

For Immediate Release

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Rochester to Host “Twestival Local” to Raise Money and Awareness for Two Area Charities
Discovering Deaf Worlds and Safe Journey were voted by Rochesterians to be benefactors.

Rochester, N.Y., September 10, 2009—On Saturday, September 12, Rochester will host its third Twestival fundraiser, a concept that leverages Twitter and other social media to spread the word about a good cause. The Twestival Local will take place from 6 to 10 p.m. at Boulder Coffee in South Wedge, located at 100 Alexander Street on the corner of South Clinton in Rochester. Community members in more than 200 cities worldwide voted online to determine which charity in their respective areas will receive all of the proceeds from each Twestival Local.

The Twestival Local will have two local benefactors: Discovering Deaf Worlds (DDW), which advocates for and empowers deaf and hard of hearing communities in developing countries, and Safe Journey, a suburban-based resource and support center for victims of domestic violence. Ten dollars, or the cost of a single general admission ticket, will enable both organizations to further support their initiatives. The goal is to raise \$2,500 through ticket sales and donations—100 percent of which will be shared equally between DDW and Safe Journey.

The Rochester Twestival Local has been organized within a short timeframe by the same core group of volunteers who, earlier this year, rallied the community’s participation in the global Twestival for Charity:Water and Twestival for Foodlink. “The concept of social media for social change has played an integral role in organizing the previous two Twестivals here, as well as raising awareness around each cause,” said Matthew Ray, 25, Rochester Twestival Local organizer. “We hope to build on our former successes and make an even bigger difference with the Twestival Local, which is a great way to have fun while supporting two deserving local organizations.”

An estimated 80 percent of deaf people in developing countries worldwide do not receive an education, which would enable them to contribute to society on par with members of the hearing community, as well as with deaf people in developed countries who enjoy opportunities to grow through language access, interpreting services, and disability rights. Discovering Deaf Worlds seeks to serve as a catalyst for positive change in local communities around the world that will offer better educational and employment opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing people.

Domestic violence affects nearly 76,000 women in Monroe County alone. One in four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime, and one in three teens will experience abuse in a dating relationship. Safe Journey—which reopened its doors this January after suspending operations last year to restructure—has provided practical and emotional support to more than 800 women throughout the community for over 10 years.

“Given the fact that our community came together and made a big impact on a global scale, I believe wholeheartedly that Rochester will again bring forward the same compassion and generosity at Twestival Local to help advance the mission of two important organizations, both with unique stories to tell. And, you don’t even have to use Twitter to attend,” added Ray.

For those who may not be familiar with Twitter and social media, Rochester technology guru Nick Francesco and other local Twitter elite will be on hand to address questions about how to sign up for and use the microblogging site.

Tickets may be purchased at the door. General admission is \$10, and includes a complimentary glass of beer, wine, or coffee beverage and snacks. VIP admission is also available for \$20, which includes five raffle tickets, two free beverages, and snacks. A good time is guaranteed for all attendees with live entertainment featuring local bands, Sinzibukwud, A Kick of Crimson, and Red Light Autumn.

Several Web 2.0 companies of Rochester—including Fixitology and MyMinderz Inc.—are sponsoring the event. Other sponsors include Auction Direct USA, Sign Language Connection and Martino Flynn LLC. Sponsorship opportunities are available through the date of the event until 6pm.

Prizes have been donated by Mac Village Productions, Tap & Mallet, Boulder Coffee, and Lovin’ Cup among others, and will be auctioned off multiple times throughout the night.

Those unable to attend the event are still able to donate to these local charities via the website below.

For more information about the event or sponsorships, visit www.rochester.twestival.com. To follow event updates on Twitter, visit <http://twitter.com/RocTwestival>.

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