



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CHICAGO MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON HEARS DIRECTLY FROM SURVIVORS AT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ROUNDTABLE

Chicago (September 3rd, 2024) – Wednesday afternoon, Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson met with survivors of gender-based violence at WINGS Metro Safe House for a roundtable. Survivors shared with the mayor their first-hand knowledge of what additional financial resources are needed to make Chicago a safe city for survivors and ensure children break the cycle of violence.

Organized by The Network Advocating Against Domestic Violence and WINGS Program, the event began with a tour of WINGS Metro Safe House. Also in attendance was 14th Ward Alderwoman Jeylú Gutiérrez.

At the roundtable, survivors shared their experiences: what resources were most impactful, what could have been done better to support them, and what they see as the most pressing needs of survivors in Chicago. Many survivors shared the need for longer-term counseling for themselves and their children, the powerful impact of emergency funds to establish independence from their abuser, and the importance of transitional housing programs.

Rebecca Darr, WINGS President & CEO shares, "We were thrilled Mayor Johnson took this time to hear what survivors are experiencing. This roundtable made up of inspiring survivors displayed that investing in housing, adult and child

counseling services, and Survivor Crisis Funds can save lives and ultimately break intergenerational cycles of violence.”

Adding to these sentiments, Amanda Pyron, Executive Director of The Network says, “The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence is grateful to Mayor Johnson for meeting with and listening to survivors of gender-based violence. These brave survivors were honest about what is needed to strengthen the safety net in Chicago and the Mayor and his team were empathetic in their responses. We also appreciate the presence and commitment of Alderwoman Jeylú Gutiérrez, who will work with WINGS and The Network to ensure the needs of survivors in her ward are met.”

Mayor Johnson commented, “I am honored to have joined this roundtable with survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and our host organizations, WINGS and The Network. WINGS and The Network are supporters of GBV and valued thought partners of our GBV Task Force and we appreciate their contributions to survivors and the sector overall. As centering survivors’ experiences and voices is crucial in all discussions about community safety, I am committed to supporting them and grateful for their courageous partnership towards building a **better, stronger, safer Chicago** for everyone.”

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ABOUT WINGS PROGRAM, INC.

The [mission of WINGS Program, Inc.](#) is to provide housing, integrated services, education, and advocacy to end domestic violence. With nearly 40 years of experience, WINGS is a premier provider and leading expert in the field of direct service domestic violence solutions.

As the largest domestic violence agency in Illinois, WINGS creates and implements high-quality, client-centered, domestic violence programs for survivors of all ages, ethnicities, and gender identities. The agency’s housing programs have provided over one million nights of safe housing in well-maintained facilities. WINGS Community Based Services are innovative and scalable. WINGS Children and Family Services program provides critical interventions for youth to end the cycle of violence.

Anyone experiencing domestic violence can receive help by calling the 24-hour hotline at 847.221.5680. Survivors interested in learning more about WINGS counseling services may call 847.519.7828. For more information, visit www.wingsprogram.com.



From Left: Rebecca Darr, WINGS President & CEO; Carline Theodore, WINGS Director of WINGS Metro and Rapid Rehousing; Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson; Amanda Pylon, The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence Executive Director; and La Tonya Walker, WINGS Chief Program Officer.



Mayor Johnson addresses survivors at the GBV Roundtable.



La Tonya Walker, WINGS Chief Program Officer welcomes Mayor Johnson to WINGS Metro Safe House.



14th Ward Alderwoman Jeylú Gutiérrez (right) introduces herself to survivors at the Roundtable.