



Contact: Susan Keliher
Director of Development
skeliher@thesecondstep.org
617.965.4173

**Actress Marlee Matlin to Speak at The Second Step's
20th Anniversary Event, *Celebrating Success***

Newton, Mass. – The Second Step, a comprehensive program in Newton for survivors of domestic violence, will host its 20th anniversary signature fundraising event, *Celebrating Success 2012*, on April 26 at the Westin Waltham Hotel. Marlee Matlin, Oscar-winning actress and prominent advocate and survivor of domestic violence, will serve as the keynote speaker.

Matlin received worldwide acclaim for her film debut in *Children of a Lesser God*, for which she received the Academy Award for Best Actress at the age of 21. A four-time Emmy Award winner, she starred for seven years on *The West Wing* and has made numerous guest appearances on many top-rated shows. She is known to reality TV audiences for her appearances on *Dancing with the Stars* and on *Celebrity Apprentice*, where she became a finalist. Matlin also is the author of three children's books and has been honored by the White House for her extensive charitable work.

In 2009, Ms. Matlin published her autobiography, *I'll Scream Later*, which became a *New York Times* best seller. The autobiography reveals her experience with domestic violence, including sexual and other physical abuse. As keynote speaker at *Celebrating Success*, Matlin will offer personal stories and highlights from her career and share the inspiration for her advocacy work on behalf of survivors of domestic violence.

“With our 20th Anniversary, we have much to celebrate,” said Roberta Rosenberg, executive director of The Second Step. “We are delighted to have Ms. Matlin speak and help us to bring attention to the active role the broader community plays in our success and the survivors’ success in rebuilding their lives and staying free of abuse for the remainder of their lives.”

An annual Boston-area event, *Celebrating Success* will include a cocktail reception, live and silent auctions and Matlin’s keynote speech. In the past, First Lady of the Commonwealth Diane Patrick has served as the event’s keynote speaker.

Three Newton couples, who have demonstrated a long-standing commitment to The Second Step—Roberta and Paul Carson, Elizabeth (Liz) and Larry Kirsch, and Clare Villari & David Weinstein—are honorary co-chairs of the event. Roberta Carson is a long time board member of The Second Step, Liz Kirsch is the agency's first executive director, and Clare Villari is former board president. All have demonstrated extraordinary leadership, furthering the mission and work of The Second Step in transforming the lives of survivors of domestic violence.

The Celebrating Success event committee is led by steering committee members Roberta Carson, Sharon Johnson, and Marianne Karmel, all of Newton. The event committee also includes Newton residents Joanne Andrews, Patricia Baker, Liz Coleman, Cindy Laughrea, Ruth Isaacs, Linda Isenberg Lerner, Laurisa Neuwirth, Jan Silverman, Alexandra Simes, Jennifer London, Lisa Monahan, Beverly Orlove, Liz Novack, and Bev Zweiman. Also serving on the event committee are Anita Adelson, Cheryl Cronin, Mary J. Kakas, and Jill Shulman of Boston; Colette Philips of Brookline; Mary Ellen Colten of Cambridge; Kim Pazera of Charlestown; Tanya Crowley of Fitchburg; Kathleen Manning Hall of Malden; Jessica Zirpolo Clayson of Needham; Liane Parness, Shari Pellows, and Kim Shapiro of Sharon; Lisa Cerqueira of Watertown; Marjorie Stanzler of Wellesley; and Karen Shapiro.

Founded in Newton in 1992, The Second Step helps survivors of domestic violence create a safe, supportive community, identify choices, and build foundations to transcend abuse. The agency's programs include a transitional living program, where 16 families can live up to two years, and a community program that serves nearly 150 families each year.

The Second Step's services include safety planning, legal assistance, help in accessing healthcare and other services, a therapeutic afterschool program, peer support groups and mentoring programs, and training in parenting and life skills. The Second Step also promotes community awareness and education about domestic violence and collaborates with other agencies to address root causes of domestic violence and end it in our time.

For event information or to purchase tickets, please contact Lee Sullivan, special events manager, at 617.965.2026 or lsullivan@thesecondstep.org.