

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

VANCOUVER ACTOR CHAMPIONS FITNESS AS IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING LONG AND WELL WITH DIABETES

Helping people build a healthy future despite a life of constant pin pricks

VANCOUVER, BC (Nov. 23, 2010) – Not even a difficult upbringing in a broken home with a drug-addicted mother could have prepared actor and athlete Rufus Dorsey for the biggest battle of his life – a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes at the age of 17. But he turned that crisis into opportunity by setting an example for physical fitness and later helping others do the same by championing the Canadian Diabetes Association’s Team Diabetes program

“Since it was established as a national activity fundraising program in 2000, Team Diabetes has promoted a healthy and active lifestyle to all Canadians and raised funds for diabetes education, services, advocacy and research,” said Michael Cloutier, president and CEO of the Canadian Diabetes Association. “You don’t have to be an athlete to join. Team Diabetes prepares you for the physical challenge and provides the support you need to achieve your fundraising goals.”

Raised by single mother who sold drugs from her home, Dorsey had already tackled a lifetime of challenges and was poised to leave for university on a football scholarship when he was blindsided by the devastating news.

“It was like dropping an atomic bomb onto me. I fell into a depression and even thought about taking my own life,” said Dorsey.

And he worried about the potential complications – kidney failure, blindness, amputation, and heart disease and stroke. Initially he rebelled against the disease, continuing to eat fast food.

“That was one way I could kill myself,” he added.

Dorsey credits his flawed but loving mother for getting him back on track, imposing a structure that enabled him to take control of his diabetes, and restore his hope that he could live a productive, athletic life. He tested his blood glucose regularly, exercised and began to eat better and was eventually able to go off insulin. He went on to play football, complete his degree in criminal justice administration, and become an actor and licensed physical fitness trainer.

Appearing in local productions, such as *The L Word* and *The Secret Lives of Second Wives*, Dorsey became a permanent resident of Vancouver in 2007. He has been a guest speaker for Team Diabetes and encourages people to join the program as a way to get fit and support a great cause at the same time.

“I can relate to kids and adults who have to take insulin and prick their fingers for blood glucose tests. My goal is to educate them about diabetes, show them that there is hope. I learned to see diabetes as a glass half-full – it motivated me to stay in shape. If you get on it, treat it, you can live a great life,” said Dorsey.

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For the entire month of November, the Canadian Diabetes Association is asking individuals to visit diabetes.ca to see the stories of incredible supporters including Rufus Dorsey – who are living healthy with diabetes, advocating for the cause and breaking ground towards a cure. Join the Association in leading the fight against diabetes by supporting the cause or participating in local Diabetes Awareness Month events or fundraising activities in your community. Visit diabetes.ca or call 1-800-BANTING (226-8464) for more information.

The 2010 Diabetes Awareness Month campaign is sponsored by sanofi-aventis.

About the Canadian Diabetes Association

Today, more than nine million Canadians live with diabetes or prediabetes. Across the country, the Canadian Diabetes Association is leading the fight against diabetes by helping people with diabetes live healthy lives while we work to find a cure. Our community-based network of supporters help us provide education and services to people living with diabetes, advocate for our cause, break ground towards a cure and translate research into practical applications. For more information, please visit diabetes.ca or call 1-800-BANTING (226-8464).

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