FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“SEEK THEN SPEAK” PUTS VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE DRIVER’S SEAT

$1.4 million award will increase access to victim support and reporting options

Washington, DC – End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI) announced today they have received funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime to enhance and expand Seek Then Speak, an initiative designed to improve responses, services, and access for victims of sexual assault. Seek Then Speak provides sexual assault survivors a way to interact directly with a technology platform to gather information, explore options and connect directly with local resources to get help or report to law enforcement.

“When someone has been sexually assaulted, they are often confused about what happened, who they can tell, and what they can do about it,” said EVAWI CEO Joanne Archambault, a retired Sex Crimes Unit Sergeant from the San Diego Police Department. “Seek Then Speak is a digital aid to guide victims through a series of questions to decide what options are right for them. They control the information they share, who they share it with, and whether they want to report to the police.”

EVAWI teamed up with Ten8Tech, a technology firm which offers a cloud-based digital communication platform for law enforcement, to modify its patented technology to facilitate an interactive dialog with victims of sexual assault. Seek Then Speak was developed in conjunction with EVAWI’s Start by Believing campaign which is dedicated to helping the public and criminal justice professionals understand how to respond when a sexual assault victim confides in them after an assault.

“Because the first person a victim confides in is usually a friend or family member, how they react determines in large part what happens next. A positive reaction can improve victims’ well-being, and increase the chances they will report to law enforcement and reach out for help from other sources” adds CEO Archambault. “Start by Believing is a philosophy that has been adopted by hundreds of communities in the U.S. and around the world.”

EVAWI is a non-profit organization dedicated to inspiring and educating those who respond to gender-based violence, equipping them with the knowledge they need to support victims and hold offenders accountable. EVAWI promotes victim-centered, multidisciplinary collaboration, which strengthens the response of the criminal justice system, other professionals, allies and the general public—making communities safer.

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If you would like more information, please contact Kristina Rose, EVAWI Executive Director, at Kristina@evawintl.org.