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SMTX VAGINA MONOLOGUES PARTNERS WITH HCWC FOR 8TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

FEBRUARY 14, 202534

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Disclaimer: Themes of dating violence are spoken about in this article. Please call the HCWC helpline (512-396-HELP) if you are in need of resources.



Performers from a past SMTX Vagina Monologues event speak about on stage. | Permission to use by Beth Rose.

The Hays Caldwell Women's Center (HCWC) highlights Dating Violence Awareness Month every year in February. A big part of the initiative is the long-lasting relationship with the San Marcos Vagina Monologues which raised \$12,200 for the women's center in 2024.

The Vagina Monologues is a 1996 play written by "V" depicting the stories of nearly 200 women that were interviewed about their experiences through womanhood. The experiences range from many stages of womanhood, such as pregnancy, and include different experiences from women of color.

The Vagina Monologues expanded into a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization called V-Day in 1998 and is dedicated to spreading awareness and education about violence against women.

Amber Johnson formed the SMTX Vagina Monologues in 2017 and originally charged canned goods and tampons as a fee of entrance.

Since 2017, SMTX Vagina Monologues has been hosting this event to connect with the community and help the women's center thrive with resources.

The monologues are completely composed of volunteer staff and cast members.

Megan Osborne, the education and communication director for HCWC, says that the event has helped raise funds for overall operational costs.

"It's very important because, unlike grants and things that we get, those have a lot of restrictions. So, when we can get donations from outside sources, we have more flexibility in what we can do to help survivors and to effectively run our programs," Osborne said.

Signs of dating violence can include love bombing, emotional abuse, financial abuse by way of social status, or monetary strain and are not limited to physical abuse.

Beth Rose, organizer for the SMTX Vagina Monologues, says the organization's mission has always been to spread awareness about violence against women.

"It's always been focused on promoting safety and the end of violence against women and so that is definitely our primary cause in promoting this event and that's why Hays Caldwell Women's Center is a perfect recipient of the funds that we raise given that [is] our primary resource in the area for victims of domestic violence," Rose said.

The Vagina Monologues are a key part of the women's center's education initiative surrounding dating violence as it is an important topic within the play.

Osborne says that education surrounding dating violence has increased in Texas due to HB 366, passed in 2018, striving to bring healthy relationship education to public schools.

Osborne also believes that recognizing signs of dating violence and maintaining a healthy relationship starts with self-reflection.

"Being able to recognize those signs of dating violence and knowing what a healthy relationship looks like and a lot of that really can start with yourself and you know, working on your own... emotional regulation...and kind of self-reflecting on how you treat others and how you treat yourself," Osborne said.

The monologues will be performed this Saturday at the Wildflower Country Inn and Events Center and also includes a burlesque show, ticket raffles for art pieces and local business vendors.

The event is currently sold out as the community has widely accepted and embraced the message and mission of the monologues.

Rose says that a reason why the event has become so popular is because it connects to almost every woman due to the honest and real stories.

"I think it is a growing experience sometimes some parts of the monologues make people feel uncomfortable and that's on purpose right because growing and experiencing life as a woman is not always 100% comfortable," Rose said.

The SMTX Vagina Monologues aims to raise \$15,000 this year for HCWC.

To learn more about HCWC click here.

To learn more about SMTX Vagina Monologues click here.

If you are in need of resources against dating violence, please contact 512-396-HELP.

All resources provided by HCWC are free and confidential, offered in English and Spanish.

WRITTEN BY: KTSW NEWS

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