

## Luncheon helps Human Options raise funds and awareness of domestic violence

BY SAMANTHA ESQUIVEL

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Every 9 seconds a woman is assaulted or beaten. It's a scary statistic, but for the past 35 years the Orange County nonprofit Human Options works to protect victims of domestic violence and build awareness of the issue.

Human Options celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by hosting its annual fall luncheon for domestic violence awareness. The event was hosted at Hotel Irvine with nearly 100 people supporting the event.

"Again and again women say, 'you gave me back myself' and luncheons like this are so important to bring an awareness on how to stand for dignity and respect," said Vivian Clecak, Human Options founder.

This year the organization invited Dr. Jackson Katz as a keynote speaker. Katz is best known for his TED Talk, "Violence against women-it's a men's issue" with nearly 2 million views.

One of the most powerful moments at the luncheon was when domestic violence victim Karen Rager-Takeda shared her story of finding a safe haven in Human Options.

"It was my promise to God: You get me to safety, you get me back home and I will fight for every man, woman and child and no one will have to live and go through what I've had to," said Karen Rager-Takeda, Co-Chair.

The event raised nearly \$122,000. The funds will go to supporting Human Options' programs including a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, counseling programs and transitional housing.

More than 32,000 people in Orange County have been counseled or given shelter through Human Options in its 35-year history. The organization has responded to nearly 70,000 calls through its crisis hotline.

"Ultimately, we are a culture that cares about people and hopefully the more we are conscious of domestic violence the more we will change it," said Clecak.



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COURTESY OF HUMAN OPTIONS



**Vivian Clecak, Karen Rager-Takeda and Maricela Rios-Faust**  
Courtesy of Human Options

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**Karen Jaffe and Dr. Jackson Katz**  
Courtesy of Human Options

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