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CELEBRITIES HELP PUT NEW FACE ON ALZHEIMER'S *David Hyde Pierce, Dick Van Dyke, Peter Gallagher and Others Featured In First Campaign to Educate America and Dispel Misperceptions*

(NEW YORK CITY) APRIL 16, 2007 – Dozens of celebrities are lending their time, talents and faces to educate the public on the facts of Alzheimer's disease and challenge more than five million people – one for every person currently living with the disease – to get involved. A photo collection of more than 30 famous faces wearing purple T-shirts featuring motivational words from the Alzheimer's Association's new consumer campaign will be unveiled today in New York. The photo exhibit of well-known Alzheimer's *Champions* are slated to travel to more than 12 markets later this year as part of the first comprehensive public education campaign from the Alzheimer's Association.

Ricki Lake, Lea Thompson, Peter Gallagher, Victor Garber, David Hyde Pierce, Kate Burton, Tracie Thoms, Dick Van Dyke and others are the faces of a new campaign that aims to dispel the misperception that Alzheimer's disease is just about old people losing their memory. The photo collection was photographed by well-known celebrity and fashion photographer, Robert Trachtenberg. It includes both print stills of personalities committed to making a difference and personal quotes from the stars about the disease.

"If Alzheimer's ever was cause for public concern, it's now," said David Hyde Pierce, Alzheimer's Association board member and spokesperson for the campaign. "Our aging population compels the need for effective disease-modifying drugs. As individuals, as families, as a country, we can't afford this disease, physically, emotionally, or financially."

To get involved with the campaign, Americans can become a Champion, purchase a campaign tee like the one the celebrities are sporting in the exhibit, advocate for more research funding, register for a local Memory Walk or make a donation online by visiting www.actionalz.org. The celebrity photos can also be viewed on the site.

Campaign and Personalities Dispel Alzheimer's Misperceptions

A new poll shows that while more than half of Americans know someone with Alzheimer's, 90 percent say they don't know much about the disease.

"It's this lack of understanding that has fueled complacency," Kate Burton said. "Shows like Grey's Anatomy and the character I played – Ellis Grey – have slowly awakened our senses to what individuals with the disease and their families have to endure. The reality is, Alzheimer's can strike as young as age 30 and it's a slow, debilitating, fatal disease. This new exhibit and campaign will hopefully open people's eyes to the reality of this horrible disease."

New figures released last month show that more than five million Americans are currently suffering from Alzheimer's, a 10 percent increase over the previous figure. Someone new is added to those ranks every 72 seconds.

As millions of baby boomers begin to turn 60 this year, Alzheimer's prevalence will skyrocket. By mid-century, the number of people with Alzheimer's is expected to grow to as many as 16 million –more people than the populations of New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston combined. At a projected cost of \$400 billion by the year 2030, Alzheimer's has the capacity to bankrupt Medicare.

“The fact is, someone suffering from Alzheimer's disease will lose the ability to form thoughts, remember simple words and ultimately communicate,” Hyde Pierce said. “People with Alzheimer's need us to be their voice and open minds to the realities of this disease.”

Hope on the Horizon

There are new treatments on the horizon – currently nine drugs are in Phase III clinical trials, several of which show great promise at slowing or stopping the progression of the disease. This, combined with new diagnostic tools, has the potential to change the landscape significantly.

New Campaign Seen Nationwide

This week, the campaign's powerful new advertisements will start to appear in *Newsweek*, *Time*, *O (the Oprah Magazine)*, *Prevention* and others. The images in the new print ads represent the struggle someone with the disease – and their loved ones – experience as Alzheimer's disease progresses. The stirring ads decisively ask Americans to stand up and represent people who suffer from the disease. The ads feature one word larger than the others, in purple, which invites a certain action – Voice, Move or Open.

The photo exhibit is slated to travel to 12 cities across the country during the next few months. Exact locations will be available at www.actionalz.org.

Additionally, today many landmarks and buildings from coast to coast will be illuminated in purple, the official color of Alzheimer's disease, to call attention to the five million people affected by the disease and commemorate the campaign kick off.

Introduced in 2007, the *Champions* Consumer Campaign was created by the Alzheimer's Association, the world's leader in Alzheimer's care and research, in a national effort to dispel public misperceptions and move people to take action towards a world without Alzheimer's disease. The *Champions* Campaign includes the use of provocative advertising, celebrity involvement, public relations, online and grassroots marketing and advocacy. For more information, visit www.actionalz.org.

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