



12th Annual Unity Walk is a Catalyst for Hope and Promise for the Parkinson's Disease Community

- Largest-ever grassroots fundraiser for Parkinson's disease brings momentum and attention to the condition -

NEW YORK, April 14, 2006 – On Saturday, April 29th the Parkinson's disease community comes together to instill spirit and optimism in those affected by the disease at the 12th annual Parkinson's Unity Walk, the country's largest annual grassroots event for the disease. More than 8,000 people living with the disease, caregivers, families and friends are expected to lend their feet and dollars by participating in a two-mile walk and community education day in New York's Central Park in the ongoing fight to find a cure. Every nine minutes someone is diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.¹

"It is incredible to see the strength and reach of the Walk increase each year. This event is more than just a fundraiser - it's a gathering of family with the power to affect tremendous change. The Parkinson's Unity Walk gives people living with the disease hope, and impassions the community to help find a cure for this debilitating condition," commented Martin Tuchman, chairman of the Parkinson's Unity Walk.

At the Walk, attendees will be able to speak to a neurologist, learn about new therapies and clinical trials, and find information on local support groups. **Impromptu visits from celebrities are also expected.** Interested participants may register online or by mailing a registration form c/o Parkinson's Unity Walk, 633 Third Avenue, 27th FL, New York, NY, 10017. Donations are accepted either online via the Parkinson's Unity Walk website or may be mailed. To receive more on Parkinson's disease and the Parkinson's Unity Walk, please visit <http://www.unitywalk.org> or call 1-866-PUW-WALK (789-9255).

In its sixth year as Premier Sponsor of the Parkinson's Unity Walk, Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc., will unveil *Planning Your Course*, a patient education program specifically designed for people newly diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. *Planning Your Course* is part of the company's commitment to providing people with Parkinson's disease with the tools they need to better manage and understand their condition. Developed in partnership with the National Parkinson Foundation, the program includes an educational booklet and video featuring professional golfer Cherie Zaun, discussing her personal battle with Parkinson's disease. Cherie Zaun will be participating in this year's event to share her experience with Parkinson's disease with patients, caregivers and families.

The Parkinson's Unity Walk has made a significant impact on the Parkinson's disease community since its inception, raising more than \$5 million for Parkinson's research by uniting the community under a common goal of winning the war against Parkinson's disease. The event is in collaboration with the seven major Parkinson's disease organizations: American Parkinson's Disease Association, National Parkinson Foundation, Inc., Parkinson's Action Network, Parkinson's Disease Foundation, The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, The

Parkinson Alliance and the Parkinson's Institute. With 100 percent of donations given to research, the Walk provides the public with an opportunity to help the Parkinson's community and change the lives of the millions of people suffering from the disease.

About Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease is the second most common chronic neurological disorder in older adults after Alzheimer's, affecting approximately one percent of people over age 60. Approximately 15 percent of patients develop Parkinson's disease before the age of 50. Symptoms include tremor, muscle rigidity, slowed motion, shuffling gait and a loss of facial expression. The symptoms vary from patient to patient, but become more severe over time.

About Parkinson's Unity Walk

Founded in 1994 by Margot Zobel, the Parkinson's Unity Walk is an annual event where the entire Parkinson's community gathers with the goal of not only raising awareness of the condition, but of raising donations for research. The Parkinson's Unity Walk experienced tremendous success in 2005, raising more than \$1 million to aid research and has established itself as the largest grassroots fundraiser for Parkinson's disease in the country.

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¹ "What is Parkinson's Disease?" Parkinson's Action Network About Parkinson's
<http://www.parkinsonsaction.org/content/view/11/33/> [Last accessed 3/17/06]