

Graduating Senior throws benefit for abuse victims, provides safe venue for party

Brookwood High senior decides to make a difference in lieu of traditional graduation party. May 21st event to raise funds for Gwinnett Sexual Assault Center & Children's Advocacy Center.

Duluth, Ga., May 19, 2009. Rosa Ponton, a graduating senior at Brookwood High, a recipient of the Bank of America Donna Champion Scholarship, a Featured Fellow, and a third place finisher for Outstanding Young Business Person, is an excellent champion for her community.

Instead of a typical graduation party, Ms. Ponton has chosen to host a benefit for **The Gwinnett Sexual Assault Center & Children's Advocacy Center**. Her goal is not only to raise money through ticket sales and sponsorships, but to raise awareness. The event will also provide a safe opportunity for teens to celebrate their graduations. Rosa decided to do something positive because, "[she] know[s] too many girls who have been raped or molested without a place to turn to for emotional and physical comfort. They are girls my age and younger who live with histories of sexual abuse eating away at their hearts without any relief."

The Gwinnett Sexual Assault Center (GSAC) was created 22 years ago to assist victims of sexual assault as they searched for healing and justice. Today, GSAC is a full-service facility where forensic medical exams, interviews, counseling, and advocacy take place in a caring and safe environment. The Gwinnett Children's Advocacy Center was created within GSAC to improve the community's response to child abuse. Since 1995, the Gwinnett Children's Advocacy Center has assisted hundreds of children, youths, and their families victimized by sexual abuse.

Rosa's graduation benefit will be held at Dave & Busters in Duluth, Ga. on May 21 from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. As of May 19, Rosa has confirmed 74 attendees with 135 more potential participants. She has enlisted and received the support of local businesses for raffle and/or auction prizes.

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