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NEWS

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FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE**

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Social justice movement Ageless Alliance to be launched at White House, UCI World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is catalyst for campaign

Irvine, Calif., June 13, 2012 — Elder abuse awareness advocates from UC Irvine will launch a national campaign highlighting the crisis June 14 at a special White House event and June 15 at the UCI campus.

Ageless Alliance: United Against Elder Abuse is a social justice movement connecting people of all ages to identify, prevent and eliminate the abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of vulnerable adults, said Mary Twomey, co-director of the National Center on Elder Abuse and UCI's Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse & Neglect.

"Elder abuse isn't just a problem that affects older Americans; it affects all of us," she said. "That's why it takes all of us to do something about it: kids, teens, grandparents and everyone in between. Ageless Alliance is our rallying cry to unite generations and create positive change."

The historic daylong symposium at the White House recognizes the seventh annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and brings together public and private partners with key roles in addressing senior abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Four sessions will be webcast live starting at 9 a.m. EDT on the White House website (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/live>) and will include interactive question-and-answer forums on Twitter and Facebook. Speakers from the federal government and national banking institutions as well as leading elder abuse experts from around the country will be featured.

The free UCI event will incorporate accounts from elder abuse survivors, highlights of the White House symposium and testimony from local people about their commitment to raise awareness of the issue. It will take place from 10 to 11:30 a.m. PDT at the Arnold & Mabel Beckman Center of the National Academies of Sciences & Engineering, 100 Academy, Irvine.

More than 800 reports of elder and dependent-adult abuse are made every month in Orange County, said Kerry Burnight, Ph.D., clinical professor of family medicine at UCI and co-director of the county's Elder Abuse Forensic Center, a collaboration among legal, medical, social services and law enforcement personnel to better understand, identify and treat such abuse and determine more efficient ways of successfully prosecuting offenders.

“The only way to move forward in addressing the abuse and neglect of our society's most vulnerable adults is for each of us to take a stand,” she said.

Twomey noted that the White House event adds to a growing recognition of the problem in America. Last year, actor Mickey Rooney detailed his experience as an elder abuse victim before the Senate's Special Committee on Aging and a national TV audience.

In addition, Marie-Therese Connolly, director of Life Long Justice, was awarded a MacArthur Foundation “genius grant” for her work to put a national spotlight on elder abuse. With more than 70 million baby boomers approaching retirement age, it becomes more critical to confront the crisis.

The White House Office of Public Engagement – in collaboration with federal partners from the Department of Health & Human Services' Administration for Community Living, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Department of Justice – is hosting the symposium.

Elder abuse includes intentional, unintentional and neglectful acts by family, caregivers or others and comes in many forms, including sexual, physical and emotional abuse; neglect; and financial exploitation. About 5 million older Americans are abused each year, with an estimated 84 percent of cases going unreported. By providing tools and resources to help those currently suffering, Ageless Alliance empowers people to take action.

For more information about the movement or how to get involved, visit

www.agelessalliance.org.

The Center of Excellence partnered with Newport Beach, Calif.-based Orange Label Art + Advertising to develop the Ageless Alliance identity and tools to motivate multiple generations to stand united against elder abuse and neglect.

About the National Center on Elder Abuse: The U.S. Administration on Aging designated UCI as the National Center on Elder Abuse in September 2011. Led by Dr. Laura Mosqueda and Mary Twomey, M.S.W., the center is a clearinghouse for practical information supporting federal, state and local efforts to prevent, identify and effectively respond to elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. It is the national authority on elder abuse in the U.S.

About the Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse & Neglect: Founded by Dr. Laura Mosqueda and the UCI Program in Geriatrics in 2001, the Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse & Neglect provides medical, forensic and victim services to abused, neglected and exploited seniors in Orange County. It has served as a national and international model for prevention efforts and is a source of technical assistance, multidisciplinary training, useful research and relevant policy briefs. The center is a “living laboratory” of innovative approaches to eliminate the abuse, neglect, mistreatment and exploitation of seniors.

About the University of California, Irvine: Founded in 1965, UCI is a top-ranked university dedicated to research, scholarship and community service. Led by Chancellor Michael Drake since 2005, UCI is among the most dynamic campuses in the University of California system, with nearly 28,000 undergraduate and graduate students, 1,100 faculty and 9,000 staff. Orange County’s second-largest employer, UCI contributes an annual economic impact of \$4 billion. For more UCI news, visit www.today.uci.edu.

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