vice president and general manager for Direct Energy US North Residential.

Lee Carlson, General Manager for the Patriot-News said, "We received 36 nominations and they were all very admirable but Nancy's story about how she is using her heartbreak to help others is nothing short of amazing. We are honored to be able to help her in her campaign to end domestic violence."

A special event honoring Nancy Chavez will be held at the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building Rotunda on Monday, June 4, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. Representatives from Direct Energy and The Patriot-News will be on hand to present Nancy with her award. The Pennsylvania State Capitol Building is located at North Third St., Harrisburg, PA 17120.

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About Direct Energy

Direct Energy is one of North America's largest energy and energy-related services providers with more than 6 million residential and commercial customer relationships. Direct Energy provides customers with choice and support in managing their energy costs through a portfolio of innovative products and services. A subsidiary of Centrica plc (LSE:CNA), one of the world's leading integrated energy companies, Direct Energy operates in 45 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia and 10 provinces in Canada.

About The Patriot-News

The Patriot-News is the largest daily newspaper that serves the Harrisburg metropolitan area and central Pennsylvania, including the Capitol region of Dauphin, Cumberland and Perry Counties. Delivering news and advertising to approximately 492,000 readers each week in print and on its website, www.pennlive.com, The Patriot-News is Harrisburg's full-service and award-winning newspaper. For more information and the latest news, visit www.patriotnews.com.

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