



NEWS RELEASE

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**For Grace Broadens Its Mission
*Non-Profit Makes Women In Pain Its Primary Focus***

LOS ANGELES - After five years of raising awareness for a little known pain disease called Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, For Grace and its founder Cynthia Toussaint are broadening their mission to address gender differences in the treatment of pain so that all women with RSD and other pain conditions may lead healthier, happier, more productive lives.

"RSD will always be part of For Grace's mission, but we believe For Grace's new mission broadens our base of support so that we can keep the focus on women in pain across America and the prejudice and bias by the medical community involving the undertreatment of women in pain," said Toussaint, who has RSD and has suffered in pain for the past 24 years.

Toussaint, a champion of women's health issues involving pain and equality, testified in 2004 before a California legislative hearing she spearheaded that focused on eliminating healthcare disparities for women in pain. She also is the author of a landmark Women In Pain Bill of Rights and petition that has circulated since 2002.

"Cynthia and For Grace have been instrumental in increasing visibility and public awareness regarding gender bias in pain management," said former California Senator Liz Figueroa (D-Fremont), who chaired the Senate hearing on the issue. "Through education, legislative advocacy and pure determination, Cynthia has helped to open a dialogue with many of the country's top pain specialists as well as with consumers on an issue that had received scant attention in the past."

For Grace's vision is that all women in pain will be guaranteed a standard of care comparable to their male counterparts and will be allowed to express their pain experience without fear of being labeled "too emotional". For years, Toussaint was told her pain was "hormonal," "all in her head," or that the former ballerina suffered from "stage fright," while men were believed and prescribed painkillers.

For Grace's Women in Pain initiative is far reaching. In addition to leading a public awareness campaign and providing legislative updates, research articles and an on-line community where women in pain may share their stories, For Grace intends to support a legislative agenda that encourages all 50 states to hold informational hearings on gender inequalities in the treatment of pain and to adopt a Women in Pain Awareness Month much like For Grace has accomplished in California. Each February in California is Women in Pain Awareness Month.

"We plan to lobby every state in the nation until the medical community wakes up and starts treating women the same way they treat men. Cynthia is an extraordinary spokesperson and will continue to speak out about pain from a national platform until all women receive the respect and equal medical care that they so richly deserve," said John Garrett, Executive Director of For Grace.

For more information about For Grace or to arrange an interview, call 818.760.7635 or visit our website at www.forgrace.org.