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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Forward Thinking, Outstanding Service Honored at INCASA 25th Anniversary Gala

Indianapolis, IN (May 3, 2011) – The Indiana Coalition Against Sexual Assault (INCASA) is excited to announce our 25th Anniversary of providing services to victims of sexual violence in Indiana. To commemorate this important anniversary, INCASA will host a Gala on Friday, May 6th, from 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. at Oak Hill Mansion in Carmel.

INCASA is honored to announce the Indiana National Guard and the Indiana Fever with the 2011 Vision of Hope Award for their outstanding service in sexual assault prevention and education. Mary Weiss of Weiss Communications will be honored with the 2011 Visionary Voice Award for her forward thinking and willingness to tackle the tough topic of sexual violence.

The Indiana National Guard has partnered with INCASA to train military Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, and how Indiana can be prepared to assist military personnel who seek services through civilian hospitals and rape crisis centers. This partnership brings civilian advocates and military advocates together coordinating sexual violence prevention education and response for service men and women throughout the state of Indiana.

In 2007, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) worked with the WNBA to promote Choose Respect initiative to help form healthy relationships to prevent dating abuse before it starts. The Indiana Fever have used this opportunity to partner locally with INCASA to reach students and helping schools implementing the Choose Respect curriculum with guest speakers and holding a convocation at the end of the school year. The Fever's accomplishments and continued work in the community continues to help at risk youths across Indianapolis.

Mary Weiss, President and Chief Executive Officer of Weiss Communications, is the 2011 Visionary Voice Award winner. Ms. Weiss launched *Indianapolis Woman Magazine* in 1994 and *St. Louis Woman Magazine* in 2004. Ms. Weiss has challenged her readers with information on teen dating violence, technology and cybercrimes, and sex abuse at the hands of someone in a position of authority, Ms. Weiss' vision and forward thinking has resulted in many conversations and greater awareness in our schools and communities on sexual violence.

Our 25th Anniversary Gala is themed One in Seven: Just the Tip of the Iceberg. The theme aptly conveys the stark reality that one in seven women is a victim of sexual violence in her lifetime in Indiana and fewer than 25% of victims report their crimes to law enforcement. In 2010 there were over 6,000 adult victims that sought services at a rape crisis center and over 4,000 children that went through the system as substantiated cases of child sexual abuse.

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Individual seating is available for \$75 per ticket and can be purchased at www.incasa.org. Couples are \$125 and tables of 8 are \$700. Funds raised will support the ongoing efforts to eradicate sexual violence in the State of Indiana. For more information on the INCASA 25th Anniversary Gala, please visit www.incasa.org/25th-anniversary-gala/.

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