



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michigan Women’s Foundation, Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office and Detroit Crime Commission Unveil “Enough SAID” Collaboration to Secure Justice for Every Victim Represented in Detroit’s 11,000+ Untested Rape Kits and a Safer Community for All

Unique Public/Private Partnership and Special Fundraising Campaign Announced at Jan. 6, 2015 Press Event

DETROIT – Jan. 6, 2015 – At a 10 a.m. press conference held today at the Atheneum Suite Hotel in Detroit, leadership from the Michigan Women’s Foundation (MWF), Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office (WCPO) and the Detroit Crime Commission (DCC) – supported by Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan, Wayne County Executive Warren Evans and Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette – unveiled [Enough SAID \(Sexual Assault in Detroit\)](#), a new independent collaboration for justice.

In 2009, more than 11,000 unopened, untested rape kits were discovered in a Detroit Police Department storage unit. The kits represented thousands of unprosecuted sexual assault cases, and potentially thousands of sex offenders still on the streets. Due to economic constraints in Detroit and Wayne County, limited funding has been available to date to address the backlog. From this need, Enough SAID was created.

The goal of Enough SAID is to advocate for additional public monies and raise private sector funding, the first known effort of its kind in the country, from major corporations, local businesses, families and individuals alike, to finish testing the remaining kits, investigate resulting cases and prosecute the rapists. Beginning today, [www.EnoughSaidDetroit.org](#) and [www.miwf.org/EnoughSaid](#) are live and accepting donations, as well as providing ideas and encouragement for individual and corporate fundraising.

Testing the kits will identify unknown assailants, confirm current locations of known suspects, connect suspects to other crimes and exonerate the innocent. In short, testing all of the kits is the first step in guaranteeing justice for thousands of victims, and securing a safer community. From an initial random sample of just 2,000 kits that underwent testing, the WCPO identified 188 serial rapists and has already obtained 15 convictions.

“We know that rapists attack an average of 11 times and are associated with a myriad of other criminal offenses,” said Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy. “Having the resources to take these criminals off the street, and stop them from committing further violent crimes, will ensure a safer Detroit for all.”

It is important to note, however, that this is not an issue unique to Detroit or Wayne County, but rather a problem unfortunately occurring across the country, with more than 400,000 untested kits identified to date nationwide. The Enough SAID partnership, along with an impressive group of initial funders, represents one of country’s first formal efforts to right this wrong. Additionally, Enough SAID is currently working on a pilot program in partnership with UPS to design and implement a better system for tracking kits moving forward.

“The Enough SAID partnership and the support it has already received to date is a critical statement in our world that crimes against women will not be brushed aside or diminished in any way,” said Carolyn Cassin, president and CEO of Michigan Women’s Foundation.

Based on its 29-year history of leading important initiatives on behalf of the state's women and girls, MWF was approached by the private foundation community to assume leadership for this critical fundraising campaign. The foundations have funded an infrastructure that will allow all money raised for Enough SAID to directly support the testing, investigation and prosecution of cases.

Specifically, the MWF will grant Enough SAID dollars to a fiduciary, the Detroit Crime Commission, who will facilitate the establishment of a Cold Case Unit with adequate resources to handle the volume of investigation and resulting prosecution, including highly-trained law enforcement and legal staffs, as well as the latest technological tools. Already, the DCC has successfully negotiated a reduction in the forensic labs' testing costs from \$1,500 to \$490 per kit.

"The Detroit Crime Commission team looks forward to continuing to aid Wayne County Prosecutor Worthy in the effort to process and test backlogged rape kits, and preventing future sexual assaults in Wayne County by identifying and prosecuting past perpetrators," said Andrew Arena, executive director of the DCC.

Until the full backlog of rape kits is tested and the results analyzed, it is impossible to estimate the full cost of the investigations and prosecution. The Enough SAID campaign has set a goal to raise \$10 million private sector dollars, which will help to leverage additional local, state and federal support, and make a substantive contribution to solving this issue. The economic and social implications of a safer Detroit align with all of the exciting developments taking place in the city and the region.

To date, individuals and business donors from 45 states and eight countries have contributed close to \$750,000, with gifts ranging from \$500,000 to \$5. Initial support has come from the Joyful Heart Foundation, MGM Grand Detroit Casino, MotorCity Casino, the National Institute of Justice, the Nicholson Family, Office on Violence Against Women, Quicken Loans, Skillman Foundation, the State of Michigan, Gretchen Valade, the U.S. Department of Justice and nearly 1,000 individuals.

Moving forward, to ensure something like this never happens again in Michigan, Governor Snyder this summer signed HB 5445, enacting legislation that mandates faster and more organized sexual assault kit testing.

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About the Enough SAID Collaboration

Michigan Women's Foundation:

The MWF has been working to achieve social and economic equity for women and girls in Michigan for 28 years. Through philanthropy and high impact initiatives, their goal is to ensure a brighter future for women throughout the state. For more, visit www.miwf.org.

Wayne County Prosecutor's Office:

The WCPO, headed by Prosecutor Kym Worthy, has been a prominent voice for this effort, reminding public and private sectors of the importance of prosecuting these crimes, as well as the necessity of legislative action to ensure such neglect will never occur again. Visit www.waynecounty.com/prosecutor for more.

Detroit Crime Commission:

The Detroit Crime Commission is led by highly-trained former FBI, Michigan State Police and Detroit Police Department directors and officers. Its mission is to lessen the burdens of government and the citizens of southeast Michigan by facilitating the prevention, investigation and prosecution of crime. Visit www.detroitcrimecommission.org for more information.

Media Contacts: Monica Cheick or Hope Brown – PublicCity PR
mcheick@publiccitypr.net; 586.612.8220 or hbrown@publiccitypr.net; 248.346.3399

NOTE: All press kit materials from the Jan. 6, 2015 press conference are available online at www.EnoughSaidDetroit.org.



FACT SHEET

8/17/09 Representatives from the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office (WCPO) and Michigan State Police discovered 11,304 untested sexual assault kits (SAKs) dating back to the 1980s during a tour of a Detroit Police Department storage unit located at 5140 Riopelle Street in Detroit.

SAKs, performed in the aftermath of a sexual assault, contain and preserve evidence from a four- to six-hour examination of the survivor. If a survivor chooses to report her rape to the police, the evidence in the rape kit can be a very powerful tool to bring a perpetrator to justice. The timely analysis of rape kit evidence is a core public safety issue.

2010 In collaboration with the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board, Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy sought and received funding from the Office on Violence Against Women to test a random sample of 400 kits ("Project 400") to give a statistical snapshot of the rape kit problem in Detroit.

2011 Based on the results of Project 400, the WCPO was one of only two jurisdictions in the country to receive a prestigious 30-month award in the amount of \$1.5 million from the National Institute of Justice to better determine the full scope of the unsubmitted SAKs problem, and to understand the resources required to correct the problem. Funding received allowed the testing of an additional 1,600 kits. Titled, "*National Institute of Justice Sexual Assault Kit Action Research Project*," the project commenced in April 2011 and ran through October 2013.

2010-2014 From that initial 2,000-kit sample, there were 670 hits in the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), the national DNA database, including hits linking to crimes committed in 26 other states and the District of Columbia. The Wayne County Prosecutor's Office identified 188 serial rapists, and obtained 15 convictions. A sample of resulting convictions and sentences tell the story of gruesome reality:

- Reginald Holland –Serving a life sentence; abducted and raped four women before being identified through DNA testing.
- Shelly Andre Brooks –Serving a life sentence; raped and murdered seven women.
- Gabriel Cooper – Serving a sentence of 30-70 years; raped three women.
- Eric Eugene Wilkes – Serving a sentence of 32-75 years; raped four women.
- Deshawn Starks – Serving a sentence of 45-90 years; raped four women.

2013-2014 Encouraged by results of the preliminary 2,000-kit sample, private donors contributed \$150,000 to the initiative.

It is important to note that this is not an issue exclusive to Detroit or Wayne County, but rather a problem that unfortunately is occurring across the nation, with more than 400,000 untested kits identified to date nationwide. *Memphis* – 12,000+ untested kits, undertaking substantial efforts to reduce backlog; *Cleveland* – nearly 4,000 before undertaking significant efforts to reduce their backlogs; *Tulsa* – 3,700+; *Las Vegas* – 4,000+; *Milwaukee* – 2,655; *Seattle* – 1,276; *Nashville* – 200, counting in progress; *Phoenix* – 2,996, backlog status unknown; *San Francisco* – 753 kits, counting complete and testing in progress; *Denver* – 998, testing in progress; *Toledo* – 2,300, testing in progress; *Dallas* – 4,144, testing in progress; *San Antonio* – 1,499, testing in progress; *Salt Lake City* – 788, testing in progress.

- 2013** The Michigan State legislature sets aside \$4 million to test all of Detroit's remaining kits. Currently, \$3 million dollars has been allocated over the next three years by the Office of the Michigan Attorney General for prosecution. The WCPO is working on the Memorandum of Understanding with the Attorney General's Office regarding this allocation.
- 2013** Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy appointed the Detroit Crime Commission to serve as the fiduciary for all donations received in the Enough SAID effort.
- 3/10/14** Press conference held by Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy, joined by Mariska Hargitay, actress, advocate and founder of Joyful Heart Foundation, to announce Michigan Sexual Assault Kit legislation and progress on rape kit initiative.
- May 2014** Following discussions with Prosecutor Worthy, representatives of the region's private foundation community ask Michigan Women's Foundation to consider assuming leadership of a campaign to advocate for public support and raise private dollars to test all remaining kits and fund resulting investigations and prosecutions in a public/private partnership with the Wayne County Prosecutors Office and Detroit Crime Commission. On June 17th, the MWF board of trustees voted unanimously to take on this challenge, ensuring that crimes against women and girls will no longer be ignored.
- 2014** The Detroit Crime Commission negotiated the per kit testing rate to \$490 (from \$1,500).
- 6/26/14** Governor Snyder signed [HB 5445](#) The Sexual Assault Evidence Submission Act, enacting legislation that mandates faster and more organized sexual assault kit testing, to ensure this type of backlog never happens again. This Act will be a collaborative process between prosecution, law enforcement, health care and victims' organizations.
- 8/2014** Through the influence and support of Rock Financial, UPS stepped forward and offered to develop a pilot project for Detroit to create a logistical chain of custody that will track SAKs through evidence gathering, testing, investigation and prosecution.
- 1/6/15** Launch of **Enough SAID (Sexual Assault in Detroit)**, an independent collaboration for justice between Michigan Women's Foundation, the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office and the Detroit Crime Commission.

The Enough SAID fundraising page at www.miwf.org/enoughsaid and a microsite at EnoughSaidDetroit.org go live to accept donations and to encourage individuals, businesses and organizations to play an active role by raising funds for this critical effort.

ABOUT ENOUGH SAID

The goal of the collaboration is to advocate for additional public monies and raise private sector funding – from major corporations, local businesses, families and individuals alike – to finish testing the remaining kits, investigate the resulting cases and prosecute the rapists. This partnership, along with an impressive group of initial funders, represents one of the nation's first efforts to right this wrong.

Through the **Enough SAID** project, testing these kits will: identify unknown assailants, confirm the current location of known suspects, connect suspects to other crimes and exonerate the innocent. In short, testing kits is the first step in guaranteeing justice.

A group of private foundations is financing the infrastructure for the fundraising effort, ensuring that 100 percent of all donations go directly to the cause. To date, individuals and business donors from 45 states and eight countries have contributed close to \$750,000

Initial support has come from the Joyful Heart Foundation, MGM Grand Detroit Casino, MotorCity Casino, the National Institute of Justice, the Nicholson Family, Office on Violence Against Women, Quicken Loans, Skillman Foundation, the State of Michigan, Gretchen Valade, the U.S. Department of Justice and nearly one thousand individuals.

THE ENOUGH SAID COLLABORATION IS COMPRISED OF:

Michigan Women's Foundation:

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Contact: Peg Tallet, Chief Community Engagement Officer, Michigan Women's Foundation

O: 313.962.1920 x202

ptallet@miwf.org

Wayne County Prosecutor's Office:

The WCPO, headed by Prosecutor Kym Worthy, has been a prominent voice for this effort, reminding public and private sectors of the importance of prosecuting these crimes, as well as the necessity of legislative action to ensure such neglect will never occur again.

Contact Maria Miller, Wayne County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney

Director of Communications

313-224-5817 Office

313-213-0457 Mobile

mmiller@waynecounty.com

Detroit Crime Commission:

The Detroit Crime Commission is led by highly-trained former FBI, Michigan State Police and Detroit Police Department directors and officers. Its mission is to lessen the burdens of government and the citizens of southeast Michigan by facilitating the prevention, investigation and prosecution of crime.

Contact Andy Arena, Executive Director, Detroit Crime Commission

O: 313-463-4814

C: 313-720-9639

aarena@detroitcrimecommission.org