

THE HEALING PROJECT LAUNCHES BOOK SERIES and WEBSITE
--Supporting Patients and Caregivers Dealing with Life-Threatening and Chronic Illnesses--

NEW YORK, NY, APRIL 4, 2007 – The Healing Project, a new non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the quality of life for patients with life-threatening and chronic illnesses, launched its first programs today.

The Healing Project is dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of individuals suffering from life-threatening illnesses and chronic diseases by developing resources to enhance their quality of life and assist their caregivers. The Healing Project creates unique avenues for individuals to share their perspectives and stories while providing access to current information pertaining to their illnesses.

“Being diagnosed with breast cancer gave me a new perspective about the unfilled social, emotional, psychological and physical needs of patients and caregivers dealing with disease. The Healing Project has been designed to serve this population, making it easier for them to connect with others and not feel so isolated while going through the process of initial diagnosis to fulfilling their treatment needs,” said Debra LaChance, founder of both The Healing Project and LaChance Publishing and breast cancer survivor.

Voices Of Book Series

The Healing Project has created the *Voices Of* book series, in which each book targets a specific illness and is an anthology of stories and essays written by patients, caregivers, medical professionals, celebrities and friends. The first two books released are *Voices of Alzheimer's* and *Voices of Lung Cancer*. These two diseases were chosen as subject matter for the inaugural books in the series because of the staggering statistics associated with the diseases.

According to the American Cancer Society, lung cancer is the leading cancer-related cause of death in both men and women and accounts for approximately twelve percent of cancer diagnoses each year. According to the Alzheimer's Association, an estimated 4.5 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease. This number has more than doubled since 1980 and will continue to grow – by 2050 the number of individuals with Alzheimer's could range from 11.3 million to 16 million.

The book series will be published and distributed through a commercial co-venture with LaChance Publishing, who has pledged to donate 100% of the profits from book sales to The Healing Project. The next books in the series slated for publication are *Voices of Breast Cancer* (October 2007), *Voices of Alcoholism* (2008) and *Voices of Multiple Sclerosis* (2008).

The Healing Project Website (www.thehealingproject.org)

The Healing Project website is designed as a comprehensive Resource Center that aims to ease the overwhelming process of accessing web-based information by collecting quality information specific to health care questions. Resources are indexed according to the user's questions and supply a list of relevant resources and available services. Unlike traditional search engines, The Healing Project serves as a personalized patient guide that offers professionally screened web pages as well as a tailored inventory of national, state and local resources. Its Resource Center provides disease and treatment information along with a

database of organizations that provide low-cost or free health care services including pharmaceuticals and medical equipment, health insurance options and social support services.

The Healing Project is currently developing "Voices Who Care," an online social network designed to connect the patient community by providing individuals with a forum where they can meet online. The network will have functions similar to other social networking sites, such as person-to-person search, email, instant messenger, bulletin boards and photo/video hosting.

"The opportunity to connect with others through an online forum is necessary because it allows patients and caregivers to get support without the confines of the traditional in-person support group," said LaChance.

The social network is for those who are interested in communicating with others faced with similar challenges of illness and disease. Website users include patients, family members, friends, caregivers, educators, disease and services advocates and healthcare professionals. Individuals utilizing the network will be able to conduct searches to locate other individuals combating the same or similar illnesses, receiving a particular course of treatment or receiving treatment in particular hospitals or treatment/hospice centers. Membership in the online social network will be free of charge and will launch in Summer 2007.

Social networking sites have become an important online tool in our arsenal of interpersonal communication and relationships. Visits to social networking sites have increased almost 100% in the past year and people spend almost triple the time on this type of website as at non-social networking sites.

Book Purchase

Individual books from the *Voices Of* book series can be purchased online through a link on The Healing Project website at www.thehealingproject.org. Group sales are also available.

Story Submissions for Future Books

The Healing Project is looking for a wide variety of story-telling perspectives. Stories for publication consideration can be submitted by anyone who is connected to a particular disease topic. To get additional information about submission guidelines and upcoming book topics, visit www.thehealingproject.org.

Corporate Sponsorships

The Healing Project is actively seeking corporate sponsorships for future book subjects and other community programs.

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