

The Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Los Angeles Partners with Women In Film to Launch END EPILEPSY PSA Campaign

LOS ANGELES, March 3, 2011 – In a collaborative effort to raise awareness of epilepsy, a devastating neurological disorder, the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Los Angeles (EFGLA) and Women In Film today announced the launch of a multi-faceted public education campaign called “**END EPILEPSY – Do You Know How to Help?**”. The campaign is designed to improve understanding and safety of this medical condition, while also serving as a public call-to-action to join in the fight to help END EPILEPSY.

Epilepsy, the world’s most common serious brain disorders,ⁱ is characterized by recurrent seizures caused by spontaneous and abnormal electrical signals in the brain.ⁱⁱ There are many kinds of seizures and epilepsy syndromes, which affect people in different ways. Seizures may strike any one, at any time without warning. In fact, one in 10 people will have at least one seizure in their lifetime, and one in 100 people will have recurrent seizures, or epilepsy.ⁱⁱⁱ

“Our goal is to increase awareness about the problem of epilepsy amongst the general public and engage families affected by epilepsy and the public to join together in the fight to end this disorder,” said Susan Pietsch-Escueta, executive director of the EFGLA. “Everyone has a reason to help because epilepsy is more common than most people realize; and many are unaware of what to do if someone suffers a seizure in their presence. Knowing what to do can make a difference. We invite everyone to get involved by donating, volunteering, speaking up, and learning more about epilepsy.”

The campaign highlights shortages in quality treatment and access to specialty care, such as: a lack of epilepsy research, seizure first aid preparedness and basic knowledge about the disease. With an average of one new person diagnosed with epilepsy every three minutes,³ the campaign instills a sense of urgency to help those impacted by this often life-altering and potentially deadly disease.

END EPILEPSY - Do you know how to help? kicks-off today in the Los Angeles, CA region, where there are currently about 160,000 people living with epilepsy. The EFGLA and Women In Film are releasing four television PSAs designed to educate viewers about epilepsy, illustrate the debilitating physical and social impact, and convey the diverse aspects of the disease via the depiction of seizures in different environments:

- *My Epilepsy* demonstrates different types of seizures experienced by a man, woman and child
- *Fear* dispels the bullying associated with the disease as a young girl has a seizure in front of her taunting classmates
- *First Aid* encourages the public to learn Seizure First Aid, as a man seizes on a busy street and is ignored
- *Statistics* builds awareness of the misunderstanding and isolation felt by people with epilepsy as a woman suffers a seizure while bathing alone

“We selected the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Los Angeles as a recipient of our PSA Program and are honored to partner with them to create awareness and action,” said Judith Parker Harris, executive producer of the END EPILEPSY campaign and founding chair of the Women In Film Public Service Announcement Program, “directed by Katie Davison and Produced by Tessa Bell, and we are confident that the stories presented in English and Spanish, will get people talking about how they can help END EPILEPSY.”

Additional efforts associated with the campaign include radio PSAs, an interactive website with basic information and plans for provocative billboards displayed throughout the region. The END EPILEPSY campaign is scheduled to expand to the broader regions of California, and ultimately nationwide, to help the three million Americans living with epilepsy.³ To view the four television PSAs videos and to learn more about the “END EPILEPSY – Do you know how to help?” campaign, visit **END-EPILEPSY.org**.

About the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Los Angeles

Established in 1957, the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Los Angeles (EFGLA) is the only non-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization dedicated solely to serving the almost 160,000 people living with epilepsy in the region of Los Angeles and surrounding counties. The EFGLA is leading the fight to end epilepsy through care, advocacy, research and education. For more information, visit www.END-EPILEPSY.org.

About Women In Film

Women In Film is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping women achieve their highest potential within the global entertainment, communication and media industries and to preserving the legacy of women within those industries. Founded in 1973, Women In Film and its Women In Film Foundation provide for members an extensive network of contacts, educational programs, scholarships, film finishing funds and grants, access to employment opportunities, mentorships and the highly acclaimed and awarded Public Service Announcement Production Program. For more information about Women In Film and its programs, visit www.wif.org.

ⁱ World Health Organization, www.WHO.int/mental_health/neurology/epilepsy/en/

ⁱⁱ Adams RD, Victor M. Principles of neurology. 4th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1989.

ⁱⁱⁱ Projection based on Begley, CE, et al. The Cost of Epilepsy in the United States: An Estimate from Population-Based Clinical and Survey Data. Epilepsia 41(3):342–351, 2000 and U.S. Census Bureau 2005 population estimate of 295,200,000.

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