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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCATE HONORED AS PUBLIC CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO, IL— Each day social workers help break down barriers that prevent people from living more fulfilling, enriched lives. They work on the individual level, helping people overcome personal crises like food insecurity, lack of affordable housing, or limited access to good health care. They also advocate on a systems level to ensure laws and policies are adopted so everyone can access such services.

In continuation of this year's National Professional Social Work Month theme, "Social Work Breaks Barriers," the National Association of Social Workers, Illinois Chapter (NASW-IL) is honoring the work of some exceptional Illinois social workers and individuals whose work promotes social justice and social change with and on behalf of the people and clients they serve.

One such exemplary Illinois social citizen being honored this year is 2023 NASW-Illinois Chapter Statewide Public Citizen of the Year awardee Raquel Rosendo. **Raquel Rosendo** was born and raised outside of the US. She became interested in advocating for women's and children's rights after learning about the need of multicultural advocates in domestic violence. She has dedicated the last 29 years helping families in their journey toward healing, recovery, and self-sufficiency. She currently works as case manager at Catholic Charities of Chicago.

In support of their nomination of Raquel, Gloria Ramirez, LSW, wrote: "[Raquel] embodies the values of the social work profession. Her life's work has been committed to serving the survivor's of domestic violence population and their children. Her work ethic is to be emulated. Ms. Rosendo has provided guidance, emotional support, to women struggling with the intricacies involved in navigating every day tasks prior to living in an acrimonious and abusive environment. She thrives on seeing women reach independent living free from their abusers. Your goals become her goals when it comes to integrating new skills that empower women to live independently."

The NASW-Illinois Chapter is proud of the work of Raquel Rosendo and others her who continue to break barriers in their communities and beyond. Raquel is one of four individuals being honored as this year's NASW-Illinois Chapter Statewide Awardees. To learn more about the other statewide awardees, please visit the NASW-Illinois Chapter website (www.naswil.org) or contact NASW-IL Executive Director Joel Rubin at jrubin.naswil@socialworkers.org.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world. The NASW-Illinois Chapter is one of the association's largest chapters and advocates for over 20,000 social workers in Illinois alone. NASW strives to advance social work careers, grow social work businesses, and protect the profession while seeking to also enhance the well-being of individuals, families, and communities through advocacy.