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Contacts:

David Perry / David Perry & Associates, Inc.
(415) 693-0583 / news@davidperry.com

Rachael Vander Martin
(510) 608-5160 rachael@nccc.org

Northern California Cancer Center Announces “Equality in Breast Cancer” Study www.nccc.org

New study will address why the burden of breast cancer is unevenly distributed
across various ethnic groups

FREMONT, CA – *March 20, 2007* - It has been said that cancer doesn't discriminate. Sadly, that is not always the case when it comes to cancer care. In an effort to educate and inform both the public and medical community, the Northern California Cancer Center (www.nccc.org) is conducting **the Equality in Breast Cancer Care Study** to learn more about how women from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds go through the experience of being diagnosed and treated for breast cancer.

“We are very excited to have the opportunity to conduct this novel inquiry into why disparities exist among certain groups of women diagnosed with breast cancer,” said **Dr. Scarlett Lin Gomez** of the Northern California Cancer Center. “We hope that our findings will ultimately help to improve how cancer treatment is given in various populations and to help ensure that all women, regardless of race, language, income or any other factors, have an equal opportunity for treatment.”

Dr. Gomez -- the recipient of a BC06 Idea award from the Department of Defense -- and her team at the Northern California Cancer Center hypothesize that racial and ethnic disparities arise from differing experiences with health care delivery systems and within women's neighborhood environments. Based on this hypothesis, **the Equality in Breast Cancer Care Study** has been conceived.

The study focuses on four major racial/ethnic groups -- Whites, African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asians/Pacific Islanders -- and is comprised of two components: developmental and application. The developmental component uses focus groups and qualitative research, with open-ended questioning, to develop an instrument appropriate for measuring differences in cancer care among breast cancer patients. In the application component, Dr. Gomez and her team will conduct an epidemiological study to interview 1139 breast cancer patients. The data will be combined with geographic neighborhood data

about residential segregation and the social and built environment. All participants will be randomly selected and recruited through the Greater Bay Area Cancer Registry. The study is funded by the U.S. Department of Defense Breast Cancer Research Program, which receives some of its proceeds from breast cancer research postage stamps.

About the Northern California Cancer Center:

The Northern California Cancer Center (www.nccc.org) is a nationally recognized leader in understanding the causes and prevention of cancer and in improving the quality of life for individuals living with cancer. The organization has been working with scientists, educators, patients, clinicians, and community leaders since 1974. NCCC is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit with 145 employees and a \$15 million operating budget.