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Women of Color Network, Inc.

Women of Color Network, Inc. Applauds the Department of Justice for Release of Guidance on Gender Bias in Law Enforcement

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch announced today a new guidance from the Justice Department designed to help law enforcement agencies prevent gender bias in their response to sexual assault and domestic violence. The guidance, entitled, "Identifying and Preventing Gender Bias in Law Enforcement Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence," advises law enforcement agencies to incorporate the following principles into clear policies, comprehensive training and effective supervision protocols:

- Recognize and address biases, assumptions and stereotypes about victims.
- Treat all victims with respect and employ interviewing tactics that encourage a victim to participate and provide facts about the incident.
- Investigate sexual assault or domestic violence complaints thoroughly and effectively.
- Appropriately classify reports of sexual assault or domestic violence.
- Refer victims to appropriate services.
- Properly identify the assailant in domestic violence incidents.
- Hold officers who commit sexual assault or domestic violence accountable.
- Maintain, review and act upon data regarding sexual assault and domestic violence

"We applaud the DOJ for its release of this groundbreaking guidance on gender bias, and encourage local and state law enforcement entities to utilize this guidance to strengthen their daily practices. We look forward to more and continued stances being taken to address bias within law enforcement and the criminal justice system as a whole," says Tonya Lovelace-Davis, CEO, of the Women of Color Network. "This guidance may be useful in avoiding such cases as that of Daniel Holtzclaw, a police officer, who was just convicted for the sexual assault of 13 African American women, a case where clearly gender, racial and class bias was at play. DOJ's guidance can help in taking solid steps toward identifying the ways that racism, sexism, classism

and homophobia among other issues create layers of barriers for women of color and other underserved communities in their encounters with law enforcement.”

The DOJ press release, **Guidance and Guidance Fact Sheet** can be found [here](#).

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The Women of Color Network, Inc.

The Women of Color Network, Inc. is a national grassroots advocacy organization that focuses on addressing the unique challenges facing women of color advocates and activists within the violence against women movement. WOCN provides and enhances leadership capacity and resources that promote the activities of women of color advocates and activists within the Sovereign Nations, the United States and U.S. Territories to eliminate violence against women and families.

WOCN Inc.’s mission broadly includes fighting against all forms of violence against women, which includes: domestic and sexual violence; human trafficking and police brutality. WOCN Inc.’s work is grounded in the understanding of violence in the global context of colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, and other forms of oppression that intersect with violence against women of color.

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Check us out on Facebook: Women of Color Network

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The DOJ press release, **Guidance and Guidance Fact Sheet** can be found [here](#).