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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Seattle Women's Commission Announces Riddhi Mukhopadhyay As Recipient of 2017 Jeanette Williams Award

Celebration on August 24, 6-8 pm at Columbia City Theater

SEATTLE-- The Seattle Women's Commission is proud to announce Riddhi Mukhopadhyay, Legal Director of the Sexual Violence Legal Services, as the winner of the 2017 Jeanette Williams Award.

The Sexual Violence Legal Services (SVLS) is a program of the YWCA Seattle|King|Snohomish, and provides trauma-informed direct representation to victims of sexual violence in a wide variety of legal matters, along with technical assistance to attorneys and advocates statewide. Mukhopadhyay has been in the field for over 15 years, previously volunteering and working as a sexual assault and domestic violence advocate with local domestic violence advocacy groups in North Carolina, Texas, and Washington. She is currently on the Board of Directors for Legal Voice, and the Coalition Ending Gender-Based Violence. She is also the current co-chair for Seattle's Immigration and Refugee Commission.

Speaking Bengali, Hindi and Spanish, Mukhopadhyay specializes in working with clients who face barriers in accessing justice based on criminal history, mental illness, developmental disabilities, limited English proficiency, and immigration status.

"I am just blown away by the survivors I serve. As a community, we are aware of the prevalence of sexual assault and abuse, but it continues to be a topic that we do not like to speak of. It's considered too taboo, too unpleasant, and in some cases, requires addressing our own demons. The work at SVLS continues to leave me in awe of how strong, resilient, and brave each survivor we work with is," said Mukhopadhyay.

"The Commission felt that Riddhi's selfless and tireless work advocating for the women she has helped is incredibly deserving of this award which honors one of the City's most treasured women's rights leaders, Jeanette Williams. Myself along with the other Co-Chairs are proud to have this small way to acknowledge the incredible impact Riddhi has had on the women's lives she's touched and on the legacy of improving Seattle for women in the future," said Morgan Beach, co-chair, Seattle Women's Commission.

Award ceremony open to members of the public

The award will be presented on Thursday, August 24 during a celebration hosted by the Women's Commission from 6-8 pm at Columbia City Theater, 4916 Rainier Ave S., Seattle, WA 98118. The event is free and open to the public. Members of the public are requested to register

their attendance by clicking <http://bit.ly/swcaward>. The Women's Commission is active on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/seattlewomen) (<https://www.facebook.com/seattlewomen>) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/Seawomenscomm) (<https://twitter.com/Seawomenscomm>) and invites public participation for the event with the hashtag #SWCAward2017.

Please call 206-684-4500 if you need to request an accommodation. This information is available in other formats on request.

Street parking is available. The Columbia City Light rail station is a short walk from the theatre and several bus routes stop near Columbia City Theatre, please refer to [King County's Metro transportation guide](#) for more information.

Program Overview

6:00 - 6:45pm: Networking and refreshments

6:45pm: Welcome and brief program/announcement of the recipient of the Jeanette Williams Award

7:00 - 8:00 pm: Networking, music, conclusion

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The **Jeanette Williams Award** was created as part of the 2003 Seattle Women's Summit to honor an individual who demonstrates significant leadership and service in advancing the cause of women in Seattle. This year, the award also will honor a business in our community making strides to improve pay equity, highlighting the importance of women's advancement in the work place, and eliminating economic disparities for women and girls.

Jeanette Williams served on the Seattle City Council from 1969 to 1989. In 1971 she was instrumental in establishing the nation's first Seattle Women's Commission and Office of Women's Rights with paid staff. Prior to serving on Seattle City Council, Williams overcame gender stereotypes to become the first woman elected as County Chairperson for the King County Democratic Central Committee. A tireless advocate for women's issues, Jeanette Williams helped establish the first shelter for battered and abused women in Seattle, helped create the City's Division on Aging, developed policies to address early childhood education, and sponsored critical legislation that for the first time prohibited discrimination in housing and employment in the City of Seattle.

The **Seattle Women's Commission** advises the Mayor, City Council and city departments on issues that impact the women of Seattle. The Commission identifies areas of concern and recommends policy and legislation, provides feedback and opinion on issues of city and state budget, and acts as a liaison between the women of Seattle and City government. As advisors to the Mayor, City Council and City Departments, Commissioners have the opportunity to address issues of concern for the women of Seattle and to work for positive change.

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