



IDVAAC
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Institute on Domestic Violence In
The African American Community

Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Conference in Long Beach to Explore Healing for Domestic Violence Survivors
Event Will Feature Remarks by U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder and a live performance by
Margaret "Shug" Avery of "The Color Purple."**

ST. PAUL, MN – Each year, millions of women are the victims of domestic violence, and a number of these violent incidents are witnessed by children in the home. Strategies to address the abuse tend to focus on escaping the violence, yet little attention has been devoted to transitioning these victims from being survivors to being healed of the long-term psychological and emotional trauma associated with victimization. The Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community (IDVAAC) will address this topic through its conference, *A Journey to Healing: Finding the Path*, to be convened August 3-4, 2009 in Long Beach, California.

"Historically, conversations about domestic violence have focused on the immediate impact on and needs of battered women: what they experience, how to safely exit an abusive relationship, and how to re-establish themselves as survivors," says Dr. Oliver Williams, IDVAAC Executive Director. "Through this conference, we will be able to give attention to their pathways to recovery and healing in the long-term."

Catherine Pierce, Acting Director of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women, will provide opening remarks; **U.S. Congresswoman Laura Richardson**, of California's 37th District will be on hand for a special presentation; and **U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, Jr.**, will offer a message of hope and healing to conference participants.

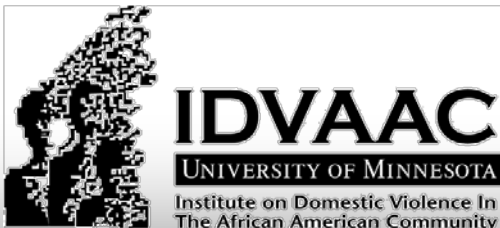
Other features include original music by Grammy-award winning R&B group **Sounds of Blackness** and an original vignette featuring a live performance by Academy award-nominated actor **Margaret "Shug" Avery** of *"The Color Purple."* Panel discussions and presentations by domestic violence survivors, adults who witnessed domestic violence during their childhood, and experts on trauma, domestic violence, and child development will offer in-depth and first-hand perspectives on how to help promote healing in the lives of battered women and children who witness domestic abuse. **Mildred Muhammad**, former wife of the convicted "DC sniper," will speak about the challenges a battered woman may face in fighting for the hearts and minds of her children.

IDVAAC is convening the conference in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. For more information about IDVAAC or its upcoming conference, visit www.idvaac.org online, or call 1.877.NIDVAAC.

About IDVAAC

IDVAAC is a pioneering national organization focused on the unique circumstances of African Americans as they face issues related to intimate partner violence, child abuse, elder maltreatment, and community violence. IDVAAC's mission is to enhance society's understanding of and ability to end violence in the African-American community. Within this context, IDVAAC works with families, individuals, and organizations serving the target population; legal and criminal justice systems; faith- and community-based organizations; researchers; and policymakers toward building the knowledge base regarding African Americans and domestic violence and to develop strategies to meet the service needs of this population.

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