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VHH's Laura Knowles Nominated for Hospital Hero Award for *A Balanced Life*

(GLENDALE, CA – November 9, 2007) – Laura Knowles, Director of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Verdugo Hills Hospital was recently nominated for a Hospital Hero Award for her development of a Falls Prevention program, *A Balanced Life*. Knowles was honored for her nomination during the Second Annual Hospital Hero Awards Luncheon on November 9 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel.

The Hospital Hero Awards, produced by the National Health Foundation, provide hospitals an opportunity to identify and reward excellence in patient care and recognize dedicated individuals who have created miracles for their patients.

Len LaBella, VHH President and CEO, said *A Balanced Life* has a profound impact on Verdugo Hills' patients and their families as they now have a resource for reducing falls and maintaining their quality of life. "Laura has provided a needed service well beyond the boundaries of the hospital," LaBella said.

Knowles developed *A Balanced Life* with the primary goal of keeping senior citizens active both in their homes and in their community. In only three years, *A Balanced Life* has directly impacted more than 600 seniors throughout the greater Los Angeles region. Working with a dedicated team of physical therapists, Knowles develops individualized fall risk assessments and treatment strategies now proven to increase the ability of seniors to lead independent lives. *A Balanced Life* dramatically increases the quality of life for hundreds of seniors annually and strongly supports Verdugo Hills Hospital's mission "to provide personalized and cost-effective high-quality services that meet the community's needs for healthcare."

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Furthermore, Knowles devoted hundreds of hours to defining specific physical therapy needs of our community's aging population, and identifying strategies for addressing those needs. She researched falls prevention programs in other regions and advocated strongly for the establishment of such a program at our hospital. She developed a strong education and outreach program component that she and her staff present at numerous community centers, nursing homes and service clubs throughout the greater Los Angeles area.

Verdugo Hills Hospital is a 158-bed nonprofit primary care facility nestled in the foothills between Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge. The hospital features all private rooms, 24-hour emergency services, comprehensive inpatient and outpatient diagnostic and treatment facilities, and a family birthing center. It is the only independent, free-standing hospital in the greater Foothills community and was voted "Foothill's Best Hospital" for 2007 by readers of the *Glendale News-Press*. Several physicians on staff also received recognition as the best in the community, including: Dr. Scott W. Beeve, Foothills Best Ophthalmologist; Dr. Allan W. Perry, Jr., Foothills Best Plastic Surgeon; Dr. Richard L. Rupp, Foothills Best Podiatrist; Dr. William F. Schubert, Foothills Best Family Physician; Dr. Jane S. Wada, Foothills Best Dermatologist; and Dr. Ronald D. Woodard, Foothills Best Obstetrician/Gynecologist. For more information, please visit www.vhhospital.org.

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