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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Houston Wellness Association to Honor Houston's Hispanic Health and Wellness Leaders

Luncheon Will Salute Hispanic Heritage Month and Raise Awareness of Prevention

HOUSTON – Sept. 14, 2009 – The Houston Wellness Association will host a luncheon on September 24th at Brady's Landing honoring Houston's health and wellness trailblazers in the Hispanic community. The luncheon will also be a celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. The luncheon will not only spotlight five individual leaders who advocate health and wellness, but will also recognize Houston's Univision 45, an institutional honoree, which has taken on the responsibility of not only providing entertainment to its audience, but also informing and educating them about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

The individual honorees have held positions as organizational directors and founders, nutritionists, doctors and professors in the Houston area who have all greatly impacted Houston's Hispanic community. In their lifetime of work, they have created and supported multiple family care initiatives and various community outreach programs. "Health and wellness does not only apply to individual health, but also to community health, and our honorees are trailblazers in that regard. They are very proactive when it comes to Hispanic wellness. We are proud to acknowledge their efforts as a way of inspiring others to get more involved in health and wellness," said Jonathan Lack, executive director of the Houston Wellness Association.

The community is invited to attend this luncheon. Tickets are \$35 for non-members and \$25 for members. The Luncheon will be at Brady's Landing (8505 Cypress Street) Thursday, September 24, 2009 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information and to register, visit HoustonWellness.org.

Honorees:

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Alicia Carmona Reyes Alicia Carmona Reyes is the Senior Vice President/Administrator of Community Health Programs for the Harris County Hospital District. Since 1979, Ms. Reyes has served at the Harris County Healthcare District doing a wide range of duties, from Head Nurse to Administrative Coordinator to Administrative Assistant. Ms. Reyes received her B.S. in Nursing, went on to USC to do graduate work as a Public Administrator, and then received her M.S. from Texas Women's University. Currently, she is responsible for the administration and direction of the Community Health Program, which encompasses eleven comprehensive community-based health centers. The sites provide access to primary care services, including adult and pediatric services. On-site nutrition, social services, chaplaincy, screening services, and health education are provided on a scheduled basis.

Dr. Rosa Tang Dr. Rosa Tang received her M.D. at C. Heredia University in Lima, Peru. She completed her medicine internship was at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) in Galveston, her Internal Medicine residency at the University of Miami, Ophthalmology residency at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. and fellowship in Neuro-Ophthalmology at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. She holds a Master's Degree in Public Health from the University of Texas' School of Public Health, specializing in Health Promotion and Prevention. Neuro-Ophthalmology deals with diagnostically challenging cases. Dr. Tang examines patients with rheumatologic, toxic, oncologic, metabolic, endocrine, infectious, and other medical diseases. Dr. Tang is board certified in Ophthalmology.

Dr. Carlos Vallbona Dr. Carlos Vallbona is a Distinguished Service Professor at the Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation at the Baylor College of Medicine as well as the Department of Family & Community Medicine and former Chairman. Also, he is Chief of Staff of the Community Health Program of the Harris County Hospital District and serves as an adjunct professor of preventive medicine and a faculty associate with the Center for Health Promotion Research at the UT Health Science Center in Houston. A native of Barcelona, Spain, he received his M.D. in 1950 and completed his residency training in pediatrics at universities in Europe and the United States. Among his various other achievements and pursuits, Dr. Vallbona has collaborated with NASA in the study of cardiac function of astronauts before and during the Gemini space flights. He has held many positions and various study sections with the U.S.'s national medical groups, the National Institutes of Health and the National Center for Health Services Research.

Louise Villejo Louise Villejo has been involved in improving the health of the Latino community for over 35 years. She is one of the founders and current president of Houston's Hispanic Health Coalition. The Hispanic Health Coalition has been instrumental in promoting the health of Hispanics through education, advocacy, and research. It has established collaborations with local, regional, and national agencies to promote healthy eating and exercise and to reduce smoking among Hispanic families. Ms. Villejo has been executive director of the Patient Education Program at MD

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Anderson Cancer Center since 1992. She directs a broad range of patient and family-centered care initiatives, performance improvement and patient education programs that actively engage patients, families, and clinical staff in collaborative partnerships. She is a frequent consultant to national health care organizations, hospitals, and private industry and has been published in the area of patient education and cultural diversity in health care.

Macarita Coronado Young Mrs. Macarita Coronado Young is a retired Nutritionist and Supervisor for HISD, where she spent 24 years of her career advising and revising the HISD menus used throughout the school district. Originally from Benavides, Texas, Mrs. Young attended Our Lady of the Lake in San Antonio, Texas, where she became interested in Nutrition. She subsequently did her Dietitian Internship at the VA Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. After completing her M.S. in Nutrition at the University of Houston, Mrs. Young continued with post-graduate studies at the UT School of Public Health. She was a Faculty Member at Texas Women's University from 1962-1972 and during her early years there, Mrs. Young conducted Nutrition Education for *Amigos de las Americas*. She also was the recipient of a US government contract to teach Nutrition to the indigenous populations of Guatemala from 1973 to 1978.

About Houston Wellness Association

The Houston Wellness Association (HWA) is a not-for-profit 501C6 with a mission to advance the health and well being of the Houston community and the economic vitality of its wellness sector and with a vision to transform Houston into a widely modeled, innovative city for healthy living.

Founded in 2006 as an outgrowth of the Mayor's Wellness Council, the Houston Wellness Association (HWA) has over 600 members representing more than 110 companies of all sizes and industries.

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