FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITIZEN ADVOCACY CENTER, NON-PROFIT PUBLIC INTEREST COMMUNITY LAW CENTER, CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF BUILDING DEMOCRACY

ELMHURST – The Elmhurst based Citizen Advocacy Center (CAC) will hold its 20th Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser on Friday, September 12, 2014 from 6:30 - 9:30pm at the Midwest Conference Center Skyline Ballroom in Northlake, Illinois. Guest speakers include Craig Delligere, WBBM Political Editor, Theresa Amato, CAC Founder, and Dr. Claire Nader, President of The Shafeek Nader Trust for the Community Interest.

The Citizen Advocacy Center (CAC) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to building democracy for the 21st Century. Through community lawyering, the CAC strengthens the capacity of the public to effectively engage in the democratic process by providing civic education, community organizing, and legal assistance and resources. The CAC also works to remove government policies and laws that deter or prevent meaningful participation in civic affairs and advances justice through ensuring that the government systems through which the public participates in the democratic process are accessible, accountable, and transparent.

Theresa Amato, a public interest lawyer who founded the CAC in 1994, served as its first executive director for 8 years, and now serves as the current board president, said that, “There is a societal void in educating people about how to be active, informed, and effective citizens in the democratic process. The CAC was created to fill that void, help people harness their civic power and close the gap between democracy in theory and democracy in practice. It is very rewarding to celebrate our 20th year and see how many people have been empowered, students have been trained, and democratic protocols improved as the CAC has evolved to be a civic leader in Illinois.”

“CAC is a full-service organization when it comes to building democracy. Our community lawyers work with a variety of constituents. We work with community groups who seek to address systemic community issues but don’t know where to start; with government bodies at the local and state level to have meaningful policies that value public participation; with educators to provide hands-on civic education training; with journalists to improve accessing government information and meetings; and with young people to know not just where city hall is but what goes on and how to impact events inside,” said current Executive Director Maryam Judar.

“For 20 years CAC has stood with community members who seek to have their voice heard and in doing so has confronted a litany of anti-democratic policies and procedures at both the local and state levels. I’m proud to be part of an organization that has evolved from a small start-up nonprofit to a visionary, bold, and effective democracy institution with accomplishments that range from building the capacity of community members to harness their civic power, improving civic education and holding government entities accountable for anti-democratic activities. I look forward to celebrating CAC’s milestone with those who have made a difference in their communities, in Illinois, and in the history of CAC,” said Terry Pastika, former executive director and community lawyer for more than a decade and current CAC Board Member.

Event tickets will be on sale until September 3, 2014. For more information and to purchase tickets please visit www.CitizenAdvocacyCenter.Org or call 630-833-4080.

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