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Elizabeth Barnhill recognized with 2010 Gail Burns-Smith Award

On Wednesday, September 1, Elizabeth Barnhill was presented with the first annual Gail Burns-Smith Award in honor of her contributions to the sexual violence prevention field.

ENOLA, PA – The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) and the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) are pleased to present Elizabeth Barnhill, Executive Director of the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault (IowaCASA), with the first annual *Gail Burns-Smith Award* during the National Sexual Assault Conference in Los Angeles, CA.

This award, jointly sponsored by ATSA and the NSVRC, is named in honor of Gail Burns-Smith (1946-2009) who strengthened the partnership between advocates in the sexual violence prevention field and those working in the area of sex offender management and treatment. “This is a wonderful opportunity of collaboration as ATSA and NSVRC join together to honor Gail Burns-Smith who was a visionary in both her thinking and her actions. ATSA is very excited to see how this collaborative effort will grow in the future,” added Maia Christopher, Executive Director of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers.

From 1982 to 2004, Burns-Smith was the Executive Director of Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Center (CONNSACS). Over the past 20 years, her accomplishments have impacted those in Connecticut and across the U.S. In Connecticut, Gail instituted one of the first Spanish-language hotlines for sexual assault victims. On a national level, she co-founded the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence. She was one of the first national leaders to establish meaningful collaborative partnerships between advocates working on behalf of sexual assault victims and those working to effectively manage and treat sex offenders. She recognized that victim/survivors and offenders live in the same communities, in fact oftentimes in the same family; and the needs of both should be addressed in order to ensure safety.

Similarly to Burns-Smith’s work, Barnhill continues to build effective partnerships between advocates who work on behalf of victims and those who work with and treat sex offenders. As, Executive Director of IowaCASA for over 20 years, she serves on numerous state boards and committees related to victim advocacy and sex offender management. She is a founding member of the Iowa Board for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers and provides leadership for the National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project. She is also a past president and founding member of the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence.

Karen Baker, NSVRC Director, said “I can’t imagine a more appropriate person to be the first recipient of this award. Beth is a highly respected advocate and leader in both realms. She is establishing a very high bar for future recipients of this award. Gail would be pleased.”

ATSA, the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers, is an international, multi-disciplinary organization dedicated to preventing sexual abuse. For more information on the treatment and management of individuals who have sexually abused or are at risk to abuse, visit www.atsa.com.

The NSVRC, founded by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, serves as a comprehensive information center related to sexual violence and its prevention. For more information on training, technical assistance and prevention resources on sexual violence, visit www.nsvrc.org.

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