



**LA MAESTRA**  
**COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS**  
City Heights · El Cajon · National City · Lemon Grove

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**December 6, 2018**

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### **La Maestra Provides a New Look at Surviving Abuse** **With the launch of *Surviving in the Shadows* by author Zara Marselian**

**SAN DIEGO** — To increase awareness about human trafficking, domestic violence and political oppression, La Maestra is cordially inviting the public to a Human Trafficking Awareness Resource Fair on Thursday, December 6 from 10am to 2 p.m. at 4060 Fairmount Avenue, San Diego, California 92105. In the same location, there will also be a reception and book signing from 11 a.m. to 1p.m. A presentation by author, Zara Marselian for the *Surviving in the Shadows* book launch will be held at 12p.m. and will include keynote speakers, District Attorney Summer Stephan and Councilmember Georgette Gomez. Books reserved prior to the event will be signed and available during the reception. The proceeds from all book sales will benefit La Maestra Foundation.

La Maestra staff will be onsite to provide information about the services offered at La Maestra's Legal Advocacy and Social Services department, as well as provide resources from other local partner organizations serving survivors of rights violations. La Maestra will provide financial education and assist community members with health coverage and food assistance enrollment. Handmade products will be available for sale from La Maestra's microcredit women's group, and free care packages will be handed out, while supplies last.

Every day, numerous people live in the shadows as they face violations of their basic human rights. Yet how much awareness is present in our community and how much support is provided to these survivors? As Zara Marselian states in her new book, *Surviving in the Shadows*, "How many times have each one of us heard about the stories of victims of violent crimes and wondered how they ended up in this situation and why didn't they just leave?"

In her third book, *Surviving in the Shadows*, author Zara Marselian illustrates the real-life experiences of people who have escaped from trafficking, domestic violence and political oppression. Through the collection of stories, as told by the people who have been trapped in these forms of modern-day slavery, the book provides an authentic and hopeful look into overcoming these injustices. Marselian's hope is that through reading these stories, from the point of view of those who have been oppressed, we can help victims break free and heal as well as prevent more people from experiencing abuse. This book aims to spread awareness so that we can work individually and collectively to discern the root causes of these rights violations and then co-create lasting solutions.

In an effort to bring additional resources to central San Diego and specifically the community of City Heights, Zara Marselian, MA, FACHE, a lifelong resident of City Heights and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of La Maestra Community Health Centers and La Maestra Foundation, co-founded La Maestra in 1990 to provide health care, education and social services to help low-income diverse residents to become healthy and self-sufficient.

In 2011, based upon the high community need for immigration and legal services, the Legal Advocacy and Social Services department was established in City Heights. In addition to immigration services, the department assists survivors of labor and sex trafficking, domestic violence and political oppression through critical recovery services and legal representation and advocacy.

*Surviving in the Shadows* is available as a free gift for a donation of \$20 or more to La Maestra Foundation. To reserve your first edition copy of *Surviving in the Shadows*, please contact Melissa Aranda by email at [maranda@lamaestra.org](mailto:maranda@lamaestra.org) or by phone at 619-584-1612. The book can also be purchased through Amazon.com. For media interviews, please contact Corinne Hanson as indicated above.

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About La Maestra Community Health Centers: La Maestra Community Health Centers is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) and a Federally Qualifies Health Center (FQHC). For more than 27 years, the organization has served immigrant, refugee, uninsured, and underinsured populations living in the underserved communities of central, east, and south San Diego County, California. Today, La Maestra operates five medical clinics, ten dental suites, four school-based sites, a mobile medical and dental unit, and a mobile mammography coach. Since its founding, La Maestra has been committed to its mission to provide quality health care and education; to improve the overall wellbeing of the family; bringing the underserved, ethnically diverse communities into the mainstream of our society through a caring, effective, culturally and linguistically competent manner, respecting the dignity of all patients.

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