



For Immediate Release

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**City of Hawthorne Joins First Ladies Health Initiative,
Offers First Secular Location for Multi-City Program**

More than 40 churches to take part in 3rd annual health day

LOS ANGELES (March 19, 2014) – The City of Hawthorne is asking its residents to “Take Time, to Take Care” on Sunday, April 27, and is furnishing the first-ever secular location for the First Ladies Health Day, which features pastors’ wives hosting FREE health screenings in inner-city neighborhoods.

This year marks the 3rd consecutive year for the First Ladies Health Initiative, a multi-city program that began in Chicago six years ago and extended to the Los Angeles area in 2011. The California program currently includes 41 churches primarily in Los Angeles, but also spotlights churches in Pomona, Long Beach, Gardena, Pasadena, Corona, Palmdale and Hawthorne.

Mayor Chris Brown of Hawthorne joined the program this year along with his wife, Hedako Brown, to offer the use of his city’s Memorial Hall to provide the FREE medical tests on the health day. The hall is located at 3901 West El Segundo Blvd. in Hawthorne, and will offer tests as well as information dissemination on mental health and nutrition.

The First Ladies Health Day focuses on eradicating chronic illnesses that are running rampant in African-American and Latino neighborhoods. Among the targeted diseases are HIV/AIDS, high blood pressure, breast cancer, diabetes and Hepatitis C. There also will be representatives at most churches to offer information on Alzheimer’s Disease.

Volunteers from more than 70 medical organizations will be on-site at the various churches to perform the FREE tests. Health Care Partners, the AIDS Project of Los Angeles, the American Diabetes Association, Cedars-Sinai, Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science, City of Hope, the Council of Black Nurses, Good Samaritan Hospital, Health Care Partners, Kaiser Permanente, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and Susan G. Komen are just some of the health organizations that will be represented at the health day.

Plus, the Los Angeles and Compton Fire Departments will share important information on performing CPR.

And also for the first time, representatives from the American Red Cross will provide medical screenings. Anyone may take advantage of the FREE health screenings at either of the participating locations, regardless of church affiliation or residency.

The First Ladies Health Initiative is directed locally by First Lady **Dr. Betty Price**, former first lady of Crenshaw Christian Center of Los Angeles; and First Lady **Evelyn Perkins** of True Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Inglewood.

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The initiative began in Chicago as an information-driven luncheon intended to educate churches about health disparities in African-American communities and elicit suggestions on how to combat the diseases. The inaugural health day was held in Chicago in 2010. The overall program was extended to Los Angeles the following year.

An estimated 22,000 individuals in Los Angeles and Chicago have undergone a combined 80,000+ individual health screenings since the start of the First Ladies Health program. **John Gremer**, director of Community Affairs for Walgreens, says he is more than confident that the work that is being accomplished by the Los Angeles first ladies and medical providers is helping to change the course of health disparities in the participating church communities.

“At Walgreens, we understand that every action that we take regarding medical screenings in the communities in which we serve is making a difference in terms of the overall health of our customers. We simply cannot fix a problem with our health, unless we first know that there is a problem,” states Gremer.

More information on the First Lady Health Day, including a list of participating churches and times, is available at FirstLadiesHealth.com.

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