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For immediate release – January 6, 2020

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Network of Victim Assistance Breaks Ground for Fairless Hills Office Expansion

State and local dignitaries help kick off the project

(BUCKS COUNTY, Pa.) Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA) held a “groundbreaking” ceremony on Wednesday, December 11 to kick-off the expansion of its Lower Bucks County office in Fairless Hills, PA. Joining NOVA staff and board members for the ceremony were Jakki Fitzmaurice, Chief of Staff, State Representative John T. Galloway (D-District 140); State Representative Tina M. Davis (D-District 141); Margaret A. McKeivitt, Director, Bucks County Department of Community and Economic Development; State Senator Robert M. Tomlinson (R-District 6); State Representative Frank Farry (R-District 142); State Representative Wendi Thomas (R-District 178); State Representative Gene DiGirolamo (R-District 18 and Commissioner Elect); and Sue Simon, District Director for Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA’s 1st District).

NOVA serves nearly 65% of their clients through the Lower County Office and to help meet the growing demand for services, felt there was a need to increase their office space in this area.

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To do this, NOVA was able to acquire the office space adjacent to their current office, expanding the space from 1,500 square feet to around 4,000 square feet.

In addition to increasing space, NOVA also will be renovating the current office space to create one of the first trauma-informed spaces in Pennsylvania that offers the full continuum of services including: The Bucks County Children’s Advocacy Center, a sensory room for children, additional space for individual and group therapy, and private meeting space for families to meet with NOVA’s Victim Advocates or other professionals. It will be a place where child victims of sexual and physical abuse, family members of homicide victims or the elderly who have become victims of financial or physical abuse will feel safe and begin the healing process

Funding for the purchase of the additional space as well as the renovations to the new and existing space came from a combination of sources including a Community Development Block Grant of \$240,000 from the County of Bucks, a Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development grant of \$50,000, and a \$100,000 challenge grant from an anonymous donor. The two to one challenge grant was announced at NOVA’s 45th Anniversary Auction and Gala in April 2019 and since then over 80 donors have contributed to help raise the necessary \$50,000 to receive all of the available funds as part of the challenge grant.

“The support of our County Commissioners, State Senator Tomlinson and our generous donors has a remarkable impact on the work that we are able to do,” said Penny Ettinger, Executive

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Director, NOVA. "Indeed, it does take a village to ensure that NOVA is able to provide a continuum of trauma-informed services to any child or adult who has become a victim or survivor of a horrific crime." Bucks County Commissioner Diane Ellis-Marseglia, LCSW added, "NOVA is a critical partner to the county and we are thrilled to support them as they endeavor to reach more citizens facing challenges with all forms of victimization. This project will increase their office space and allow them to expand services necessary to provide timely assistance to residents in the Lower Bucks area."

An open house is planned for the spring of 2020.

ABOUT NOVA

Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA) supports, counsels and empowers victims of sexual assault and other serious crimes in Bucks County and works to prevent and eliminate violence in society through advocacy, training, community education and prevention programs. Founded in 1974, NOVA is a non-profit 501(c)(3), community-based organization operating out of three offices in Fairless Hills, Jamison and Perkasie. Services are made possible through the financial support of federal, state and local government grants and contracts, corporations, foundations and private donations. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. For more information, visit www.NOVABucks.org.

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Editor's Note: Photo captions:

FHGB1 (courtesy of NOVA) – Legislators and their representative pose with NOVA's Executive Director and Board President at the "Groundbreaking" of NOVA's Fairless Hills Office Expansion Project - From left to right Jakki Fitzmaurice, Chief of Staff to State Representative John T. Galloway (D-District 140); Dot Gaboda, NOVA Board President; State Representative Tina M. Davis (D-District 141);

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Margaret A. McKeivitt, Director, Bucks County Department of Community and Economic Development; Penny Ettinger, Executive Director for NOVA; State Senator Robert M. Tomlinson (R-District 6); State Representative Frank Farry (R-District 142); State Representative Wendi Thomas (R-District 178); State Representative Gene DiGirolamo (R-District 18 and Commissioner Elect); Sue Simon, District Director for Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA's 1st District)

Rendering of Fairless Hills Proposed Construction Plan (courtesy of Phillips & Donovan Architects, LLC.) – Architect's rendering of the proposed expansion project at NOVA's Lower Bucks location in Fairless Hills, Pa. The renovation is expected to be completed in spring 2020. The project has been awarded to Elrath Construction.