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## NEW CEDARS-SINAI/USC DANCE MEDICINE CENTER AIMS TO HELP DANCERS STAY ON THEIR FEET

**LOS ANGELES (March 19, 2007)** – Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and the University of Southern California (USC) School of Theatre Dance Program this week announced the opening of the Cedars-Sinai/USC Dance Medicine Center, a unique collaborative effort to educate dancers about how to avoid dance- and other movement-related injuries.

Based at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, the Center offers a multidisciplinary team of experts in dance and movement, sports medicine, orthopaedics, surgery and physical therapy. In addition to providing informational workshops and training about how to prevent injuries, team members from the Center will also be available by appointment to assess, treat and rehabilitate injuries when they do occur, particularly foot, ankle, knee and hip injuries.

This unusual collaboration began when Glenn Pfeffer, M.D., director of the Cedars-Sinai Foot and Ankle Center, met Margo Apostolos, Ph.D., associate professor and director of Dance at the USC School of Theatre. Apostolos and Pfeffer now co-lead the Center.

Pfeffer is a board certified orthopaedic surgeon whose interest in dance began when he took ballroom dance lessons as a youth. He even competed in ballroom dancing, until a foot injury sent him to the sidelines. Dr. Pfeffer's main clinical and research interests are in the area of foot and ankle injuries. He is past president of the American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society and the American Association of Foot and Ankle Surgeons. He has also written many articles for peer-reviewed scientific publications and has edited six books on the foot and ankle.

Apostolos, who has training as both a scientist and a dancer, has developed a highly respected dance program at USC. She previously taught dance at several other universities, including Stanford University and California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo. Also a skilled roboticist, Apostolos has done work and research in robot choreography at Stanford University and at Caltech/Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, California. At JPL, she held the prestigious NASA/ASEE Faculty Fellowship in the field of Space Telerobotics.

“Most dancers intellectually understand the importance of doing stretching and warm-up exercises to prevent injuries so that they can continue practicing the art they love for many years to come. Unfortunately, many of them haven't received the best training about how to prevent injuries, or perhaps they've practiced those techniques incorrectly or inconsistently. Injuries can also occur when newcomers to dance are unfamiliar with the limits of their own bodies or those of their dance partners; or when experienced and professional dancers feel pressure to ignore minor problems until they become chronic or disabling. All of these situations create opportunities for team members from our collaborative Dance Medicine Center to step in and offer consultations, training or corrective education to help keep dancers healthy and on their feet,” said Apostolos.

“Many dance students and professionals sustain injuries caused by high impact, repetitive stress,” explained Pfeffer. “Often, those types of injuries are preventable; but when they do occur, they require specific types of care. What makes the Cedars-Sinai/USC Dance Medicine Center unique is that we’ve assembled this amazing team of experts who can speak dancers’ language from experience. For example, we have two physical therapists who both have had formal training in dance. Together, we bring significant knowledge about the anatomical and psychological issues that many dancers face - and the nuances of how they practice their art – which allows us to be especially effective at helping to prevent and treat dance-related injuries,” he added.

Apostolos and Pfeffer said that the professionals involved in the Center will share their knowledge about dance and movement injury prevention with the community by visiting dance classes, attending and making presentations at conferences, and meeting with renowned dance and athletic movement experts across the country. For more information or to make an appointment at the Cedars-Sinai/USC Dance Medicine Center, call 310-42-DANCE (310-423-2623).

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The first of 10 hospitals in California whose nurses have been honored with the prestigious Magnet designation, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center is one of the largest nonprofit academic medical centers in the Western United States. For 19 consecutive years, it has been named Los Angeles’ most preferred hospital for all health needs in an independent survey of area residents. Cedars-Sinai is internationally renowned for its diagnostic and treatment capabilities and its broad spectrum of programs and services, as well as breakthroughs in biomedical research and superlative medical education.

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