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COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER
UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA • IRVINE
A National Cancer Institute-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Video PSA Campaign Launched for *National Young Adult Cancer Awareness Week*[®]

LOS ANGELES—March 31, 2011—Vital Options International, a global not-for-profit cancer communications organization, in collaboration with the YA Program of the UC Irvine Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, has released a series of video public service announcements and vignettes about young adults with cancer for *National Young Adult Cancer Awareness Week* (NYACAW), April 3-9. One's late teens till age 40 present unique clinical and emotional issues.

- ◆ Approximately 70,000 young adults in their teens through their late 30s are diagnosed with cancer each year in the United States.
- ◆ Cancer is the leading killer of people 20 to 39 years of age, behind homicide and suicide.
- ◆ Over the last 20 years, overall survival rates in young adults with cancer have reached a plateau.
- ◆ Young adults have the lowest participation rate in clinical trials of any age group.
- ◆ Young adults face unique psychosocial concerns such as fertility preservation, body image, sexuality, education, insurance issues, employment reintegration, and long term effects of treatment.
- ◆ Young adults get cancers that are different than pediatric patients and older adult patients.

When Vital Options was founded in 1983, it was the first organization dedicated to young adults with cancer. Its founder and CEO, Selma Schimmel, had breast cancer at age 28. While Vital Options has since evolved into cancer multimedia productions for patients of all ages, with a mission *to facilitate a global cancer dialogue*[®], it remains committed to its founding purpose to advocate on behalf of young adults with cancer (www.youngadultswithcancer.org). Best known for *The Group Room*[®] cancer talk radio show, after 14 years in syndication, Vital Options transitioned to an all video platform (www.thegrouproom.tv). The PSAs and videos for NYACAW, as well as all of Vital Options' video content, are available without charge for website posting and educational efforts of other organizations.

(more)

“To Facilitate a Global Cancer Dialogue”

“Our hope is that through viral capabilities and combined efforts, the PSA and related videos about young adults with cancer will serve as a tangible and powerful tool that can be used to raise awareness about the very special and unique concerns of this patient population, and also help enhance the efforts of young adult oncology as its own clinical area of expertise,” says Schimmel.

“The young adult cancer patient is unique – from the biology of the cancers in this population to the psychosocial needs of the patient. We, at the NCI-designated Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center (<http://www.healthcare.uci.edu/youngadultcancer/>), are committed to raising awareness about this distinctive group of cancer patients. We are pleased to have collaborated with Vital Options in the PSA campaign for NYACAW, and I am committed to ongoing partnerships with young adult patient advocacy groups and participation in related awareness activities like the International Charter of Rights for Young People with Cancer (please add your name in support of the Charter at www.cancercharter.org) to advance the cause of young adult cancer in our community,” says Dr. Leonard Sender, Director of the Young Adult Cancer Program at the University of California, Irvine.

This is the 9th annual NYACAW and is sponsored by Vital Options in association with the young adult cancer movement and organization members of the **LIVESTRONG** Young Adult Alliance, which supports the efforts of its membership on behalf of advances in adolescent and young adult oncology. The **LIVESTRONG** Young Adult Alliance is a coalition of organizations with the goal to improve the survival rates and quality of life for young adults with cancer. Vital Options is an Alliance member. To support NYACAW and ongoing efforts, the **LIVESTRONG** Young Adult Alliance has initiated the **BREAK CANCER** Campaign, challenging people to dream up, set and break world records. The campaign is driven by user-generated content that raises awareness of cancer for young adults (<http://urdb.org/breakcancer>).

Vital Options first launched *National Young Adult Cancer Awareness Week*[®] in 2003, in recognition of its 20th anniversary. Vital Options International is a not-for-profit 510(c)(3) headquartered in Southern California. Its European programs are based in France at the American Hospital of Paris, with production partners at Radio Marsden, the Royal Marsden Hospital, London, UK. Vital Options produces various cancer programs including *The Group Room*[®], *Advocacy in Action*[®], *The Professor & The Survivor*[®], *The Cancer NewsMinute*[®], *OncoTalk*[®], and other cancer and health-related communications projects. For more information visit www.thegrouproom.tv and www.vitaloptions.org, or contact us at info@vitaloptions.org.

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