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****UPDATED** Circle of Friends Launches New Impact Scholarship
to Educate and Empower Female Survivors of Child Sex Trafficking and Exploitation**

Inaugural Award Doubles to \$20,000 Since Initial January Announcement

(Atlanta, GA– March 8, 2017) **Circle of Friends: Celebrating Life, Inc. (COFCL)** today launched its new **Circle of Friends Impact Scholarship** to assist young, female survivors of sex trafficking and exploitation pursue post-secondary education and workforce skills in pursuit of self-sufficiency.

“Circle of Friends has a long-standing history of offering programs and services which enrich the spirit, soul and well-being of young women seeking to reclaim their power and transform their victimization into the springboard for their own self-actualization,” **said Lisa C. Williams**, founder of Circle of Friends and Living Water for Girls program. “I am greatly humbled that we are now able to add this scholarship program to our roster of services, as its contribution will make important educational resources available to young women who need increased access and opportunities to cultivate a promising future.”

The online application submission process opens today, **Wednesday, March 8, 2017** (International Women’s Day), with a deadline submission date of Monday, May 8, 2017. COFCL may award up to twenty (20) new scholarships in an aggregate amount of up to **\$20,000** each year. The scholarship funds will be disbursed directly to the educational institution that the recipient is attending. Applicants may apply for the following scholarships:

- (a) **The Maria Duenas Calvo Vocational Scholarship** (the “Calvo Vocational Scholarship”) is awarded to those qualified individuals interested in attending a technical school or a two (2) year college with a focus towards majoring in horticulture, allied health, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) or another major closely related.

- (b) **The Honorable Nina R. Hickson Scholarship** (the “Hickson Scholarship” and, together with the “Calvo Vocational Scholarship”, the “Scholarships” and each, a “Scholarship”) is awarded to those qualified individuals interested in attending a four-year college with a focus towards majoring in journalism, social work, government/law, allied health, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) or another major closely related.

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(c) **The Lisa C. Williams Scholarship** (the “Williams Scholarship”) is awarded to those qualified individuals in need of assistance in paying for housing or public transportation while attending college. This scholarship will provide for a one-time-only, on-campus housing deposit and or one month's rent or two semesters of public transportation.

COFCL Board Members announced the formation of the Circle of Friends Impact Scholarship at their office located on the campus of Atlanta Metropolitan State College (AMSC). Atlanta Metropolitan State College is a unit of the University System of Georgia. AMSC focuses on excellence, where outstanding faculty members and committed staff teach and facilitate the successful academic matriculation and holistic development of students. AMSC offers an affordable liberal arts education and prepares students from a diverse urban community to function in a global society.

[About COFCL, Inc.](#)

Circle of Friends: Celebrating Life, Inc., was established on September 12, 1999, with a focus to serve, educate, equip and empower women to make a positive difference in the lives of other women and girls. The COFCL mission is to assist youth and young women survivors of violence, street life and human trafficking in their efforts to pursue educational endeavors and to acquire skills allowing them to become self-sufficient.

*In 2017, COFCL celebrated an impactful legislative victory, the enactment of **Georgia Constitutional Amendment 2- SR7 or “Rachel’s Law/Safe Harbor Act,”** which provides much needed resources to survivors of child sex trafficking and exploitation throughout Georgia. The law is named for COFCL graduate Rachel, and is the first Safe Harbor law in the nation to be named in honor of a child sex trafficking survivor.*

COFCL has received numerous awards and recognitions for its restorative and rehabilitation work with young women and girls and was also profiled in the 2015 CNN Special Report, Children for Sale: The Fight to End Human Trafficking.

For more information, email: info@cofcl.org or visit: www.cofcl.org

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