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THE WELLNESS COMMUNITY AND GILDA'S CLUB WORLDWIDE ANNOUNCE HISTORIC MERGER

*The Wellness Community and Gilda's Club Unify
to Provide Support to All People Affected By Cancer*

(WASHINGTON, DC) — The headquarters offices of The Wellness Community and Gilda's Club Worldwide unveiled their new, combined identity at a landmark "Cancer Summit" on Saturday, November 7, 2009. The new name, Cancer Support Community, was announced during the last day of the leadership conference of the combined organizations in Washington, DC.

As the number of cancer survivors in the United States surpasses 12 million, the demand for support services throughout the continuum of care is increasing. The Cancer Support Community is poised to help meet these needs through their innovative and comprehensive offerings to those affected by cancer. Affiliates of the Cancer Support Community will continue to offer their renowned education and support services without any disruption.

"We are the same great organization dedicated to ensuring that no one in Delaware faces cancer alone," said Cynthia Dwyer, Executive Director for The Wellness Community-DE. "We look forward to being a part of what will likely be the largest professionally-led network of cancer support in the world, and to developing new and improved resources."

Both The Wellness Community, which was founded in 1982, and Gilda's Club Worldwide, started in 1992, share a common belief that emotional support is as essential as medical care for those diagnosed with cancer. This belief is supported by the 2007 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report entitled, "Cancer Care for the Whole Patient: Meeting Psychosocial Health Needs," which says that today's cancer care does not adequately address the emotional, social, spiritual, or financial challenges associated with the disease. The report goes on to state that community-based organizations are a crucial part of the health care delivery system and need to be better incorporated into the continuum of care. The Cancer Support Community is focusing on advancing the ideas of this IOM report.

Cynthia Dwyer comments on what the merger means to local area affiliates: "We want to assure our local communities that they continue to be our top priority. Participants have come to rely on programs and services that meet their needs. We will not waver from our commitment to offer quality programs that look and feel the same to them, with exciting new opportunities

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coming as well. Donors can be assured that gifts to local Wellness Community affiliates will directly fund them, helping their staff to meet the needs of local cancer survivors. Finally, we will continue to work with community partners to strengthen networks of services and rely on them to help spread the word about these positive changes in the organization. In other words, the way local constituents have related to local area Wellness Communities in the past will not change.”

This new union creates a strong, vital, global network that will bring the highest quality cancer support for the millions of people touched by cancer. These offerings include a comprehensive menu of personalized and essential services, including support groups, counseling, education and healthy lifestyle programs.

“As a cancer survivor, I understand the emotional and social impact of this disease,” says Ted Kennedy, Jr., chair of Cancer Support Community’s honorary board. “So does the Cancer Support Community. The organization’s work is critical as it helps optimize patient care by providing essential but often overlooked services that complete the cancer care plan. From my perspective, the marriage of these two respected organizations marks one of the most significant events in the cancer nonprofit community this year,” continues Kennedy.

The Cancer Support Community is now the largest employer of psychosocial oncology mental health professionals in the United States. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the organization includes a network of nearly 50 local Gilda’s Clubs and Wellness Community centers worldwide, more than 100 satellite locations and online support services that extend around the world. For more information about the Cancer Support Community, visit www.cancersupportcommunity.org.

The Wellness Community-Delaware is part of an international nonprofit organization that provides support, education and hope to people with cancer and their loved ones. Through participation in professionally led support groups, educational workshops and mind/body classes, people affected by cancer learn vital skills that enable them to regain control, reduce isolation and restore hope regardless of the stage of disease. At The Wellness Community-Delaware, all programs are free of charge. More information about The Wellness Community is available on their website at www.wellnessdelaware.org.

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