



14th Annual Parkinson's Unity Walk Most Successful Event to Date

New York, May 12, 2008 – Although the weatherman predicted rain, that did not impede more than 10,000 people from joining together in New York's Central Park on Saturday, April 26th to unite as a passionate and dedicated community to raise money and spirits for Parkinson's disease research.

The crowd has been growing since 1994, when Margot Zobel founded the Walk to raise awareness of Parkinson's disease and funds for Parkinson's research. "There were only 200 people walking that day- but we felt we were making history. We raised \$16,000, and, as we had pledged, every penny was turned over to research," stated Margot.

After inspiring speeches from Former Attorney General Janet Reno and Maryum "May May" Ali, Muhammad Ali's daughter, among others, prize drawings and announcement of the top teams and individual fundraisers, thousands of people and more than 400 teams carrying signs of support and hope, walked along the tree-lined, wheelchair-accessible, 2-mile circular path under blue skies, sunshine, and gentle breezes.

Since its inception, the Unity Walk has built upon the success of each previous year, increasing Parkinson's awareness, and much-needed funds for research, making it the largest grassroots event for Parkinson's disease. This year's Walk is proving to be the most successful yet, and with still another full month left for people to donate for 2008, there is no doubt that the amount raised will continue to increase.

Credited with helping increase awareness and the amount of money raised this year is the "One Step Closer" fundraising guide, which provides helpful tips and tools to support fundraising efforts. Designed in partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc., the proud partner and premier sponsor for the eighth year, the guide provides information and tools to assist individuals in their mission to raise awareness and increase support of the Parkinson's Unity Walk in their own community. This unique tool is available **free** for download at www.unitywalk.org, and includes creative fundraising ideas, flyers and additional communication template materials.

In addition to having a landmark year for fundraising, this was a year of many firsts for the Walk. It was announced that the Ubell Prize for Parkinson Journalism Award, an annual \$10,000 award, would be given to a journalist for outstanding contributions to the public understanding of Parkinson's disease and related movement disorders. The award was established to honor the memory of Earl Ubell, a distinguished science and medicine writer who died last year of Parkinson's at the age of 80.

Also for the first time this year, the Unity Walk was broadcasted through a **live** webcast, allowing people around the country not only the chance to experience the spirit and compassion of the community, but also the opportunity to be engaged and active in the day's celebration. The webcast can be viewed for a year on the Unity Walk website.

And, as pledged since the inception of the Walk, every penny raised continues to go directly to Parkinson's research. This is made possible through the Unity Walk's Premier Sponsor and Proud Partner, Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc., the National Sponsor, The Weather Channel, Our Double Diamond Sponsor, Teva Neuroscience, Our Diamond Sponsors, UCB Group and Valeant Pharmaceuticals International, and others including: Advanced Neuromodulation Systems (ANS), LSVT Global, Medtronic, Novartis and PatientsLikeMe.

All funds raised from the Walk are designated for research and will be distributed among the major U.S. Parkinson's disease foundations, including the American Parkinson Disease Association, the National Parkinson Foundation, The Parkinson Alliance, Parkinson's Disease Foundation, The Parkinson's Institute, Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, and Parkinson's Action Network.

Parkinson's disease is a gradual neurodegenerative disease that affects more than one million Americans. To find out more about Parkinson's disease and the Walk, please visit our website: www.unitywalk.org. You may also call us at 1-866-PUW-WALK (1-866-789-9255) or email us at info@unitywalk.org.

For Immediate Release
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