FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PSA in Times Square Targets Isolated Victims of Domestic Abuse During Shadow Pandemic

Safe in Harm’s Way & DomesticShelters.org Partner with Neon & OAAA for National Awareness Campaign

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (February 1, 2022) -- Domestic violence nonprofits Safe in Harm’s Way Foundation Inc. and DomesticShelters.org, a service of Theresa’s Fund are partnering with Neon, an IPG Health company and the Out of Home Advertising Association of America (OAAA) to continue raising nationwide awareness of domestic abuse. Experts say the COVID-19 crisis prompted a shadow pandemic or uptick in domestic abuse and the campaign aims to connect victims of abuse with the help they need through out of home advertising.

“Many survivors, especially during the pandemic had limited access to information or support services. This campaign partnership gives survivors the opportunity to find resources in the one place abusers cannot control and isolate- what they see publicly when traveling or living their daily life,” said Caroline Markel Hammond, CEO of Safe in Harm’s Way Foundation Inc. and the Purple Ribbon Award’s 2021 Survivor of the Year.

Safe in Harm’s Way is an online platform allowing people to recognize the feelings of sadness, worry, lies, fear and pain to the red flags of abuse, so that they can build community and find the resources for healing. Made by survivors, for survivors, the platform recently partnered with DomesticShelters.org, the first and largest online and mobile searchable directory of domestic violence programs and shelters in the U.S. and Canada.

“When Safe in Harm’s Way reached out asking for our help to create messaging for their national awareness campaign, we jumped at the chance to reach even more people with
potentially life-saving information about domestic violence,” said Ashley Rumschlag, CEO & President of Theresa’s Fund and DomesticShelters.org.

Safe in Harm’s Way launched its first national awareness campaign in February 2021 for victims of domestic abuse that showcased the dark side of Valentine’s Day. The eye-catching campaign was recognized with two Purple Ribbon Awards for Best COVID-19 Response Plan, and Outstanding Awareness Plan from DomesticShelters.org.

Due to the pandemic, feelings of isolation are perhaps more common now than ever before, but they are not new to those enduring abuse. Isolation, and limiting or controlling a partner’s access to the outside world, is a red flag for domestic violence. Abusers use isolation to control their victims, making out of home advertising and public attractions such as Times Square a uniquely important medium for reaching domestic violence victims. Abusers may heavily monitor cell phone activity, or prohibit contact with family and friends, etc.

"OAAA is honored to partner on a campaign that raises awareness about the trauma of domestic violence and provides hope for survivors," said Anna Bager, President and CEO, OAAA. "The OOH industry has a long history of rallying around critical public health and safety issues; this medium is a tangible way to reach people and make an impact."

The initial Public Service Announcement on St. Valentine’s Day, done by Safe in Harm's Way, was meant to get the public to think differently about domestic violence, and the next wave of PSAs continues the theme of shifting thought paradigm, as it highlights emotional manipulation, a damaging yet more insidious form of abuse.

The “Sorry” campaign is the first in a series of four created by Neon, an IPG Health company. It was shot by James Beard Photography Award winner Johnny Miller, and includes hand-drawn typography from internationally known illustrator Sarah Coleman, whose client roster includes Coca-Cola, Apple, and Disney. Visually, it showcases the haunting buildup of apologies through the imagery of wilting flower arrangements and gifts.

The decaying flora emphasizes the reality that empty promises and repeated apologies keep people in toxic and harmful relationships over time. By capturing this essence, the team hopes to catalyze awareness and connect people to resources that can change their situation.
“In light of the dramatic increase in domestic abuse during the pandemic, we were thrilled at the opportunity to partner with DomesticShelters.org and Safe in Harm’s Way on this critically important initiative. This issue is close to all of our hearts, and I truly hope and believe it will help people find their way out of dangerous, oppressive situations,” said Jesse Kates, Co-Managing Director, Neon.

“For the launch campaign visual, we wanted a concept that viscerally connects with people and captures an unspoken truth – in this case the feeling of constant unease from a tumultuous relationship – in order to bridge the gap to resources. We drew inspiration from the many hollow apologies abusive partners often use as a form of control,” said Sam Lauro, Creative Lead, Neon.

The campaign is scheduled to make its Time Square premiere on February 1st, and the OAAA’s members will also display the PSA across the rest of the U.S. to further raise awareness.

For more information or for media inquiries, reach out to Kim Ring at kim@ringrelations.com.

About Safe in Harm’s Way Foundation Inc.

Safe in Harm’s Way Foundation Inc. is a domestic violence non-profit connecting victims with resources to build community and discover the feelings within personal relationships which equate to the red flags of abuse; allowing for resources and connections which can bring safety, health and healing to each person's unique situation. The company was born out of necessity, as its Founder, Caroline Markel Hammond is a survivor of domestic violence and realized the
unique unmet needs during her escape from abuse. The Safe in Harm’s Way online platform provides eye-opening stories from abuse survivors, a one-of-a-kind public database of conviction records and a variety of corporate solutions in partnership with Epizon Strategy that can be implemented immediately, thereby protecting corporate reputation, safety and profits. Follow @SafeinHarmsWay on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Spotify, or visit www.safeinharmsway.org

About DomesticShelters.org (A Service of Theresa's Fund)
Theresa’s Fund is an Arizona-based 501(c)3 non-profit charity started in 1992 by Preston V. McMurry, Jr. At a time when domestic violence wasn’t yet a headline, Theresa’s Fund focused on changing the landscape of domestic violence services in its home state through grantmaking, board development and fundraising for Arizona-based organizations like East Valley Child Crisis Center, Sojourner Center, Florence Crittenden, Emerge, UMOM, and West Valley Child Crisis Center. In 2014, it developed the DomesticShelters.org concept as a way to expand its reach to people across the U.S. and Canada. DomesticShelters.org is the first online and mobile searchable database of programs and shelters in the U.S./Canada, and a leading source of helpful tools and information for people experiencing and working to end domestic violence. It is also the host of the Purple Ribbon Awards, the first comprehensive awards program honoring the countless heroes of the domestic violence movement, including advocates, programs, shelters, survivors and members of the community support system. Learn more at DomesticShelters.org.

About Neon, an IPG Health Company
Part of the IPG Health Network, Neon is a full-service healthcare agency that lights the way with innovative creative solutions to the biggest challenges of life-saving brands. With a boutique agency feel backed by big network resources, and an entrepreneurial spirit, Neon works across a number of audiences and channels – from HCP and DTC/DTP to digital engagement, patient support and more. The agency delivers a diversified offering and depth of expertise that includes strategic planning, medical strategy, health literacy, engagement planning, user experience, technology and development, branding and design. Learn more at https://www.neon-nyc.com/.

About OAAA
The Out of Home Advertising Association of America (OAAA) is the national trade association for the entire out of home (OOH) advertising industry. OAAA represents more than 800 members, including leading media companies, advertisers, agencies, ad-tech providers, and suppliers which comprise over 90 percent of the industry. OOH media includes billboards, street furniture, transit, place-based media, and digital formats (DOOH) across every sector of the channel. OAAA is the unifying voice for the industry, the authoritative thought leader, and the passionate advocate for advancing OOH advertising in the United States. The legislative unit of OAAA advocates for the responsible growth of OOH with federal, state, and local government. OAAA-member media companies generously donate over $500 million in public service advertising annually. Founded in 1891, OAAA is headquartered in Washington, DC with offices in New York City. For more information, please visit oaaa.org.