



Media Release  
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## **Atlanta's generosity is recession proof PADV raises nearly \$600,000 to end domestic violence**

ATLANTA, February 26, 2009 – Atlanta corporations, community philanthropists and caring individuals gathered this past Saturday in a celebration of hope and raised \$585,000 to benefit battered women and their children. Partnership Against Domestic Violence teamed up with Verizon Wireless, Atlanta Gas Light, Avon, GE, and scores of others for its 21st annual *Hearts with Hope*. The gala is PADV's signature fundraiser and stewardship event that raises approximately half of its annual general operating revenue.

Suzanne Sitherwood, president of Atlanta Gas Light, and her husband Guy Griswold, principal of Blue Ridge Strategies, co-chaired this year's gala held February 21, 2009, at the InterContinental Buckhead Atlanta. "PADV's programs and services are urgently needed in metro Atlanta. Our community recognizes how essential PADV's mission is and helped us raise significant dollars during an economic recession," said Sitherwood. "Domestic violence affects us all, whether we know it. That's why PADV's community outreach is vitally important. In addition to raising money, *Hearts with Hope* helped us reach thousands of Atlantans with crucial information about domestic violence and PADV," said Griswold.

One of the highlights of the evening's festivities included a live performance by Shawn Mullins. Mullins who is a singer-songwriter, performed a number of songs including his Top 10 hit "Lullaby," for which he received a Grammy® nomination. He was so inspired by PADV's good work and outpouring of support, that he unexpectedly donated two private in-home concerts to the live auction and raised \$11,000 for PADV in a matter of minutes. When asked why he decided to donate, he said "PADV does such important work in our community. I wanted to do more to support the cause."

"The current economic crisis has led to an increased need for PADV's services. Even though economic stress may not cause domestic violence, it can exacerbate an already violent relationship and severely impair a battered woman's ability to break free of abuse," said Cathy Willis Spratz, president and CEO for PADV. "Raising more than half a million dollars will help us continue to meet the growing demand for PADV's life-saving services including a 24-hour crisis line, emergency shelter and support groups," continued Willis Spratz.

### **About Partnership Against Domestic Violence**

Partnership Against Domestic Violence is the largest and one of the oldest nonprofit domestic violence organizations in Georgia. For more than 30 years, PADV has been providing professional, compassionate, and empowering support to battered women and their children in metro Atlanta. PADV provides violence prevention, emergency intervention and long-term advocacy for battered women and their children including a 24-hour crisis line, two emergency shelters in metro Atlanta, transitional housing, support groups, legal advocacy, and a teen dating

violence prevention program. To learn more about domestic violence and PADV programs and services, please visit [www.padv.org](http://www.padv.org).

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