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Celebs 'Lend a Hand' to UNH Domestic Violence Awareness Event

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DURHAM, N.H. – Some of the world’s most well-known Hollywood stars and sports heroes are lending a hand to help raise money at the University of New Hampshire as part of the university’s observance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

The UNH departments of SHARPP (the Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program), Residential Life and Housing have organized a campus and community wide program titled “These Hands Weren’t Made for Hurting,” which includes a raffle of celebrity memorabilia, autographed pictures and tracings of celebrity hands Tuesday, Sept. 30, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., in the Memorial Union Building Strafford Room.

The primary goal of the program is to educate individuals about the many issues that surround domestic violence. Information on the program and an invitation to participate has been sent to all UNH employees and students, as well as many community organizations and local schools. Participants trace their hands, decorate the traced hand and sign a pledge that states “this hand represents my pledge to use my hands, voice, and mind to keep others safe, strong, and free.”

“ The leading cause of severe injury to American women between 18 and 44 years old is domestic violence. This is more than car accidents and muggings combined, and it is 100 percent preventable. Also according to a Department of Justice Report, a man is battered somewhere in America every 37.8 seconds. As a result, we must provide people with the information they need to build health and safe relationships,” says Margaret Scheitheir, coordinator of “These Hands Weren’t Made for Hurting” project.

Celebrities supporting the project include:

- Coffee table book signed by sports superstar Michael Jordan, CD from musician Dave Brubeck, signed book from anthropologist Jane Goodall, CD and signed photograph from singer Jordan Knight, a shirt from comedian Paula Poundstone, and a hat from news woman Paula Zahn.
- Signed pictures of actress Lauren Bacall, actor Robert DiNero, actor Richard Dryfuss, musician Chubby Checker, actress Calista Flockhart, Olympian Peggy Flemming, singer Sammy Hagar, hockey superstar Wayne Gretsky, Olympian Dan Jansen, Olympian Bruce Jenner (also submitted traced hand), horror author Dean Koontz (also submitted traced hand), singer Averil Lavigne, singer Annie Lennox, comedian Jay Leno, politician Joe Lieberman, TV host Ed McMahon, former Gen. Oliver North, actor Tony Randall,

members of the band REM, actress Susan Sarandon, singer George Strait, model Cheryl Tiegs, actor John Travolta, actor Jon Voight and actress Raquel Welch.

- Traced and signed hands from racecar legend Mario Andretti, actor Gary Busey, comic Dom DeLuise, actor Desi Arnaz Jr., politician Michael Dukakis and his wife Kitty Dukakis, actress Olympia Dukakis, comedian Jeff Foxworthy, singer Bruce Hornsby, singer Avril Levine, Tonight Show host Jay Leno, actor Matthew McConaughey and actor Dick VanDyke

Hands will be on display throughout the day Tuesday, Sept. 30. Individuals will be able to view the displayed hands, create one of their own, and enter for chances to win the celebrity memorabilia, autographed pictures and traced hands. All proceeds benefit A Safe Place of Portsmouth, a nonprofit organization providing services to victims of domestic violence.

If you would like further information or are interested in making a donation, please contact Margaret Scheitler, The Gables, University of New Hampshire, 40 Gables Way, Durham, NH 03824, (603) 862-2798.