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18TH ANNUAL ART AUCTION

August 16, 2012

Dear Friend of the Shield of Athena,

As this year's patron, it is my pleasure to invite you to the Shield of Athena's 18th Annual Art Auction benefitting victims of family violence. This year's theme is "Men can make a difference". As a former professional athlete, (NHL hockey player for the Montreal Canadiens) I would like to be a positive role model for the next generation and be amongst the many men who are supporting this cause in taking a strong stand against family violence that profoundly affects many women and children.

Twenty years ago, the Shield began as a grass roots organization in the Greek community. Information sessions were held in the churches and in the people's language of origin about family violence, Canadian laws and resources for victims of abuse.

Access to such vital information empowers victims, teaches them their rights and provides them with options. Furthermore, working with the entire community is essential, so as to educate everyone on the importance of supporting victims and not turning their back on them. People are taught to speak up, take action and condemn violence. Such support makes it easier for victims to rebuild their lives and not return to a relationship that endangers their wellbeing or that of their children.

The Shield now offers services in over 15 languages through its network which consists of 2 offices, a shelter and a community outreach department. Last year, close to 600 women and children received services and/or shelter. As well, 40 sessions on family violence were given to 15 organizations and 12 communities.

The funds raised through the art auction make all this possible. It is one of Montreal's most beautiful multicultural events which promotes very talented artists and raises awareness about family violence. I hope that our past supporters join us again this year but that new people jump on board to make a difference! I ask that you support the event by becoming a sponsor or by placing an ad in the Art Auction souvenir book.

Lastly, I would like to see you all at our 18th Annual Art Auction on Sunday, November 11 2012 at Marché Bonsecours in Old Montreal. I look forward to spending a fabulous afternoon with you, all in support of such a worthy cause.

Thank you,

**Chris Nilan; Former Player for the Montreal Canadiens
Patron of the 18th Annual Art Auction**