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MARJAREE MASON CENTER AWARDED \$20,000 TO PREVENT & ADDRESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN FRESNO COUNTY

Blue Shield of California Foundation recognizes Marjaree Mason Center as a critical leader in California's domestic violence field.

Fresno, CA (September 22, 2017) – Blue Shield of California Foundation announced today a grant of \$20,000 to Marjaree Mason Center to ensure its ongoing ability to care for, and advocate for, survivors of domestic violence and contribute to its prevention. These general operating funds are meant to provide Marjaree Mason Center with the flexibility to leverage new ideas as well as respond to new changes and challenges ahead.

“Today, the advocacy and services that the Marjaree Mason Center provides are more important than ever. As we face an uncertain political and social environment that threatens the well-being of vulnerable families, women, and individuals experiencing domestic violence – as well as the organizations that support them –we need leaders like the Marjaree Mason Center to be there to continue helping those who struggle most,” said Lucia Corral Peña, senior program officer at Blue Shield of California Foundation. “We stand together with the Marjaree Mason Center, alongside many other partners and leaders, in our ongoing and collective mission to prevent, address – and ultimately *end* – domestic violence in California.”

This type of unrestricted funding is part of the Foundation's effort to empower domestic violence service providers across the state and enable them to adjust to unexpected difficulties and opportunities.

“On behalf of the agency and the 5,700 adults and children we serve each year, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to Blue Shield of California Foundation,” said Nicole Linder, Marjaree Mason Center's Executive Director. “Thanks to their generous support, we are able to continue providing safe housing, counseling services, legal support, and many other resources to families throughout Fresno County who find themselves in a domestic violence situation. It truly takes a village to make these services a reality for our families in need, and we are forever grateful that Blue Shield of California Foundation has chosen to come alongside us in working toward ending the pervasive cycle of abuse.”

As California's largest private funder of domestic violence service providers, the Foundation is proud to support Marjaree Mason Center through this grant.

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About Blue Shield of California Foundation

Blue Shield of California Foundation aims to improve the lives of all Californians by working to end domestic violence and to improve health equity for our most vulnerable neighbors. To learn more, visit www.blueshieldcafoundation.org.

About Marjaree Mason Center

For nearly four decades, the Marjaree Mason Center has offered shelter and support services to victims of domestic violence in Fresno County. Currently, the Center operates the county's only dedicated provider of domestic violence shelter and support services, including education for victims and youth. The Center was founded in 1979 after the murder of Marjaree Mason, a native of Easton. A graduate of Washington High School and Reedley College, Marjaree lived in Fresno for 31 years and was well known in the community. The Marjaree Mason Center supports and empowers adults and children affected by domestic violence, while striving to prevent and end the cycle of abuse through education and advocacy. To contact MMC, call the business center at 559.237.4706, the 24-hour confidential emergency hotline at 559.233.HELP (4357) or visit online at www.mmcenter.org.