



Please call our 24-hour emergency helpline at 734-722-6800 if anyone you know needs help with issues related to domestic violence or sexual assault.

First Step's You Are the Light Gala is Going Virtual - And Here's What You Need to Know

To Our First Step Community,

September 10th, 2021

It is with great sadness, yet critical analysis, that the First Step You Are the Light (YATL) Gala planning committee has decided to pivot the 2021 YATL in-person and virtual hybrid event to be **100% virtual**.

One of First Step's Core Values is *Safety* - Safety is paramount. This includes the safety and health of our guests, staff members, volunteers, survivors, and the rest of our community. With the increase in COVID-19 cases and the mounting concerns over the Delta variant, we believe this is the best option to celebrate our accomplishments safely.

The live, virtual program will be available to view at 7:30 pm (for approx. 1 hour) by ticketed guests and sponsors only. If you are interested in joining us, but have yet to purchase a ticket, you can still do so! Our virtual program will include messages from survivors, staff, and First Step's very own Executive Director, Lori Kitchen-Buschel as well as Detroit WXYZ's Carolyn Clifford. Additionally, there will be awards, celebrations, and other ways to engage from the comfort of your own home. To-go meals, packaged and catered by Laurel Manor, and alcoholic beverages will be available for pick up to anyone purchasing a ticket before September 17th. Private links will be shared directly to ticket holders closer to the event so that they can easily join in on the celebration.

Our silent auction will be available at least one week prior to the event, and open for the public to participate in, too! Packages include survivor art, gift certificates, sports tickets, travel opportunities, and more! Taking part in our auction is a great way to support First Step's mission and raise funds for the Animals Receiving Kindness Program (ARK), First Step's on-site animal shelter. Other ways to give back will be announced during the live, virtual program, as well.

To purchase tickets, visit <http://give.classy.org/yatl2021>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Carrie Bozman at cbozman@firststep-mi.org, Theresa Bizoe at tbizoe@firststep-mi.org, or call 734-722-1772.

We want to thank everyone that has supported First Step's mission and for your understanding in this difficult decision. We hope to see everyone at next year's You Are the Light Gala!

Thank you,

Patrice Alexander, Lisabeth Riopelle, and the YATL Gala Planning Committee