



YOU ARE THE LIGHT



Virtual GALA

SEPTEMBER 24, 2021

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Karen Wilson Smithbauer
First Step Board Member
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Welcome



EVENT CO-CHAIRS

PATRICE ALEXANDER

LISABETH RIOPELLE

Welcome to the 2021 You Are the Light Virtual Gala! As Co-Chairs, we would like to express our gratitude to everyone who has been a part of bringing this event together: our planning committee, our speakers and participants, our supportive donors, the staff and survivors of First Step, and you, the attendees. It has been a great team effort, and we are committed to bringing you some light in what has been a cloudy year. Thank you for your gracious support, and please enjoy the evening.

~Patrice Alexander & Lisabeth Riopelle

Tonight's Agenda

Produced by Motown Digital

7:15pm – **Online “Waiting Room”**

(Private link provided to sponsors and ticket holders)

7:30pm – **Program live online**

(Private link provided to sponsors and ticket holders)

- **Welcome and Introduction**

Carolyn Clifford

- **Message from Event Chair**

Patrice Alexander

- **First Step Capstone**

Video created by Kat Nelson, Spalding DeDecker

- **Ways to Participate**

Carolyn Clifford

- **The First Step Karen Wilson Smithbauer Legacy Award Presentation**

Presented to Heidi Naasko

- **The First Step Hope Award Presentation**

Presented to Di Leshea Scott

- **The First Step Tillie Award for Outstanding Volunteer**

Presented to Deb Moss

- **First Step’s Response to COVID-19**

Video created by Kat Nelson, Spalding DeDecker

- **The Impact of COVID-19**

Lori Kitchen-Buschel

- **Message from a Survivor**

Video created by Kat Nelson, Spalding DeDecker

- **Call to Action**

Kathy Cronin

- **The First Step Community Leadership Award**

Presented to Larry King

- **The First Step Corporate Award**

Presented to XFER Communications

8:45pm – **Event Closes**

9:30pm – **Online Silent Auction Closes**

First Step Online Auction

🌀 BID ONLINE NOW! 🌀

CLICK HERE TO BID

HOW TO BID

1. Visit firststep.cbo.io
2. Log in by entering in your bidder number, phone number, or email address and tap GO.
3. Confirm you are the name listed (a password may be required at this time) then hit "Continue."
4. Once completely logged in, you can search by item #, keyword, or by category.
5. To place a bid tap on the blue "Bid/Info" button. There you can place a fast bid, bid, or set a max bid, and read details about items.
6. Tap on MENU > MY ITEMS to view your activity throughout the event.

MOBILE CHECK OUT:

You can securely checkout from your phone with a credit card. Once you have a checkout available, a red "Pay!" button will appear at the top of your bidding screen. Tap on this button to proceed to checkout. If you have not already put a credit card on file, you will need to do so at this time in order to check out from your phone.

* For one checkout, wait until all auction items (silent, live, appeal) have closed.

FAQs

I forgot my bidder #.

Type your phone # or email address in the bidder # box. Tap GO. You also can tap on the "?" for help.

How do I remove a bid?

Right after you place a bid, you have the option to "undo" on the confirmation banner at the top of the screen. Once this banner goes away, you will need to see an event volunteer that is using the butler to remove it. Call 734-713-0657 for assistance.

I already selected "no" or replied "STOP" to the SMS text message alerts, not realizing that I wouldn't receive outbid notices. Can I fix it?

Yes! Text "START" to 56651 to begin receiving these once again.

How do I place a Max Bid?

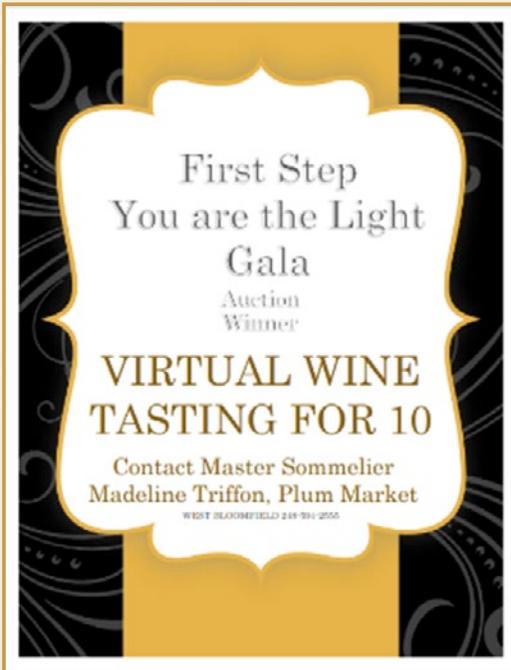
To place a "max bid", tap on Bid/Info > BID/SET MAX > select the amount you are willing to spend on the item > SET MAX. The system will bid up to that amount for you automatically. You will be notified via text message if you are outbid on this item.

Did I win?

Once the auction has closed, you can look under MENU/MY ITEMS to view everything that you have won/purchased.

Online Auction Items

~ A SAMPLING OF OUR AUCTION ITEMS ~



Wine Tasting with Master Sommelier, Madeline Triffon
Package Valued at \$3,000



“Get Your Sparty On” - The Ultimate MSU Football Tickets & Swag Basket
Package Valued at \$3,329



“Come Fly with Me” - A private flight to Traverse City or Mackinac Island
Package Valued at \$1,500



Enjoy a Weekend in Michigan's Fall Colors
Package Valued at \$450



Jeff Zak Omelet Brunch for 10 Guests with Omelet Chef and Gift Basket
Package Valued at \$375

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lori Kitchen-Buschel



2021 marks the 43rd year of First Step providing free and comprehensive services in our community. Since 1978, the impact of this agency, due to the staff, board, volunteers, partners, and donors who have supported it, has continued to grow. Hundreds of thousands of survivors of domestic and sexual violence in our communities have been touched by this work. Many have escaped such extreme violence that they are lucky to have survived at all. In times of uncertainty like these, when barriers seem to be growing everywhere, the strength, courage, and resilience of the survivors we see prove that there is hope.

This last year and a half has been a time of adaptation and growth. Though we had hoped to be in person with all of you tonight, for the safety of all involved we decided once again to celebrate virtually. Our community has continued to show us great love and support as we work to adapt to the challenges COVID-19 has created and exacerbated. Throughout this ongoing crisis, our staff and community create hope and light. This is particularly evident in the work of tonight's honorees Larry King, Heidi Naasko, Di Leshea Scott, Deb Moss, and XFER Communications.

I am so thankful to the event committee for all their hard work to put together this virtual event. I am especially grateful to our Event Co-Chairs, Patrice Alexander and Lisabeth Riopelle. This virtual event also would not have been possible without Motown Digital's amazing production work, the videography and talents of Kat Nelson (with Spalding DeDecker), and Laurel Manor's food, venue, and grace.

We are guided by our vision of communities that are safe and peaceful. It is our responsibility to step into our future with a strong commitment to eradicating violence. We are in this together. First Step will continue to adapt, grow, and reach all who need us.

To all staff, board members, donors, volunteers, survivors, and partners, I thank you for all you have done to ensure the success of this agency in serving our community safely during these uncertain times.

Kindly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lori". The signature is elegant and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Lori Kitchen-Buschel

WOODS CHARITABLE TRUST

The Woods Charitable Trust's mission is to contribute toward charitable organizations that Ronald J. Woods valued throughout his lifetime. Our charitable partners and advocates include expert organizations focused on education, animal rights protection, promoting excellence in the lives of people with disabilities including physical and visual, and social and law enforcement support.

The Woods Charitable Trust proudly supports First Step's You Are The Light Gala in memory of Shawn Abraham who devoted herself to help keep women and children safe.



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OUR EMCEE: *Carolyn Clifford*

Carolyn Clifford is a 17 time Emmy Award winning journalist who anchors the 4, 6, and 11 pm newscasts.

Carolyn was born and raised in the city of Detroit and grew up on the northwest side, and is so very proud of the city's comeback and new development.

Carolyn is one of ten children, with nearly 60 nieces and nephews in her family. She was thrilled to return to her hometown and work at the very station she grew up watching. "It's like a dream come true," says Carolyn.

Carolyn is a proud graduate of Michigan State University, earning a degree in Broadcast Journalism. She also learned mental toughness from spending time in MSU's Army ROTC.

Carolyn was originally hired at WXYZ to anchor weekends and as the station's health reporter. By May 2002, Detroit began waking up with Carolyn when she joined the "7 Action News This Morning" team.

When Carolyn became the co-anchor of 7 Action News at 11pm, she gave up her daily duties as Channel 7's Health Reporter.

Carolyn spent 13 years informing Detroiters about the latest developments in medical science and the effects they have on our community. Carolyn was also the host of the multiple emmy-nominated half hour health program called "Healthy Living Sunday."

Carolyn came to WXYZ-TV from WPGH-TV in Pittsburgh PA, where she anchored the 10 p.m. newscast. Before that, she anchored the 10 p.m. news at WLFL-TV in Raleigh, NC.

Carolyn also worked at the CBS affiliates in both Orlando, FL and Lansing, MI, but got her real start in news at a small radio station in Lansing.

In 2015, Carolyn was among a handful of journalists selected from across the country and the only news anchor in Michigan to be invited to the White House to interview President Obama about the Iran Nuclear Deal. It was one of the proudest moments of her career because not many journalists can say they were lucky enough to interview a sitting president one-on-one.

Additional memorable moments in broadcasting include interviewing Oprah Winfrey, Barbara Walters, and NBA legends Michael Jordan and Earvin "Magic"



Johnson. Carolyn has covered everything from hurricanes in North Carolina to former South African President Nelson Mandela's first visit to Michigan after he was freed from prison.

Carolyn's most rewarding stories, however, are those that have helped change the lives of our viewers; whether offering free flu shots during a national shortage, or finding free mammogram test sites for women in need.

Carolyn has been named "Woman of the Year" by the YWCA of Western Wayne County. She has also been honored by the Detroit City Council and Detroit Urban League for her community and volunteer work in the Metro Detroit area. One of Carolyn's passions is speaking out against domestic violence at numerous area events. She has also reached out and personally helped many victims of domestic violence.

Carolyn has received many professional accolades for her reporting and anchoring work at 7 Action News. She is a 17-time Emmy Award winner, including three Emmys for Best News Anchor. She has also been honored by the Associated Press, the Michigan Association of Broadcasters, and given a special tribute by the Karmanos Cancer Institute as one of their "Heroes of Breast Cancer."

Before Carolyn embarked on a career in TV news, she dreamt of dancing on Broadway. As a lifelong dancer, she performed in both the Michigan State Dance Company and the MSU Motion Dance Team before she graduated.

Hoping to make a difference in the children's lives, Carolyn often speaks at area schools and community organizations. One of Carolyn's favorite quotes is from Martin Luther King Junior in 1963: "The ultimate measure of a man or woman is not where he or she stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he or she stands at times of challenge and controversy."

Carolyn, married to Gregory F. Goss, is mother to Airielle, James and Brooke, and stepmother to Alyssa and Gregory Junior.

Carolyn loves spending time with her family and volunteering in our community.

THE KAREN WILSON SMITHBAUER LEGACY AWARD

First Step

AWARDS
+
HONOREES



Presented to Heidi Naasko

Heidi Naasko is a Member and Leader of Pro Bono Practice at Dykema Law Firm. She is also the Secretary of the First Step Board of Directors. Heidi first came to First Step in 2007 as an attorney volunteer. She learned about domestic violence as a college student and her volunteer work with survivors demonstrated a need to inject more survivor focused lawyers into the legal system. Heidi has helped First Step by supporting the agency and survivors through her expertise in her field of law and in board operations. She has also provided leadership to fundraising events. In her position at Dykema, Heidi works diligently to train lawyers on how best to represent and support survivors of domestic violence, sex trafficking, and sexual assault across the country in numerous courts and various capacities, from personal protection orders, name changes, divorce and child custody, crime victim rights counsel, immigration issues, and international kidnapping matters. Heidi has also guided First Step through various legal issues including finance, human relations, zoning issues and more. First Step is proud to present Heidi Naasko with the First Step Karen Wilson Smithbauer Legacy Award for her service to First Step, and for her work in the justice system representing survivors and promoting systems change.



This award is named after Karen Wilson Smithbauer – a philanthropist and business leader who has positively impacted thousands of survivors through her generosity, skills, and passion. The First Step Karen Wilson Smithbauer Legacy Award is given annually to an individual or group who inspires dedication and has made a lasting impact and worked to achieve First Step’s vision of peaceful families and safe communities.



First Step

AWARDS
+
HONOREES

THE FIRST STEP
HOPE AWARD



Presented to Di Leshea Scott

This year's First Step Hope Award goes to Di Leshea (Lee Lee) Scott, residential survivor advocate. This is Lee Lee's tenth year with First Step. Lee Lee is well respected by her peers and colleagues. She is someone you love to be around. Lee Lee is the type of advocate that will move mountains so that survivors get what they need. From working diligently to eliminate barriers survivors face in order for them to no longer be bound to their abuser, to raising awareness and educating the community on how to better support those who are impacted by violence – Lee Lee does it all. When working with a client she is not just an advocate, she becomes a mentor, supporter, teacher, role model, problem solver, and all the things that a survivor might need during this transitional phase of their life. She is extremely passionate and driven about working with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. She has hope for survivors that do not yet have hope for themselves. Lee Lee has touched thousands of survivors' lives, making lasting impressions that bring many of them to contact her months and even years after they have left First Step. Lee Lee is a wonderful employee, friend, educator, and advocate, and First Step is grateful to know her.

The First Step Hope Award is given to a staff member who exemplifies excellence in service to First Step's mission and to the movement to end violence.



THE FIRST STEP TILLIE AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER

First Step

AWARDS
+
HONOREES



Presented to Deb Moss

Deb Moss has been volunteering at First Step for over six years. Deb has been an invaluable volunteer for the Finance Department and Plymouth Office. She is instrumental in helping the Finance team prepare for yearly audits and monthly, internal financial audits, and prepare gift cards for clients. Her attention to detail is incredible. Auditors have even commented on how impressed they are with her work and how helpful it is for them to do their reports. Deb also does grounds keeping on the gardens and flowerbeds in Plymouth. She continued her work even during the pandemic. She would pick up items at the Plymouth office to work on remotely and routinely visited the office to do exterior maintenance. Deb's commitment to First Step is immeasurable. First Step is lucky to have her on the team!



This award is given to an outstanding First Step volunteer who through their service, takes positive action that changes the world and inspires others by their example.

This prestigious award is named in memory of longtime-volunteer Tillie LaFave, who served First Step for decades and encouraged 3 generations of her family (the O'Malley and LaFave families) to become involved in First Step's mission.



First Step

AWARDS
+
HONOREES

THE FIRST STEP
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD



Presented to Larry King

Assistant Prosecuting Attorney (APA) Larry King started working with First Step in 2018, first with the 34th District Court and then later within multiple jurisdictions throughout Wayne County. Larry has worked tirelessly to support survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault not only through the challenging process of court, but also with locating and gaining access to additional resources. Larry is vigilant in guiding survivors to First Step services and is always available to our advocates for collaboration. APA King understands domestic violence dynamics and often attempts to secure convictions without putting survivors through the traumatic process of testifying. Larry works hard to keep survivors safe and achieve justice while also raising awareness, and educating others and himself, on domestic violence and sexual assault dynamics. His selfless work shines through every day and First Step is thankful to have such an impactful and inspiring partnership with APA King.

The Community Leadership Award is given to a group, team or partner organization who has gone above and beyond to support survivors of violence in Wayne County.



THE FIRST STEP CORPORATE AWARD

First Step

AWARDS
+
HONOREES

Presented to



Corporation

XFER Communications has been working with First Step since January of 2011. XFER serves as First Step's outsourced information technology development and support. XFER provides First Step with all technology related and computer security needs. They have provided their services to First Step at 50% of their usual cost. We estimate their donation of labor has been over \$150,000. It is contributions like these that help First Step ensure we can continue to provide our life saving services consistently and safely without having to worry about breaches, breakdowns, or accessibility. Lori Kitchen-Buschel, First Step's Executive Director said, "XFER provides outstanding service to our organization. Their staff are always helpful and supportive. XFER has helped us to bring our technology into the modern world and they are always there to give us advice, tech-tools, support, and security so we can serve survivors and not have to worry. XFER is also a regular donor at First Step events. They are a part of the First Step family and we are grateful for their partnership."

The First Step Corporate Award is given to a business that demonstrated excellence in community service especially supporting First Step and survivors of violence in our community.



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Faith is taking the first step
even when you don't see
the whole staircase.

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

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We are so proud of our Mom/Grandma,
Karen Wilson Smithbauer for all she
does for the community.

Gertrude, Morgan, Hannah and Rich Lyons

Thank you

Our most sincere thanks to the staff, board, donors and volunteers that make First Step a safe haven for all those who are impacted by domestic and sexual violence.

With Gratitude,
Jennifer Hartke
and Andy Hetzel



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"When I heard about First Step's ARK it seemed to me a brilliant enhancement for First Step and I felt I needed to support it. Not only for Wayne County survivors but also as a model for other organizations. I am so proud to be able to make a contribution to this community."

Is she smiling through the pain?

Stop domestic violence!

The scars you can't see are the hardest to heal.

LET THE HEALING BEGIN BY TAKING THE
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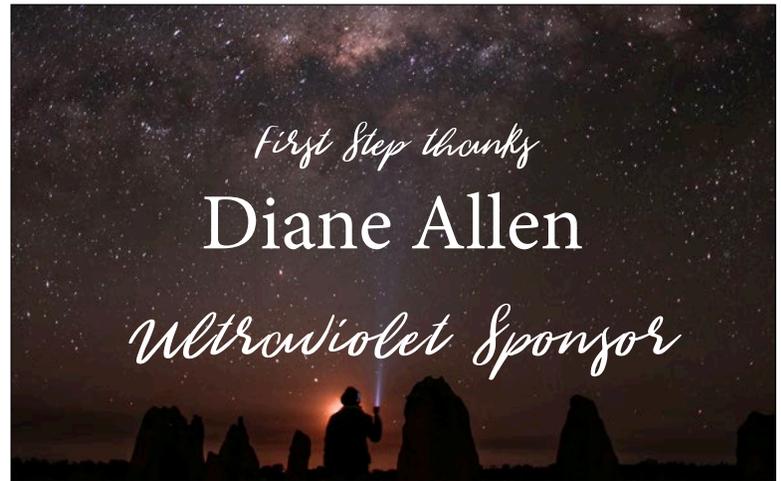
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Event Committee

Thanks to our fantastic 2021 You Are the Light Event Committee members:

EVENT CHAIRS: Patrice Alexander, Lisabeth Riopelle

COMMITTEE: Ailsa Blunk, Amy Marmaduke, Barbara Arnett, Carla O'Malley, Christine Anthony, Eileen Freeman, Elaine Tingle, Jane Weaver, Jessica McCullough, Karen Wilson Smithbauer, Kathy Bernard, Kathy Cronin, Marcy Hayes, Sam Martens, Susan Johnson, Susan Kage, Susan Lee, Tami Rager, Wendy Woodward, Nancy Novell, Lizabeth Hanks, Elizabeth Schlack, Lori Arthur

Special thanks to Kat Nelson from Spalding DeDecker for producing our videos, Motown Digital for producing the live virtual event, and Laurel Manor for providing event space and catered meals.

About First Step

First Step offers a variety of supportive services including:

- * 24-hour HelpLine
- * 24-hour on-call assault response team
- * Temporary emergency housing
- * Safety planning
- * Support groups
- * Crisis intervention, advocacy, and counseling
- * Legal, financial, medical and housing information
- * Transitional supportive housing
- * Community organizing
- * Education awareness and risk reduction programs
- * In-service trainings on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, etc.
- * Children's counseling & support groups
- * Onsite animal shelter for residential clients

24-Hour HelpLine

734.722.6800

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