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## ***Neighborhood House hosts "Unplugged" to combat rape and despair***

***Two free performances of Milwaukee native's acclaimed work***

Milwaukee --- **Neighborhood House of Milwaukee**, in collaboration with **Aurora Health Care's Sexual Assault Treatment Center & The Healing Center** will host award-winning author/performer/ educator **Paul McComas** in 2 free performances on **Monday, July 28 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.** McComas and Chicago singer-songwriter Maya Kuper will present ***Unplugged***, a one-hour program of scenes and songs to combat rape and despair, adapted from McComas' critically acclaimed novel, with guitarist Mike Holden and Milwaukee drummer Tim Buckingham Buckingham, and the author's niece Joelle Taknint on hand drums. Merchandise proceeds will benefit Neighborhood House and the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), on whose National Leadership Council and Speakers Bureau McComas serves.

McComas is bringing the show to Neighborhood House in memory of his mother **Hazelyn McComas**, a long-time supporter and former Board President who passed away earlier this year. After her passing, Paul toured Neighborhood House and was "gobsmacked" by the powerful ways its mission is being expressed now, and how it dovetails both with Hazelyn's ministry and social engagement, and with his own interest in social healing through music and the arts. "What the staff and families are doing here every day is *heroic*," he adds—as is the work of RAINN, his main cause.

Both the novel and the show tell the story of troubled young alternative-rocker and rape survivor Dayna Clay, including her solitary journey into the wilderness of the South Dakota Badlands and her subsequent struggle to recover from depression, come to terms with her traumatic childhood, and secure a hard-won inner peace. "Anytime we can break the silence on serious issues that affect young people, it creates an opportunity for all of us as a community to heal and move forward," said Anna Bierer, Director of Programs at Neighborhood House.

Mental-health professionals from **Aurora Health Care** will join Paul & Maya during talkbacks after each performance.

*Unplugged will be performed at 2 and 7 p.m. on Monday July 28, at Neighborhood House, 2819 W. Richardson Place. Admission is free.*

**ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE:** *Neighborhood House of Milwaukee was founded in 1945 to help strengthen children and families in some of the city's most under-served neighborhoods. The agency has touched the lives of nearly a million children and adults in the last 70 years. Its highly regarded, award-winning programs serve infants & toddlers, school-age and teen youth, adults and families, refugees and immigrants. More at [www.nh-milw.org](http://www.nh-milw.org)*

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