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Contact: Maria Mondragón
312-744-1819
mmondragon@cityofchicago.org

FASHION SHOW FUNDRAISER TO HIGHLIGHT UKRAINIAN DESIGNERS AND RAISE FUNDS FOR BREAST CANCER DETECTION IN UKRAINE

The Kyiv (Kiev) Committee of the Chicago Sister Cities International Program will host *Because Life is Beautiful*, a fashion show fundraiser featuring three leading Ukrainian designers: Anna Babenko, Victoria Gres, and Oksana Karavanska, as well as two Chicago based designers from Ukraine, Tatiana Chelekhova and Natalia Nazarova. The Honorary Chair for this event is Mrs. Maggie Daley. All proceeds will go towards the purchase of mammography equipment for early detection and preventative care of breast cancer in underserved areas of Ukraine. The fashion show is presented by NBC 5 Fashion Editor Barbara Glass of *Glass Communications* and produced by Tracey Tarantino of Zzazz Productions. It will take place Friday, May 30, 2003, at 6:30 pm in Preston Bradley Hall at the Chicago Cultural Center 78 E. Washington Street Chicago, IL 60602. Tickets are \$75 and include a pre-show reception. For tickets and information call 312-742-5320.

The Chicago show is the North American premiere of the show, which will then travel to Detroit, Toronto, New York and Washington D.C. An earlier fundraiser took place in fall 2002 in Kyiv. All are part of an ongoing effort, initiated by the Ukrainian Women's Fund in Ukraine, to promote early detection and treatment of breast cancer in Ukraine, where its mortality rate is one of the highest in Europe. In this country with more than 26 million women (54% of the population), there were more than 14,000 new cases of breast cancer last year and more than 7,000 deaths from breast cancer. And available statistics tell only part of the whole story. In Ukraine, the limited availability of breast cancer screening and diagnostics produces a large number of undetected and untreated victims. As a result, most breast cancer cases are diagnosed too late or not at all, which explains this disease's high mortality rate in Ukraine. In this part of the world, women understand a diagnosis of breast cancer to be a likely death sentence because it is the leading cause of death among women of working age, killing 20 percent within the first year.

The underlying causes of Ukraine's breast cancer problem are well known. These include cultural taboos about candid discussion of serious illness, including physicians previously trained to withhold relevant medical information from patients; the general unavailability of routine screening and diagnostic mammography; the widespread reluctance of Ukrainian women to undergo mammography because of the fear of radiation; the general absence of knowledge about self-diagnosis and the common inclination to treat breast lumps with herbal remedies.

Much remains to be accomplished in helping Ukrainian women prevent and survive breast cancer. The Chicago Sister Cities International Program Kyiv Committee is taking a step in this direction by addressing two of Ukraine's critical needs in this area—more readily available mammography outside urban areas and a focused public education campaign that educates women about self-examination and the importance of early detection. The Committee joins the following Ukrainian non-governmental organizations that are working in Ukraine to conduct the nation-wide information campaign "Knowledge Overcomes Cancer: the Center for Ukrainian Reform Education" (CURE) as implementer of the Ukrainian Reform Education Program (sponsored by USAID); Charitable Fund "Women's Health and Family Planning"; Ukrainian Women's Fund; National Council of Women of Ukraine; AICA Ukrainian Section; and Winrock International (together with the International "Renaissance" Foundation and USAID).

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The charity contributions and gifts raised by the Kyiv Committee will be used to purchase a Mammography Machine and diagnostic equipment in order to enable Ukrainian women to diagnose breast cancer in its early stages. The Chicago Sister Cities International Program is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. All contributions are tax deductible as permitted by law.

Chicago and Kyiv have been sister cities since 1991. Chicago's other sister and friendship cities include: Accra, Ghana; Athens, Greece; Birmingham, England; Casablanca, Morocco; Delhi, India; Durban, South Africa; Galway, Ireland; Gothenburg, Sweden; Hamburg, Germany; Lucerne, Switzerland; Mexico City, Mexico; Milan, Italy; Moscow, Russia; Osaka, Japan; Paris, France; Petach Tikva, Israel; Prague, Czech Republic; Shanghai and Shenyang, China; Toronto, Canada; Vilnius, Lithuania; and Warsaw, Poland. The Chicago Sister Cities International Program, under the auspices of the Department of Cultural Affairs, provides leadership to develop, manage and coordinate comprehensive exchanges with Chicago's international sister cities. For more information about the Chicago Sister Cities International Program, please call (312) 744-8074.

The Chicago Sister Cities International Program acknowledges the generous support of its Corporate Partners: Ariel Capital Management, Barbara Burrell Real Estate Services, D'Ancona & Pflaum, A. Epstein and Sons International, Inc., LLC, Lakeside Bank, Motorola, Neal, Murdock and Leroy, Sara Lee, ServiceMaster, United Airlines, Walgreen Co., and WHSmith USA Travel Retail.

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