



**For immediate release  
February 9, 2009**

Contact: Susan Berryman Rodriguez  
404.870.9605 or 404.273.0008 or  
susan@padv.org

## **Shawn Mullins to perform for local charity** *PADV hosts fundraiser to benefit battered women and their children*

ATLANTA, February 9, 2009 – Shawn Mullins, singer-songwriter, will perform at *Hearts with Hope* benefiting Partnership Against Domestic Violence (PADV) on February 21, 2009. He is most recognized for his song “Lullaby” which dominated the airwaves in 1998. Mullins will be performing at PADV’s signature fundraising and stewardship event to help battered women and their children live safe, productive and violence-free lives. The *Hearts with Hope* gala will be held at the InterContinental Buckhead Atlanta.

“I’m interested in the issue of domestic violence and its affect on children because my wife and I are expecting our first child,” said Shawn Mullins. “Children are affected by the attitudes of their parents and what they experience at home. A child learns to ‘be’ from available role models like parents or guardians.”

Children who live in violent homes face a dual threat - witnessing violence and being physically abused. An estimated 3.3 million children are exposed to domestic violence each year. Forty to sixty percent of men who abuse women also abuse their children. Young boys who grow up in violent homes are more likely to become batterers and young girls are more likely to become victims of abuse.

“I believe it’s critical to break the cycle of violence for children,” said Mullins. “The reason I’m involved with PADV is because they support thousands of women and their children every year; helping them break the vicious cycle. I hope the community will join me by supporting PADV to help them continue to provide lifesaving services during this economic down-turn.”

Cathy Willis Spraez, president & CEO for PADV, added to Mullins’ observations with a perspective on how the current recession is influencing domestic violence. “Today’s economic difficulties have led to an increased need for our free services. Economic stress may not cause domestic violence, but it can exacerbate already violent relationships and severely impair a battered woman’s ability to break free of abuse. The number of crisis calls has increased by 28 percent and 17 percent more women are seeking the safety of our shelters as compared to last winter when we weren’t experiencing an economic crisis. Our need is both compelling and urgent,” continued Willis Spraez.

*Hearts with Hope* (HWH) co-chairs Suzanne Sitherwood, president of Atlanta Gas Light, and her husband Guy Griswold, a principal with Blue Ridge Strategies, are joined by a host committee of executives from diverse companies including Atlanta Gas Light, Verizon Wireless, GE, Pink Magazine, The Coca-Cola Company, IBM, Cisco Systems and many others. HWH raises more than half of PADV’s annual general operating budget. With these funds, PADV provides quality programs and services in support of Atlanta-area battered women and their children.

-more-

More than 600 people are expected to attend the black-tie *Hearts with Hope* 2009 event. The event includes a cocktail hour/silent auction, dinner/live auction, and a live performance by Shawn Mullins. PADV will announce the lucky winner of the \$100 raffle – a 2008 Porsche 911 Carrera S Coupe valued at \$94,000. This is the ultimate sports car with 355 horsepower and the ability to accelerate from 0 to 60 in 4.1 seconds.

Tickets to the event are \$350 per person and sponsorships range from \$5,000 to \$75,000. For information or tickets, visit [www.padv.org](http://www.padv.org).

### **About Shawn Mullins:**

Shawn Mullins is an Atlanta native. Born in Clarkston, Mullins has been an active member of the music scene in Atlanta for more than 20 years. He is most recognized for his song “Lullaby” which dominated the airwaves in 1998. The music community took notice of his deep, emphatic voice and “real” lyrics and showcased his talent to the masses by bringing his music to the screen. His work was featured in “Dawson’s Creek” and “Scrubs” and has provided a memorable soundtrack for movies like “The Faculty” and “Big Daddy.”

The Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter uses his powerful lyrics and guitar rhythms to paint pictures of hope, love, sorrow and pain. One of his songs called “Eggshells” describes the overwhelming and empowering feeling of winning the battle against abuse. Mullins carefully and descriptively explains the different emotions of a survivor of abuse channeling her feelings of loneliness, self-doubt and eventual empowerment once she no longer carefully walks on eggshells but instead stomps on them in defiance.

Shawn Mullins has also been active in political and social issues. In 2004, he supported Democratic nominee John Kerry and toured with the Senator during his presidential campaign route through Georgia. In 2009, Mullins received the honor of performing during President Obama’s inauguration in Washington DC. Mullins has also put his musical genius to work for charity albums and benefit concerts which have supported various philanthropic efforts.

### **About Partnership Against Domestic Violence**

Partnership Against Domestic Violence is the largest and one of the oldest nonprofit domestic violence organizations in Georgia. For more than 30 years, PADV has been providing professional, compassionate, and empowering support to battered women and their children in metro Atlanta. PADV provides violence prevention, emergency intervention and long-term advocacy for battered women and their children. Support includes a 24-hour crisis line, two emergency shelters in metro Atlanta, transitional housing, support groups, legal advocacy, and a teen dating violence prevention program. To learn more about domestic violence and PADV programs and services, please visit [www.padv.org](http://www.padv.org).

Contact: Susan Berryman Rodriguez  
404.870.9605 or 404.273.0008 or [susan@padv.org](mailto:susan@padv.org)

###