

OCTOBER 23, 2006 - San Francisco community and philanthropy leaders are gathering later this week to increase awareness of preeclampsia, a pregnancy-related disorder, and raise funds for the Preeclampsia Foundation, a national patient advocacy organization dedicated to saving the lives of pregnant mothers and their babies. The benefit dinner and auction, entitled 'Saving Grace: A Night of Hope,' will be held 7:00 p.m., Friday, October 27, 2006, at the Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco.

William C. Weldon, chairman & CEO of Johnson & Johnson, is co-hosting this event with honorary chairman San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and event chair Lauren Larsen. The benefit will feature a performance by world-renowned jazz violinist Regina Carter, a recent recipient of a John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation 'genius grant.'

Preeclampsia and related disorders affect almost one out of every twelve pregnancies. In the Bay Area alone, more than 7,000 pregnancies each year are affected by preeclampsia, resulting in the loss of 300-400 babies from this often-undetected health condition.

Several notable scientists and medical experts will be recognized Friday evening through the Foundation's 'Hope Awards' that herald individuals who provide hope through their exceptional service and pivotal research.

"As a nearly all-volunteer organization, the Preeclampsia Foundation is grateful to those who have made charitable donations to support our efforts," said Eleni Z. Tsigas, chair of the Preeclampsia Foundation. "We have always tried to focus our limited resources where we can make the biggest difference. This year, the Foundation has begun a patient education campaign to improve recognition of the symptoms and sponsored professional education courses. Next year, the Foundation plans to fund more research aimed at improving the clinical management practices that directly impact health outcomes for pregnant women."

"Preeclampsia is a significant health issue that merits greater attention," said Johnson & Johnson CEO William Weldon. "Our colleagues in health care and pharmaceuticals are focusing on research and development to detect preeclampsia earlier and to devise treatments to prevent this condition."

"It is vitally important that we support the efforts of the Preeclampsia Foundation and their pivotal role in driving patient and provider education," added Weldon. "Their efforts to inform and empower patients ensure healthier outcomes. We must help health care professionals to recognize the disorder as early as possible and equip them with the knowledge and resources to manage it. The more we support effective education and outreach initiatives such as the Continuing Medical Education (CME) courses that the Preeclampsia Foundation is offering, the more adept the medical community will be at reducing the death rate and improving health outcomes."

The Preeclampsia Foundation:

- Funds research and influences research directions
- Develops educational materials and tools, such as a national survey that can influence clinical diagnosis and management of preeclampsia
 - Conducts professional education courses for health care providers, including information on the long term health impacts on preeclampsia survivors
 - Saves lives via an interactive online forum, a toll-free hotline, and patient information brochures (in English and Spanish) that help women recognize their signs and symptoms so they may seek medical attention before their or their baby's life is endangered.
 - Supports patients and their families after the loss of a baby or mother, the birth of a premature baby, or an unexpectedly difficult pregnancy.

"We can do much to prevent preeclampsia deaths by developing and implementing best practices for screening and management," added Tsigas. "With the support of donors and organizations such as Johnson & Johnson, BAS Medical, and Obstetrix, we can reduce the occurrence of this syndrome and prevent loss of life."

Tickets for the 'Saving Grace: A Night of Hope' benefit can be obtained by sending an email to Lauren Larsen at laurenwardlarsen@earthlink.net or online at: www.preeclampsia.org/sghome.aspx.

About Preeclampsia Symptoms of preeclampsia include high blood pressure, swelling in the hands and face, and protein in the urine. If undetected or untreated, it can lead to stroke, kidney failure, liver failure and hemorrhage. It is responsible for 15 percent of all premature births. If the mother experiences seizures, it is called eclampsia. Both conditions can be disabling or fatal to mother and baby. By conservative estimates, these disorders are responsible for 76,000 deaths each year worldwide.