Minneapolis, MN – September 24, 2009 – The Preeclampsia Foundation announced today that Ms. Kara Boeldt is the 2009 recipient of its annual Hope Award for Volunteer of the Year. This prestigious award will be presented to Ms. Boeldt at its annual benefit gala, Saving Grace – A Night of Hope, on Saturday, October 24, at the Renaissance Chicago Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. The award recognizes an individual who epitomizes the true spirit of volunteerism and has made significant contributions to the Foundation.

Eleni Tsigas, Executive Director of the Preeclampsia Foundation, said, “It’s hard to identify Kara’s most significant contribution as she has been instrumental in so many areas. This past year she served as our National Walk Coordinator, organizing, motivating and supporting the work of two dozen local walk coordinators across the country. This is our largest awareness event of the year.”

Boeldt also has served for several years as a moderator on the Foundation’s highly active online community forum and annually hosts her own local walk in Madison, Wisconsin. Along with another volunteer, she has organized an active local group of survivors and volunteers. She contributes regularly to the Foundation’s newsletter and was featured recently on the Department of Health & Human Services Office of Women’s Health website. She has also worked with her local hospital and medical community to advocate for better patient-provider communication and has contributed to professional education curriculum via Grand Rounds.

Nominations for the Volunteer of the Year award come from the volunteers themselves. A committee comprising former recipients and a member of the Board of Directors reviews the applications and scores them according to published metrics.

Boeldt, formerly of Chicago, Illinois, owns her own business as a licensed Broker Realtor, in Wisconsin, her home for the past four years. She is in the midst of relocating to Midland, Texas, with her husband, Derek and four year old daughter, Avery. Boeldt suffered the sudden onset of severe preeclampsia at 31 weeks gestation in her first pregnancy. Her daughter was born due to fetal indicators, including severe growth restriction. Avery weighed two pounds, seven ounces at birth, spent 27 days in the neonatal intensive care unit, and came home a month before her due date at a weight of three pounds, eight ounces.

When asked to comment on her award, Boeldt says, “I'm humbled. I consider it a privilege to volunteer for the Preeclampsia Foundation. It’s personally rewarding to be an advocate for those who have yet to experience preeclampsia, and a voice for those who are no longer with us.”