



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jenesse Center to Salute Husband and Wife Team of Supervisor Mark and Avis Ridley-Thomas for their Efforts in Preventing Domestic Violence

Chaired by Academy-Award winning actress Halle Berry, the April 18 fundraiser will benefit the Jenesse Center, which provides holistic and comprehensive programs to nurture families victimized by domestic violence

LOS ANGELES – The Jenesse Center, Inc. will recognize the husband and wife team of Supervisor Mark and Avis Ridley-Thomas as its 30th Annual Silver Rose Award Honorees for their tireless efforts in preventing domestic violence in the County of Los Angeles.

The couple will be recognized at the Jenesse Center's awards fundraiser at 5 p.m. on Sunday, April 18 at the Beverly Hills Hotel, located at 9641 Sunset Boulevard, Beverly Hills, CA.

Chaired by Academy-Award winning actress Halle Berry, the gala event will benefit services of the Jenesse Center, a community nonprofit that provides holistic, comprehensive programs to nurture families victimized by domestic violence with the intent to restore a place of mental, financial, physical and emotional well being. This year's theme is "*In a Perfect World.*"

"We are so grateful that they are committed to saving families in crisis," said Jenesse Center Executive Director, Karen Earl. "We appreciate that Mark Ridley-Thomas has listened over the years to the insight and professional expertise of Avis on protecting the family unit from domestic violence and methods of restoring families and communities back to self sufficiency and healthy conflict resolution."

Staunch defenders of human rights and the protection of the family unit, Mark and Avis Ridley-Thomas have passionately worked for over two decades to end domestic violence, and in the process, ensuring that every person in need of protection has access to shelter.

The couple has supported a wide range of women's issues and community advocate organizations.

In 1984, the couple co-founded the Rosa Parks Sexual Assault Crisis Center, which offers support services to sexual assault survivors and their significant others. The center also provided special training for social service providers, law enforcement and a number of community-based agencies.

In 1994, then a L.A. City Councilman, Mark Ridley-Thomas introduced a motion to establish the Domestic Violence Task Force, to coordinate domestic violence policy and program development. The success of this motion led to more funding for domestic violence organizations and an increase in shelter services for families in need.

Avis Ridley-Thomas has dedicated years to working with community families, serving as Director of the Dispute Resolution Program for the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, since its inception in 1989. The program specializes in mediation, violence prevention, cross cultural relations, and has provided consultation, training and support to institutions, businesses, organizations and communities throughout the Southern California Region.

Mrs. Ridley-Thomas formerly served as Consumer Services Coordinator and Victim Witness Services Coordinator in the City Attorney's Office. She chaired the California Advisory Committee on Sexual Assault Victim Services and the South Central Los Angeles Domestic Violence Task Force.

The recipient of numerous awards in her field, Mrs. Ridley-Thomas is currently co-Director of the UCLA Institute for Non-Violence in Los Angeles and co-instructs an undergraduate class entitled "Restoring Civility: Understanding, Using and Resolving Conflict" at UCLA for the departments of Education and Chicana/o Studies.

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