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C. Jessie Jones

## Keeping Vigil

CSUF Fibromyalgia Center Marks Second Anniversary With May 9 Event

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May 1, 2009 :: No. 874

A public candlelight vigil for all who have died from complications due to fibromyalgia, those living with the chronic pain condition and their supporters, will highlight Cal State Fullerton's Fibromyalgia Research and Education Center's second anniversary.

The 6:30-8:30 p.m. May 9 event, "Remember, Embrace and Celebrate," is hosted by the university and the North Orange County Fibromyalgia Support Group.

Before the vigil, two fibromyalgia experts will speak in Room 199 of the Kinesiology and Health Science Building. The experts are C. Jessie Jones, professor of health science and director of the CSUF Fibromyalgia Research and Education Center who has fibromyalgia, and Judy Westerfield, a marriage and family therapist, clinical hypnotherapist and certified guided- imagery therapist.

Jones will present the latest research findings on fibromyalgia, and Westerfield will focus on the grieving process for people who have or support those dealing with fibromyalgia.

"Sometimes it's a slow death while you watch in disbelief and sometimes it strikes suddenly, shaking you to the core," Westerfield noted. "Whether you have or your loved one has fibromyalgia, you ultimately grieve alone, in your own way, in your own time. We will explore the process of grief, learn how differently we cope, mourn, the effect it has on relationships,

and learn ways to express your pain and sorrow while minimizing the suffering. Good grief! It's possible!"

Fibromyalgia is a chronic-pain illness characterized by widespread musculoskeletal aches, pain and stiffness, soft-tissue tenderness, general fatigue and sleep disturbances. The most common sites of pain include the neck, back, shoulders, pelvic girdle and hands, but any body part can be affected by a range of symptoms of varying intensities that wax and wane over time. It is estimated by the Food and Drug Administration that 10 million people in the United States, mostly women, have fibromyalgia.

Jones said there are studies that refer to suicide among people with chronic pain.

"A lot of people with fibromyalgia end up with a host of co-morbidities related to poor lifestyle choices," Jones said. "We know that the average woman with fibromyalgia has the physical capacity of an 80-year-old, which makes her vulnerable for mobility problems, falls and eventually, disability."

The center is dedicated to conducting research and providing educational programs for empowering people with fibromyalgia to learn how to reduce chronic pain and fatigue, improve physical and cognitive function and enhance overall quality of life, Jones said.

For more information, call 714-278-7031 or send an email to [fibromyalgia@fullerton.edu](mailto:fibromyalgia@fullerton.edu).

### Photos:

Available online at [www.fullerton.edu/newsphotos](http://www.fullerton.edu/newsphotos)

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