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Unseen Battles: Navigating the Challenges of Domestic Violence for South Asian Survivors

South Asian survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse in the U.S. face unique and complex barriers that often make it difficult to seek help, leave abusive situations, or access resources. These barriers stem from cultural, societal, legal, and systemic factors. Some key challenges include:

- **Cultural pressures:** Fear of bringing shame, stigma against divorce, and family intervention discourage survivors from seeking help.
- **Immigration challenges:** Dependent visa status and fear of deportation trap survivors in abusive situations.
- **Language barriers:** Limited English proficiency makes it difficult to access legal, social, and crisis support services.
- **Lack of culturally competent services:** Mainstream shelters, law enforcement, and counseling services may not understand South Asian cultural nuances.
- **Financial dependence:** Many survivors lack access to bank accounts, employment, or financial resources, making it harder to leave.
- **Religious and community influence:** Religious leaders and social circles may discourage separation, prioritizing family honor over safety.
- **Mental health stigma:** Seeking therapy is often taboo, and survivors fear judgment or community backlash.
- **Custody concerns:** Survivors worry about losing their children, especially if they lack legal knowledge or financial stability.

A Quiet yet Profound Force: A Legacy Beyond the Physical Realm



October, 9, 1939 - December 5, 2024

In every organization, there are those whose contributions shine in the spotlight and then there are those whose work speaks in silence—steady, unwavering and deeply impactful. Today, we remember one such quiet yet powerful force—a dedicated supporter and volunteer whose presence was felt in every event and every act of service, yet whose humility kept him away from the recognition.

Though I never had the privilege of knowing him personally, his unwavering support and dedication were impossible to miss. He was there—not for applause, not for acknowledgment, but because he believed in the mission. Whether it was offering quiet words of encouragement or ensuring that everything ran smoothly. He contributed and supported with a heart full of service. Now, as he leaves his mortal body, Mai Family Services will deeply feel the absence of his physical presence.

Yet, true service transcends the boundaries of life and death. His selfless spirit lives on in the foundation of this agency, in the countless lives he touched, and in the inspiration he leaves behind.

We believe he continues to support this mission from the spiritual realm, his blessings guiding us forward. Though we may no longer see him among us, his legacy of kindness, devotion, and unwavering support will remain in our hearts.

As we move forward, we honor his memory not with sorrow, but with the same quiet dedication that defined his life. Thank you for everything, dear **Guru Sashital**. Your presence was a gift and your spirit will forever be with us.

On behalf of MaiFS Staff,

Yogita Chhettri (Program Manager)

An Educational Guide



Understanding Alimony in Michigan

- **Does Michigan have alimony?**

Yes, Michigan has provisions for alimony, known as spousal support, aimed at providing financial assistance to a lower-earning or non-earning spouse during or after a divorce.

- **How does alimony work in Michigan?**

In Michigan, the court evaluates various factors such as each party's income, age, health, and the duration of the marriage to determine the necessity, amount, and duration of spousal support.

- **Is alimony permanent?**

Alimony can be permanent or temporary in Michigan, with permanent alimony being less common and usually awarded in long-term marriages or when one party has significant needs.

- **How long does alimony last in Michigan?**

The length of alimony in Michigan is determined by the court and may last for a few years or until a significant event occurs like the remarriage of the recipient.

<https://kellykellylaw.com/blog/family-law/michigan-alimony/>

Monthly Statistics



Our world in February

TOTAL NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED: 73



60

Current active survivors

12

Referrals and Resources

1

Empowered!

MaiFS Free Helpline: 888-664-8624

Office Hours

(Mon-Fri: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM)

www.maifs.org

MaiFS – CSU Grant

The CSU-Grant program, funded by Michigan's Division of Victim Services (DVS), has been instrumental in supporting South Asian victims and survivors of domestic violence. Through advocacy services and skill-building sessions, the program empowers participants to heal and rebuild their lives.

The advocacy sessions educate survivors on the dynamics of domestic violence, safety strategies, and the free local, state, and county resources available to help them recover. Meanwhile, the skill-building sessions focus on enhancing English communication, computer literacy, and financial management skills, along with providing educational and tuition assistance to further their empowerment.

Outreach to local South Asian community organizations plays a crucial role in raising awareness about the CSU-Grant program. Over the years, the program has successfully collaborated with organizations such as the American Chinese Association and the Bangladeshi American Public Affairs Committee (BAPAC) to extend its services. This year, through continued outreach efforts, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ICNA Relief and have begun providing sessions for some of their domestic violence survivors.

While our outreach aims to expand program participation among various South Asian communities, the Division of Victim Services, our grant agency, firmly believes that even a single survivor rehabilitated and empowered through this funding is a meaningful success. We agree.

For more information about the CSU-Grant program, please contact Murali Nair at 248-795-4639 or visit <https://maifs.org/csu-grant/>.

Special Screening - 'Dear Pra'

Breaking Down Barriers to Mental Wellness

Shri Thanedar Community Center is holding a special screening of 'Dear Pra', a short film that shines an unflinching yet caring light on an affliction that has upended the lives of millions of individuals and families in the US and around the world.

The film, which premiered at the first Marathi Film Festival in North America, organized by NAFA (North American Film Association), has been critically acclaimed and selected at niche film festivals in the US and India.

The film is in Marathi and English, with English subtitles.

The screening will be followed by a Q&A with Congressman Shri Thanedar, the Producer, on "The Stigma of Silence: Breaking Down Barriers to Mental Wellness," and with the director. The discussion will be in English.

The event is free and open to public, and seating is first come, first served.

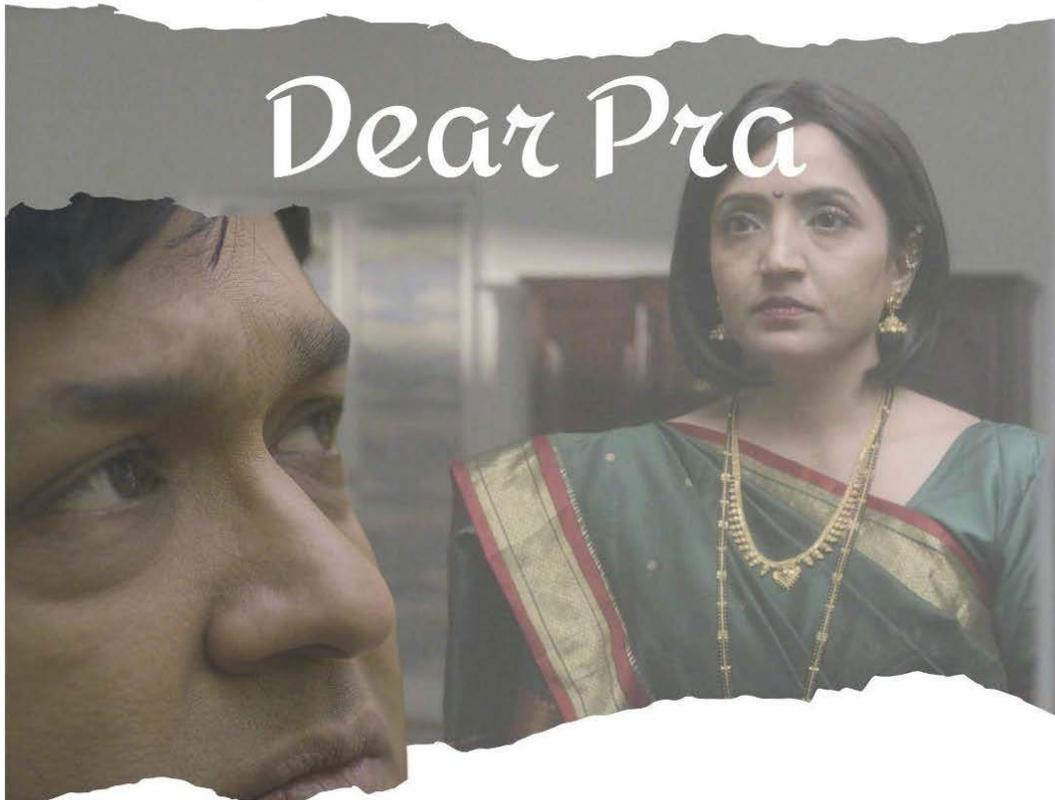
Please RSVP at: <https://www.tugoz.com/DearPra>

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Farmington Civic Theater
33332 Grand River Ave
Farmington MI 48336
Saturday, March 1, 2025 10:30 AM



NAFA
FILM CLUB

SPECIAL SCREENING



- AGENDA**
- 10:30am-11:00am: Doors open. Tea & Refreshments
 - 11:00am-11:20am : Screening of short film 'Dear Pra'
 - 11:20am-11:45am : The Stigma of Silence. Q&A with Congressman Shri Thanedar
 - 11:45am-12:15pm : Q&A with the director and producers.

Farmington Civic Theater

33332 Grand River Ave, Farmington, MI

1st March 2025

Content Warning: This film contains themes of suicide that may be distressing to some viewers.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events

JOIN US. SUPPORT US.
ENGAGE WITH US.

APRIL
27

ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

MAY
18

YOUTH LIGHTHOUSE

MAY
31

WALKATHON

AUG
24

GOLDEN CLUB YAADEIN

NOV
22

HOLIDAY BANQUET



Partner Event

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Collectively, we can
ACCELERATE ACTION
for gender equality.
#IWD2025
#AccelerateAction

SAT MAR
15
2025
10AM-3PM

Schoolcraft College | Vistatech Center
18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia, MI 48152



Scan QR
to RSVP

Adult: \$30 | Ages 12-18: \$10

RSVP by February 26:
<https://tinyurl.com/2025IWD>
Contact: aiwamich@gmail.com

OUR PROUD
SPONSORS:



This event is initiated by AIWA in collaboration with Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders community organizations.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Collectively, we can
ACCELERATE ACTION
for gender equality.

#IWD2025 #AccelerateAction



Tsu-Yin Wu, PhD, RN, FAAN

Director, EMU Center for Health Disparities
Innovation and Studies (CHDIS)
Professor and Ph.D. Program Director,
EMU School of Nursing

MC, Moderator and Panelist:

Anu Gopalakrishnan [MC]

Broadcaster/Entrepreneur

Gargi Shah [Moderator]

Director for Software Engineering, Ford Credit

Ritu Barkotoky

Director of People Development,
Amsted Automotive Group

Laurel Capobianco

CEO, iCare Pathways

Sabala Mandava, MD, FACR

Chair, Department of Radiology
Henry Ford Hospital and Health Network
Associate Professor, Michigan State University

Bhavani Koneru

Chief Information Officer, Oakland University

Youth Interactive Kahoot Game:

Shravya Dumbala (*Novi High School*)

Pranavi Annavarapu (*Novi High School*)

Mona Pandit (*Salem High School*)

Aileen Kim (*International Academy West*)

Anika Sahas-Shah (*Plymouth High School*)

Registration	10:00 am
Program	10:30 am
Cultural Program	12:50 am
Lunch	1:00 pm
Tai Chi & Bollywood	1:50 pm
Networking	2:20 pm
Wrap up	3:00 pm

Enjoy hot Mediterranean lunch
crafted by Schoolcraft Culinary.

Offering exhibitors for shopping
and interactive Kahoot game
for fun!

Schoolcraft college | Vistatech Center

18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia, MI 28152

Adult: \$30 | Ages 12-18: \$10

RSVP by February 26: <https://tinyurl.com/2025IWD>

Contact: aiwamich@gmail.com



Scan QR to RSVP

This event is initiated by AIWA in collaboration with Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders community organizations

MaiFS Monthly Recurring Program



DONATION APPEAL

Dear Supporters,

Today, we're excited to launch our monthly recurring donation program. Your regular support, even in small amounts, can make a big difference.

Think of it this way: For less than the cost of a weekly lunch, you can fuel our mission year-round. A \$10 monthly donation adds up to \$120 annually - that's enough to provide basic services to our survivors.

By becoming a monthly donor, you're not just giving - you're joining a community of dedicated change-makers. Your steady support allows us to plan ahead and tackle long-term projects with confidence.

Ready to make a lasting impact?

Visit [Monthly Recurring Program](#) to set up your monthly gift today.

Thank you for your continued support.

MaiFS Fundraising Team



Your consistent support can make a lasting difference. By becoming a monthly donor to Mai Family Services, you help ensure we can provide ongoing, culturally sensitive support to families in need- the number which is growing every month.

For as little as the cost of a cup of coffee per month, you can:

- Sustain vital programs
- Empower families to break cycles of violence
- Support community education and outreach

Every month, your generosity creates ripples of positive change. Join our circle of committed supporters today!

Set up your monthly donation now and be a continuous force for good in our community.

[Become Monthly Hero](#)

Thank you for supporting Mai Family Services!



Our mailing address is:
MAI FAMILY SERVICES
32401 W. Eight Mile Rd
Livonia, MI 48152

