

First Lady Walker: Supports Adult and Teen Challenge Wisconsin, promotes its mission at annual banquet and auction

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CONTACT: Katie Schick, (920) 609-5284

Milwaukee - First Lady Tonette Walker will host the Annual Adult and Teen Challenge Banquet this evening in Milwaukee. The banquet directly benefits Adult and Teen Challenge of Wisconsin and helps them cover the costs of running a long-term residential addiction recovery program in the greater Milwaukee area and beyond. Governor Walker will join the First Lady as an Honorary Co-Chair and Speaker Paul Ryan will address the guests as a keynote speaker.

Reverend Jack Murphy and Teen Challenge graduates will also share their inspirational stories of redemption.

"I am truly inspired by Teen Challenge's mission to heal and rehabilitate young adults with substance abuse addictions," First Lady Tonette Walker said. "Opioid and alcohol abuse are serious problems in our state, and in many other states throughout our nation. Teen Challenge is a part of a multifaceted response here in Wisconsin to combat this issue, and I'm grateful for the good work they do to provide people with the treatment and help they need to recover and lead healthy lives."

Teen Challenge was founded in Brooklyn in 1958 by Reverend David Wilkerson after he read a LIFE magazine article about seven teenage gang members on trial for murder following a gang fight in Manhattan. Reverend Wilkerson, who was a pastor

of a church in Phillipsburg, Pennsylvania at the time, moved to New York City to work full-time with teenage gang members.

Shortly after the first Teen Challenge center was established in Brooklyn, chapters began opening in cities across the nation as well. Today, there are more than 1,029 centers in 90 countries. Teen Challenge has the largest network of recovery centers in the world, primarily offering a one-year residential faith-based program for former gang members and drug addicts.

Founded in 1972, Teen Challenge Wisconsin has grown from a six-bed residential program to two long-term adult residential recovery centers in Milwaukee, a woman's center with a 30-student capacity, and a newly-expanded men's center with room for 60 students.