



For Immediate Release

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## TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL MAINE WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME

The Twenty-third Annual Maine Women's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Gala Celebration will be observed on Saturday, March 17, 2012 in Jewett Hall at the University of Maine at Augusta. Each year's ceremony is held at UMA during the month of March, in observance of Women's History Month.

A Silver Tea in honor of the inductees and registration will be held at 1:00 PM. Contributions will be accepted to augment BPW/Maine scholarship program.

The Induction Ceremony will be held at 2:00 PM for our two honorees: Mary Farrar of Solon, Victim-Witness Advocate since 1990, and Ruth L. Lockhart of Bangor, Co-founder and Executive Director of the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center.

The nomination of Mary Farrar was sponsored by Allyson H. Handley, Ed.D., President of the University of Maine at Augusta. The nomination of Ruth L. Lockhart was sponsored by Sharon Barker of Bangor, Director of Women's Resource Center at the University of Maine (Orono) and a 2009 Inductee in the Maine Women's Hall of Fame.

"Life after death" is generally considered the province of prophets and preachers. Since 1990, it was also the province of one stay-at-home mom, former bank teller and substitute teacher by the name of Mary Farrar. For her, though, life after death was not about what happens to someone after he or she dies, but rather what happens to those who are left behind—and left behind due to the most tragic of circumstances.

In 1984, ten years after her brother, William's murder, Federal Laws were enacted to protect the rights of crime victims. Although not aware of it at the time of her brother's death, the passing of these laws put Mary Farrar on a path that led to a career in victim advocacy.

Mary Farrar studied at the University of Maine at Farmington. She was hired by the Somerset District Attorney's Office in February of 1990. For six years she advocated for children and adult victims of sexual assault, and victims of domestic violence, aggravated assaults and attempted murders. In addition to being an advocate, she educated crime victims about their rights as victims, encouraged them to exercise those rights, and guided them through the criminal justice system.

The State of Maine Office of the Attorney General hired her in 1996, where she worked for fourteen years providing direct services to surviving families and friends of murder victims.

The Maine Chapter of Parents of Murdered Children welcomed her as their victim advocate. More importantly, they embraced her into their unique group as a fellow family member of a murdered victim. She is on the board of directors and remains an active member. The members of the Maine Chapter continue to provide her with emotional support and friendship and are her extended family.

Mary Farrar was instrumental in the planning and success of the Maine Chapter's first Victim's Rights Week in 2006, and in organizing Maine's first National Day of Remembrance for Murdered Victims in 2007. These have become annual remembrance programs and continue to be events that raise awareness about the aftermath of murder.

Mary Farrar was the State of Maine Office of the Attorney General Employee of the Year in 2000. She has served as a member of many elected and appointed panel positions throughout her career, including: the Maine Homicide Review Panel, the Department of Corrections Victim's Advisory Group, the Maine Elder Death Review Panel, and the Maine Commission to End Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Mary Farrar has testified before Maine Legislative

Committees, and is a past panel member for the Impact of Crime Program at the Maine Correctional Center and the Maine Correctional Reentry Network as a representative and advisor for the crime victim community. In 2010 she was a member of a working group involved in a bill for the enactment of Elder Abuse legislation.

She has also facilitated training on trauma and death notification practices for the Muskie School Social Worker Studies at the University of Southern Maine and the Maine State Police, local law enforcement agencies, and Emergency Medical Services in Southern Maine.

In December 2009, Mary Farrar was hired by the Department of Corrections as a victim advocate. She provided services in regard to restitution and notification of release of prisoners to crime victims.

After twenty-one years of service to crime victims, she retired from her position as a Victim Advocate in October 2011.

She continues to serve on the Department of Correction's Victim Advisory Group and work on behalf of crime victim's rights as well as watch over legislative bills that have a direct impact on crime victims.

Mary Farrar received the distinguished Father Ken Czillinger Professional Award from the National Organization of Parents of Murdered Children in August of 2011 for her contribution, dedication and sensitivity to the victims of violent crime.

She certainly has her fans at the national level, but no one loves her more than the Maine families she has helped and supported over the years. They are not all women, of course, but so many of them are – of every age from the youngest daughter to the middle-aged widow to the aging grandmother. While she may be neither a prophet nor preacher, Mary Farrar has worked her own share of miracles; and there are more than a few who just downright worship her.

Ruth L. Lockhart is one of the most respected and accomplished women leaders in Maine. Her crowning achievement is founding and leading Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center, a unique women's health organization in Maine that was created to respond to the increasingly hostile political environment for reproductive rights and abortion. The Center has achieved success beyond anyone's expectations, and her leadership has been critical. Her demeanor is always respectful, always gracious, and her conviction that women must have reproductive freedom and privacy never wavers. Because of these attributes, she is able to work productively with all sorts of people, regardless of their position, their values, or their socioeconomic status. Working in abortion services during this time is not only challenging, but also dangerous, but her commitment stays strong, and her reaction to adversity is measured and effective. Without compromising her values or her commitment to women, she is able to marshal the resources and support to address any contingency.

Mabel Wadsworth Center is a medical service available to all women, and provides the only access to abortion care north and east of Augusta. Ruth Lockhart was instrumental in organizing many women's health conferences, including many firsts: first statewide conference on menopause, first on women's health and disabilities, first on lesbian health care, first on women and AIDS, and others. Women come from all over Maine to receive education and information about women's health issues in a way that is balanced and is based on the individual needs and interests. A large proportion of the Center's clients are the uninsured and underinsured, and the Center establishes payment schedules for women based on their stated ability to pay. Without this option, many women would not receive the health care they need to lead healthy lives. When the Center discovered that the waiting period for colposcopy for low-income women who had bad pap tests was months, the Center applied for and received funding for their own colposcope and training for the nurse practitioner so the service could be offered within days.

Creation of a Lesbian Health Project provided educational materials and networks for lesbians, who frequently are left out of discussions about women's health. Until they were able to obtain the medical care they need at the Center, Ruth Lockhart and a small group of volunteers brought an exam table to Gay/Lesbian statewide meetings and provided pap tests and basic

women's health care on site. The Center provides an organizational structure and place where lesbians can find services not offered elsewhere, even a workshop on wills for Lesbians.

During the time of greatest violence in the abortion movement, she led a project called CUREs, Communities United for Reproductive Safety. This project brought together abortion advocates with people opposed to abortion to discuss ways to keep the Bangor community safe from the incidents that were happening elsewhere in the country. One important aspect of this project was advising City Council about legal options to keep residential neighborhoods safe from threats of violence from hostile picketers. This was a time when the community came to more fully understand the impact and scope of the Center's work. Not only did it provide medical services, it also educated individuals and communities about their rights and responsibilities, and established productive relationships with doctors, police, and other community leaders, as well as their clientele.

Ruth Lockhart is an original founder of the Feminist Abortion Network, a national organization of the less than 20 private, non-profit organizations that provide abortion in the United States. This group offers a voice that is independent of government funding and is able to speak out on behalf of women when other organizations may jeopardize their funding by doing so. These organizations have been able to share expertise and experience and thereby make the individual organizations stronger, as well as providing a national network. In Maine, she chairs the Maine Choice Coalition, a membership coalition of organizations and individuals who support abortion rights.

She has been a pioneer in other ways that have benefited the women of Maine. She was one of the first people in the nation trained to be AIDS Educators, and was a prominent figure in the development of Maine's protocols and service delivery for people with AIDS. She brought this expertise to the University of Maine, where she organized comprehensive AIDS education for staff and students, created the SHARE (Sexual Health and Reproductive Education) peer education program, and coordinated UMaine's Women's Health Services. She also was one of a small group of people who brought the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure to Maine. That

organization continues to raise money for breast cancer education and services, providing thousands of dollars to Maine organizations every year.

Ruth Lockhart's contributions to Maine women have been direct educational programming not available elsewhere, a safe and supportive organization in which to receive health care, a strong voice in Augusta and elsewhere in defense of women's reproductive freedom, and the establishment of thriving, autonomous organizations that will continue to provide support for women and give them, a voice in policy development and legislation.

Ruth Lockhart's inclusive and non-judgmental style combined with highly developed teaching, management and public speaking skills, and a singular devotion to women's reproductive rights and equality make her an ideal inductee for the Maine Women's Hall of Fame.

The Maine Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs established the Maine Women's Hall of Fame in 1990, to honor women who have made an outstanding contribution to improving opportunities for all Maine women. The BPW/Maine Futurama Foundation and The University of Maine at Augusta are co-sponsors.

The three criteria for selection to be inducted are (1) woman's achievements have had a significant statewide impact, (2) woman's achievements significantly improved the lives of women in Maine, and (3) woman's contribution has enduring value for women.

The Maine Women's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held on Saturday, March 17, 2012 in Jewett Hall at the University of Maine at Augusta. For more information, please contact Sally Ann Parks, chair for Hall of Fame, P O Box 84, Hinckley, ME 04944; 207-453-6004.