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National Safe Place and Southwest Airlines Announce 2012 *HEROES for Youth* Award Recipient

(October 29, 2012) Louisville, Ky. – National Safe Place and Southwest Airlines announce Tammy Hopper, President and CEO of the Youth & Family Services Network (YFSN), as the 2012 *HEROES for Youth* award recipient. Southwest Airlines sponsors this annual award, established by National Safe Place, to recognize individuals who have made extraordinary contributions nationally to services provided to at-risk youth.

“Southwest Airlines is honored to sponsor the *HEROES for Youth Award*,” said Linda Rutherford, vice president of Communication and Strategic Outreach for Southwest. “This year, we’re proud to join National Safe Place in honoring Tammy Hopper. She has dedicated her professional life to young people and believes that together we can make a better world for our youth. We honor her efforts and celebrate her accomplishments with this distinguished award.”

Hopper is a licensed clinical social worker and has more than 25 years of experience working with adolescents. In her current role with YFSN, she provides training, technical assistance and capacity building support to youth service organizations across the country. Hopper previously served as the Director of Organizational Advancement for YFSN and has been on staff with the Network since 2002.

Since 2008, YFSN and Hopper served as a contract trainer and technical assistance specialist for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center (RHYTTAC) operated by the National Resource Center. In this role, she provided more than 20 runaway and homeless youth trainings on such topics as trauma informed care, runaway and homeless youth program eligibility, grant writing, documentation, aftercare and case planning. She also helped to draft and pilot the RHYTTAC Training of Trainers for Trauma Informed Care.

“Tammy Hopper is a dedicated advocate for youth empowerment and effective services,” said Laurie Jackson, National Safe Place Executive Director. “Her passion for youth is translated into her professional work and showcased by the many positive outcomes she has generated over the years. We are truly honored to recognize her as this year’s Hero for Youth.”

Hopper has been recognized by the National Network for Youth for both networking and advocacy. In 1992, she was in the inaugural group of 10 child welfare professionals recognized with the David S. Leidermann Award from the Child Welfare League of America. For the past 20 years, Hopper served on the National Safe Place Advisory Board.

Prior to joining YFSN, Hopper served as a Clinical Supervisor and Program Director for Child and Family Tennessee.

National Safe Place based the *HEROES for Youth* award on the following criteria:

- H** Hear the voices of at-risk youth
- E** Engage in the discussion
- R** Respond to the call
- O** Observe the need for change and take action
- E** Educate and encourage key stakeholders to make a positive difference
- S** Significantly change the lives of at-risk youth for the better

About National Safe Place

National Safe Place, headquartered in Louisville, KY, provides training and technical assistance for youth service agencies and businesses interested in developing the Safe Place program. Safe Place provides access to immediate help and safety for all young people in crisis. A public-private network of more than 20,000 locations in 1,582 communities across the country extends the doors of local youth shelters by displaying the Safe Place sign. Businesses and community locations that appeal to youth – such as fast food restaurants, convenience stores, fire stations, public buses and libraries –connect kids looking for help with a partnering youth service agency. Safe Place was created as an outreach program of Shelter House by the YMCA of Greater Louisville in 1983 and remains a wholly owned subsidiary of the YMCA of Greater Louisville. Since its inception, Safe Place has helped more than 270,000 youth. For more information, please visit www.nationalsafeplace.org.

About Southwest Airlines Co.

In its 42nd year of service, Dallas-based Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV) continues to differentiate itself from other low-fare carriers by providing reliability and exemplary Customer Service delivered by 46,000 Employees to more than 100 million Customers every year. Including wholly owned subsidiary AirTran Airways, the Company operates the largest fleet of Boeing aircraft in the world to serve 97 destinations in 41 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and six near-international countries. Visit southwest.com/citizenship to read the Southwest Airlines One Report™ and see how Southwest is doing its part to be a good citizen while underscoring a commitment to the triple bottom line of Performance, People, and Planet.

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