

## @issue

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

# End the nightmare against women

By ANDREA CARTER

My office is just one block from CNN Center, and I eat at the food court there four times a week. When I saw the live news shots of the shooting there Tuesday, my heart sank. Witnesses see a man dragging a woman down the stairs.

As we were glued to the TV, I told my boss, "I can write the script for this tragic story." "Another case for MSV," she replied, referring to the non-profit Men Stopping Violence.

I am the president of the board of Men Stopping Violence, a social change organization dedicated to ending men's violence against women. I went to my desk as the group stayed glued to the TV. I wept and wept and wept for the 22-year-old Omni Hotel worker. At the time, I didn't know her name, her favorite hobbies or her aspirations. The only thing I could think was that she came to work today, fully expecting to do her job, go home and do it over again. I could only think of the friends and family who loved her.



Andrea K. Carter is president of the board of Men Stopping Violence.

The cause of ending domestic violence is one too near and dear to my heart. A wonderful friend of mine was killed a few years ago at the hands of her estranged husband. The day — that Nov. 22 — was to be great. It was LeBron James' first year in the NBA and his first time playing at Philips Arena. My friend and I were going to meet for dinner and "drinkie drinks," as she used to say, before watching this phenom up close. We never had the chance.

So what do we do about this needless violence? Get involved with an organization such as Men Stopping Violence. I applaud the man in CNN Center who went for help when he saw the defenseless woman being dragged by her hair. While he couldn't save her life, he tried to do something.

I dream of a world where we all do something, where the friends of my smart, talented, caring friend's estranged husband had taken a stand. I dream of a world where those friends said to him: "We will not allow you to treat her this way because it is wrong." I dream of a world where real men take this stand because they are committed to making a safe world for women and do not care if they seem "soft."

One way to get involved is through such programs as Men Stopping Violence's "Because We Have Daughters" program, which provides a unique opportunity for fathers and daughters to share fun and educational activities, followed by discussions about what the activities taught them about themselves and each other.

Dads come away with a new understanding about what the world is like for girls today.

They also come away engaged in the movement to end domestic violence even though they are not batterers and do not know any. They are engaged because they have daughters, nieces, mothers and other wonderful women in their lives.

Learn more about the Women's Resource Center to End Domestic Violence, one of our sister organizations. And if you don't support Men Stopping Violence, please support a group in your community that is committed to safety for the women in your life and for women such as Clara Riddles who lost her life at the CNN Center.

I dream of a safe world. I hope you share my dream because this most recent domestic violence incident, like the countless others, is a nightmare. Before we face another tragedy like this one, it's time for all of us — especially the real men in our community — to wake up and take a stand.

**I dream of a world where real men stand because they are committed to making a safe world for women.**