

## **P R O C L A M A T I O N**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Silver City shares a critical concern for victims of sexual violence and a desire to support their needs for justice and healing; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council has been advised that current estimates suggest no more than 20 percent of sexual assaults will be reported to law enforcement and less than 3 percent will result in the conviction and incarceration of the perpetrator; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council has been advised that research documents that victims are far more likely to disclose their sexual assault to a friend or family member, and when these loved ones respond with doubt, shame, or blame, victims suffer additional negative effects on their physical and psychological well-being; and

**WHEREAS**, the “Start by Believing” public awareness campaign (a program of End Violence Against Women International) is designed to improve the responses of friends, family members, and community professionals, so they can help victims to access supportive resources and engage the criminal justice system; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council in concert with the Silver City Police Department, Gila Regional Medical Center Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and Silver Regional Sexual Assault Support Services, support the “Start by Believing” public awareness campaign;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Michael S. Morones, Mayor of the Town of Silver City, do hereby proclaim April 1, 2015 as

### **“START BY BELIEVING DAY”**

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused this official seal of the Town of Silver City to be affixed this 24th day of March, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael S. Morones, Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ann L. Mackie, Town Clerk

*Start by Believing* is a public awareness campaign uniquely focused on the public response to sexual assault. Because a friend or family member is typically the first person a victim confides in after an assault, each individual's personal reaction is the first step in a long path toward justice and healing. Knowing how to respond is critical—a negative response can worsen the trauma and foster an environment where perpetrators face zero consequences for their crimes.

Because rapists attack an average of six times, one failed response can equal five more victims. *Start by Believing* will lead the way toward stopping this cycle, **by creating a positive community response, informing the public, uniting allies and supporters, and improving our personal reactions. The goal is to change the world, and outcomes for victims, one response at a time.**

*Start by Believing* was launched during Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April 2011 and, now, we would like to launch a local *Start By Believing* Campaign here.

This year, on the first day of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, April 1<sup>st</sup>, at Gough Park we invite your (city/town/county) and your Chief of Police to participate in a joint proclamation. It is our goal to show a united front in believing survivors of sexual assault. The event will take place at 6 PM and will include taking a group photograph for press releases.