



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Annual Fundraiser Hopes to Raise \$130,000 to Help Victims of Crime and Trauma in Summit County

On Saturday, March 7, 2020 over 400 guests will once again turn The Tangier in Akron into a night out on Bourbon Street for Victim Assistance Program (VAP)'s annual Mardi Gras Gala, presented by Leppo Rents! Guests will enjoy a gourmet meal, an open bar, live & silent auctions while helping to reach the fundraising goal of \$130,000. For over 25 years, proceeds from the agency's signature Mardi Gras Gala have directly impacted victims of crime and trauma in Summit County. The generous support of the community allows victim advocates to provide 24-hour crime scene response, crisis intervention and advocacy services to over 6,000 victims each year.

Each year, we recognize those in our community who embody the importance of the work we do. VAP is pleased to announce our awardees for this year's Courage Award and the Bernard I. Rosen Community Service Award. The Bernard I. Rosen Community Service Award honors the life and work of Bernie Rosen, a well-loved attorney, community activist and leader of numerous non-profits throughout the Akron area. This year, VAP recognizes the extraordinary work of Dr. Jennifer Savitski, who makes Akron a better place to live—an effort that Bernie made his life's work. Dr. Savitski is the chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Cleveland Clinic Akron General, current board president of the Women's Network, and former Medical Director of the Providing Access to Healing (PATH) program, which cares for, collects evidence from, and protects survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence who seek medical care. 2020 marks the 5th anniversary of the PATH program's inception at Cleveland Clinic Akron General and to celebrate, Cleveland Clinic Akron General is generously supporting the Mardi Gras Gala as our Hardship to Healing Sponsor, continuing to pave the path forward for trauma informed recovery for every member of our community in need.

The Courage Award is presented to a VAP client who exemplifies exceptional courage and resilience in the face of trauma. Victim Assistance Program is honored to present Holly Neman with this year's Courage Award. Holly worked with advocates at Victim Assistance Program, as well as nurses from the PATH program, throughout her healing journey.

empowering our community to restore lives impacted by crisis, violence, and tragedy



There are many ways to help. Victim Assistance Program is currently seeking sponsors and donations for the Gala. If interested in sponsoring this incredible event, there are many options available beginning at \$500, which include event tickets, advertising, and more. Other opportunities to help include donating an item or experience for the live and silent auctions or purchasing a program advertisement.

Discounted early bird tickets are available now through February 3, 2020 for \$100.00 per person, after which the price increases to \$115.00. To learn more about the event and make your reservations visit victimassistanceprogram.org/mardigrasgala/ or phone Victim Assistance Program at 330.376.7022.

The mission of Victim Assistance Program is to empower our community to restore lives impacted by crisis, violence, and tragedy. The purpose of the Agency is to provide 24-hour crisis response, advocacy services, and education to victims of crime and trauma and the professional community who serves this population. To learn more about Victim Assistance Program's services, and ways to get involved, visit victimassistanceprogram.org or call our 24-hour hotline, 330.376.0040.

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