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Marjaree Mason Center Launches Capital Campaign & Community Challenge Nov. 1-15 Towards Building New Campus to Combat Domestic Violence

Fresno, CA — (November 1, 2023) — A project that began in 2018, the Marjaree Mason Center announces a capital campaign, Courage Takes Root, in conjunction with a two-week Community Challenge November 1-15, aimed at building a new Community Resource Center that meets the ongoing, critical need for services and the vision of a domestic violence-free community.

Beginning November 1, the Marjaree Mason Center is calling upon community members, businesses and organization to support the campaign to help adults and children escape domestic violence. Individuals, businesses or organizations that commit to contributing \$2,500 or more during the challenge period (Nov 1-15), either by donating directly or by raising the funds in their own way (employees and customers via fundraising drives, donation matching, etc.) will be eligible for marketing benefits and the company that raises the most will have a private meeting room named in their honor.

Additionally, Lynda and Stewart Resnick, through The Wonderful Company, will match up to \$1 million donated through November 15. Through the public's anticipated support, The Wonderful Company, and several lead gift donors, the Marjaree Mason Center is successfully positioned to complete the \$20 Million goal with an anticipated move in date of December 2024.

The following major donors have provided significant investments to date:

- **County of Fresno**

The County of Fresno allocated \$4.7 million of Federal ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding towards the remodel of the existing facility. The Marjaree Mason Center is the only known organization in Fresno County that meets the 14-service standards as identified in California Penal Code Pen S 13823.15 and the California Office of Emergency Services. According to the California Department of Justice reported numbers, of the ten most populated counties in the State, Fresno has the highest calls to law enforcement for domestic violence for every 1,000 residents.

“The Marjaree Mason Center does the important and necessary work of educating our community about domestic violence and providing crucial services to those who are affected by the cycles of abuse,” said County of Fresno County Administrative Officer, Paul Nerland. “The County of Fresno is proud to allocate \$4.7 million of ARPA funds to

help fund Marjaree Mason Center's new community resource location which will expand essential services and even life-saving resources to County residents.”

- **The Isnardi Foundation**

In honor of their \$3 million donation, the Community Resource Center will be named the Isnardi Foundation Community Resource Center.

Vincent Tocchini Isnardi was born and raised in Fresno, California by his Italian immigrant parents. After graduating from Fresno High, UC Berkeley and UCSF School of Pharmacy, Vincent returned to Fresno to join the family pharmacy, the International Drug Company. Vincent passed away in 2011 and his Foundation has supported The Marjaree Mason Center since 2013.

"Vincent's philosophy of life was to 'Treat everyone with dignity and respect, care for your patients as if they were your own parents, be a good listener, work hard, save for a rainy day, live modestly, and be humble.' It has been a tremendous pleasure to partner with the Marjaree Mason Center over the past decade as they care for families coming out of abusive environments,” said Isnardi Foundation Board President, Judith Griffin. “We know that, through this new community resource center, this gift of financial resources will be transformed to one of hope, safety and the improvement of personal and community health."

- **Janell Smittcamp-Boldt**

Janell Smittcamp-Boldt was one of the very first major donors to the project. She has been a Marjaree Mason Center donor for nearly 20 years. In recognition of Janell's generous donation, the 24/7 Crisis Support Center will be named in her honor.

“As a long-time member of the Fresno community, I have been blessed to be able to give back to areas closest to my heart: children and women,” Janell said. “It's truly an honor to support the Marjaree Mason Center, who provides compassionate care to families during one of the darkest times of their lives. This new center is a beacon of hope."

- **The Lyles Foundation**

In recognition of their generous \$1 million donation, the Board of Directors' Room will be named in honor of the Lyles Foundation.

“Since the start of our family business in 1945, the Lyles family has endeavored to provide opportunities and improve conditions for the members of our community,” said Kathy Porter, on behalf of the Lyles Foundation. “We are proud to support the new community resource center of the Marjaree Mason Center as it will enhance their ability to meet critical needs and intentionally address root causes of domestic violence to help us build a healthier community.”

- **Carl and Lulu Mitchell Family Foundation**

In recognition of their generous \$1 million donation, the Welcome and Reception Area will be named in honor of the Carl and Lulu Mitchell Family Foundation.

“It has been an honor to support the community and the Marjaree Mason Center,” said the Mitchells. “As retired health care professionals, we wanted to join them in creating a space that was welcoming and safe, giving survivors a place to heal.”

- **Lynda and Stewart Resnick, through The Wonderful Company**
Lynda and Stewart Resnick, through The Wonderful Company, have pledged matching funds up to \$1 million given through November 15.

“The Wonderful Company and our owners Lynda and Stewart Resnick are committed to supporting the communities in which our employees live and work, because we believe partnership is critical to building a healthy, thriving society,” said Andy Anzaldo, Chief Operating Officer, Corporate Social Responsibility at The Wonderful Company. “We are proud to lead this matching campaign because we have seen the transformational work of Marjaree Mason as supporters over the past decade, and believe this new center will have far-reaching impact for families across the Central Valley.”

Community Challenge:

As part of the Community Challenge November 1-15, ABC30, Cumulus Media and Outfront Media have donated significant advertising space to promote the campaign and encourage the public to give monetarily. Marketing agency MJR Creative Group designed all campaign materials.

If a business or organization would like to become a Challenge Partner and commit to raising \$2,500 or more during the challenge period, they can download a Commitment Form at www.mmcenter.org or contact Ashlee Wolf at (559) 487-1313 for additional details on the marketing benefits available to those involved.

Anyone can donate towards the Community Challenge to have every dollar up to \$1 Million matched through November 15 by visiting donate.mmcenter.org/challenge.

Naming opportunities are available in the new Community Resource Center in honor of donations and pledges of \$50,000 - \$10,000,000. Additionally, a permanent donor wall inside the building will be featured in honor of all donations of \$10,000 or more.

Campaign Background & Project Information:

While proud to have helped thousands of adults and children experience hope and healing through the Center’s 44-year history, the ongoing need is far greater than the current footprint can accommodate.

In December 2022, the Marjaree Mason Center purchased a 5.5- acre property in Fresno with an existing 37,680 sq. ft. building. In its 60-year history, the building was home to several educational organizations including Queen of the Valley, Heald College and The Milan Institute. A fundraising campaign is now underway to raise the additional funds needed to modernize the facility to meet today’s building and operational standards and transform it into a physically and emotionally safe Community Resource Center that will double the physical service capacity of the Center.

Due to the size of the project, the Marjaree Mason Center enlisted support services through Pace Management Group and plans have been developed with Paul Halajian Architects. At the end of September, BMY Construction Group, Inc. was selected as the Construction Manager General Contractor for the project and renovations are expected to begin early next year with a target completion date of December 2024.

Campaign Name:

Courage (noun)

The Quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc., without fear; bravery.

Take Root (verb)

To become established or fixed; to begin to develop.

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About Marjaree Mason Center

For over 40 years, the Marjaree Mason Center has offered safe housing and support services to adults and their children affected by domestic violence in Fresno County. As the only comprehensive domestic violence agency in Fresno County, the Marjaree Mason Center provides housing, legal services, counseling and education to survivors and youth. The Center was founded in 1979 after the murder of Marjaree Mason, a native of Easton. A graduate of Washington High School and Reedley College, Marjaree lived in Fresno for 31 years and was well known in the community. To contact MMC, call the business center at 559.237.4706, the 24-hour confidential emergency hotline at 559.233.HELP (4357) or help@mmcenter.org, or learn more online at www.mmcenter.org.