



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WTLC Board of Directors names Gigi Tsontos Chief Executive Officer

FULLERTON, CA (July 6, 2017) – On Wednesday, July 5, the Women’s Transitional Living Center (WTLC) Board of Directors named Gigi Tsontos Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of WTLC.

In order to better align the organization with its corporate partners and to increase its professional capacities, WTLC’s Board elected to strengthen the organization’s mission by restructuring its leadership. Over the past few years WTLC has expanded from its grassroots origins into a multi-service organization with a budget of over two million dollars. With a vision of ending the cycle of domestic violence and exploitation, WTLC’s programs support survivors of human trafficking, those who harm (batterers), and whole family systems. WTLC also engages in community based services focused on education and awareness.

Tsontos has worked in nonprofits and social services for over 18 years and is an alumna of the Peace Corps, where she served in West Africa. She holds a master’s degree in social work from Columbia University and is a licensed clinical social worker. She holds a second master’s degree in public administration from San Diego State University. Since 2013, Tsontos has served as Executive Director of WTLC. During this time, Tsontos has implemented innovative techniques and evidence-based best practices to meet the needs of all survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking in Orange County. Under her leadership, WTLC transitioned from a service-oriented agency into a trauma-informed, survivor-driven model of care. With the goal of increasing access, Tsontos led the initiative to bring supportive services to survivors in the community, both through mobile advocacy and through the opening of The Center, and created the first domestic violence shelter in Orange County to house survivors’ animal companions.

Tsontos says of this development, “This advancement will further WTLC’s not-for-profit business model and ensure the organization continues to grow and develop to serve the community’s most vulnerable populations in the most effective and productive ways possible.” On Wednesday the Board also named Mark Lee WTLC’s Chief Operating Officer. Having served as WTLC’s Director of Operations for two years, Lee provides extensive knowledge in program development, evaluation, and operations.

As the oldest and largest domestic violence emergency shelter in Orange County, WTLC helps individuals and families escape the depths of domestic violence and exploitation, empowering them to recover from their past trauma. This year the organization launched its mobile advocacy program, through which Advocates provide services to survivors in the community outside of the traditional emergency shelter setting, and this summer WTLC became the first DV shelter in Orange County to house the pets of survivors. On October 4th, WTLC will hold an Open House for The Center, an on-site community space for survivors to meet with Advocates and receive supportive services.

To learn more about WTLC, its programs, and its services, or to donate to end the cycle of violence and exploitation, please visit wtlc.org, or contact WTLC CEO Gigi Tsontos for a tour at (714) 992-1939 x106, or at gtsontos@wtlc.org.

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