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Lupus Awareness Month

*Raising Awareness of a Complex Disease,
Local woman and nationally acclaimed speaker
offers free, educational webinar to public*

TAMPA, FL—For Americans living with the chronic autoimmune disease lupus, simple tasks of everyday life can be challenging. Lupus can affect any part of the body. There is no known cure for the disease, and it is often difficult to diagnose. What’s more, many lupus patients may appear outwardly “normal,” making it difficult for family members, friends and coworkers to understand the gravity of the illness and provide support.

A Tampa woman is working to change that. In recognition of Lupus Awareness Month, Cindy Coney, a nationally acclaimed resiliency speaker, educator and past Chair of the Lupus Foundation of America’s National Board of Directors, is offering a free webinar to the public on May 1st titled *Live Beyond Lupus: 5 Steps to HappYness*.

Diagnosed herself with lupus over 30 years ago, Coney has seen first-hand the powerful role an individual’s ability to be resilient in the face of chronic illness can be. “Resilient people have the ability to respond to life’s challenges in a healthy way. They are better able to cope and find happiness despite longterm adversity, such as living with a chronic illness,” Coney says. “I believe that anyone can learn and develop this ability, which is really essential to living a happier and healthier life.” Coney points out that current research confirms the critical role resiliency plays in reducing stress, improving job and life satisfaction, and improving patient outcomes.

A sought after public speaker, Coney has testified before the FDA Advisory Panel in support of the drug Benlysta, the first new lupus drug to be approved in over 50 years. Her pioneering educational work in health and prevention has been

federally recognized as a SAMSHA Model Program, and she was recently selected to the Eli Lilly Lupus Patient Advisory Board.

Coney will be speaking next at an educational event for the Lupus Foundation of America in Phoenix, Arizona on May 10th and will be the keynote speaker at the Nova Southeastern University's Orlando campus on May 17th as part of the Lupus Foundation of America-Florida Chapter's program *Redefining Lupus: Putting the Pieces Together*. "My hope and what I work toward every day," says Coney, "is a better educated public and improved patient and family support for those living with lupus."

To learn more about Coney's free webinar, upcoming appearances or for a list of lupus resources, visit CindyConey.com.

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