

Gloria Steinem to Host Local Fundraiser in Support of “Private Violence” Documentary

Film and education project uncovers the epidemic of domestic violence in America

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DURHAM, N.C., [February 5, 2010] – When local domestic violence advocate and survivor Kit Gruelle interviewed Gloria Steinem for her documentary “Private Violence,” she didn’t anticipate that Steinem would become an avid supporter. “‘Private Violence’ is the best film I’ve ever seen on domestic violence,” said Steinem. On Sunday, February 28, the famous activist-author will travel to Chapel Hill, N.C. to speak at a fundraiser for the film.

Sharing the stage will be Ann Jones, internationally known feminist and author of “Women Who Kill” and “Next Time, She’ll Be Dead,” domestic violence survivors Fran Bumgarner and Vernetta Cockerham, and Deborah Tucker, executive director of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence.

A feature length documentary, “Private Violence” draws from more than 150 hours of interviews with domestic violence survivors and advocates, pioneering activists, and vocal allies of the movement, including Vice President Joseph Biden. In a scene from the film, Biden said: “If the Lord Almighty came down and said, ‘Joe Biden, you can have one wish to deal with violence in America,’ I would say eliminate violence against women. The simple reason is that it would transform society.”

Participants in the fundraiser will support more than a documentary film, according to Gruelle. “‘Private Violence’ represents a comprehensive outreach effort to end the recurring cycle of domestic abuse. We are thrilled that Gloria will be joining us in support of this critically important issue,” she said.

Gruelle is partnering with award-winning, Durham-based documentary filmmakers Cynthia Hill (“Tobacco Money Feeds My Family” and “The Guestworker”) and Rebecca Cerese (“Change Comes Knocking: The Story of the North Carolina Fund”). Video Dialog founder, Dr. Steven Channing (“Durham: A Self Portrait”) is an executive producer. Previous success for this dynamic team includes “February One,” the story of the Greensboro Woolworth’s sit-ins that sparked a national civil rights movement, which premiered on PBS.

According to Gruelle, while domestic violence often happens behind closed doors, its impact reaches deep into our communities. “This film connects the dots between violence in the home and other serious social problems – gangs, drugs, teenage runaways, high school dropouts, and bullying behavior,” said Gruelle. “From misdemeanors to murder, domestic violence often is found at the heart of many crimes.”

The presence of Gloria Steinem in the region for this fundraiser is a significant coup. A foremother of contemporary feminism, she is known internationally for her tireless activism in support of women's rights. In 1971, she co-founded the National Women's Political Caucus. The following year, she became the founding editor and publisher of Ms. Magazine. A prolific writer, her published work includes the national bestsellers "Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions," and "Revolution from Within."

All donations to "Private Violence" up to \$50,000 will be matched by Joan Waitt. In addition to hundreds of individual supporters, "Private Violence" has received funding from Cindy Waitt and the Waitt Institute for Violence Prevention, which was created by Ted Waitt, co-founder of Gateway, Inc. "Private Violence" is a fiscally sponsored project of the Southern Documentary Fund.

WHAT: "Private Violence" Fundraiser with Gloria Steinem.

WHEN: Sunday, February 28, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

WHERE: Spice Street, University Mall, 201 South Estes Drive, Chapel Hill, N.C.

COST: Minimum donation \$25 per person. All proceeds support completion of "Private Violence."

INFO: 919.824.0811 or privateviolence@gmail.com.

Reserve tickets at www.southerndocumentaryfund.org. Tickets will be available at the door. All donations are tax deductible.

Durham-based poet and musician Shirlette Ammons will perform at the event, which also features an auction of memorabilia signed by Steinem. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served with a cash bar available.

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