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## **HOPE FOR HEARTS FOUNDATION KICKS OFF AMERICAN HEART MONTH WITH A “TIP-A-DAY” FOR A HEALTHY HEART**

*Foundation encourages healthier lifestyles and smart choices that make cardiovascular health a priority during the month of February—and beyond.*

**NEW YORK, NY** – February 2, 2012 – In observance of “American Heart Month” throughout February, the *Eric De La Cruz Hope For Hearts Foundation* announced yesterday the launch of a month-long educational campaign aimed at increasing awareness of cardiovascular health. The Foundation will be publishing a helpful tip for a healthier heart each day of the month, and will offer supporting information and links through its website and social media pages.

“Heart disease kills an estimated 630,000 Americans each year,” notes Foundation founder Veronica De La Cruz. “It’s the leading cause of death for both men and women. To prevent heart disease and increase awareness of its affects, the Hope For Hearts Foundation is proudly participating in American Heart Month. So many people I have met—including my family—are, or have been, affected by heart disease. We all need to get better educated.”

In the United States, the most common type of heart disease is coronary artery disease (CAD), which can lead to a heart attack. You can greatly reduce your risk for CAD through lifestyle changes and, in some cases, medication. Everyone can make healthy changes to lower your risk of developing heart disease. Controlling and preventing risk factors is also important for people who already have heart disease.

“Today, heart disease is such a pervasive threat to all of us, and yet so many of the risks involved contributing to it are preventable with proper education and choices,” states De La Cruz. “It’s important to know what can be done to prevent, treat and/or mitigate your risk factors. Things like watching your weight, quitting smoking, staying away from secondhand smoke, controlling your cholesterol and blood pressure, and getting active and eating healthy are no-brainers, but we need to be reminded. Additionally, there are so many other easy, everyday ways to reduce your risk, and that’s what our ‘Tip-A-Day’ program in February is all about.”

The Hope For Hearts Foundation was started by De La Cruz in 2010 in memory of her brother, Eric, who passed away while awaiting a heart transplant. Since then, the non-profit organization has been helping other transplant patients and families in financial need.

For more heart health tips and information on the Eric De La Cruz Hope For Hearts Foundation, please visit [www.hopeforheartsfoundation.org](http://www.hopeforheartsfoundation.org). The Foundation and all 29 of this month’s tips can also be found on social media sites Facebook ([www.facebook.com/hopeforheartsfoundation](http://www.facebook.com/hopeforheartsfoundation)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/@Hope\\_4\\_Hearts](http://www.twitter.com/@Hope_4_Hearts)).