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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Arizona Kidney Failure Patient Goes Above and Beyond the Call of Duty to Help Community—Awarded National DPC Hero Award**

*Award given for patient's leadership and inspiration; Patient organizes annual Dialysis walk in local community to raise awareness of kidney disease*

**Washington D.C. (April 26, 2007)** - DaVita Patient Citizens (DPC)—a nationwide patient advocacy group comprised of more than 20,000 dialysis and pre-dialysis patients and family members—is proud to honor dialysis patient Ed Stizza as the first recipient of the DPC Hero Award, a national award recognizing empowered and heroic individuals going beyond the call of duty to make a difference in the lives of dialysis patients.

Ed is being recognized for his organization of dialysis walks in his local community of Fountain Hills, Arizona. For the past two years Ed and Laura, his wife of 47 years, have organized and promoted annual dialysis walks to educate and raise awareness about kidney disease in their community. This event has raised thousands of dollars for kidney disease and continues to grow in size. Ed hopes to inspire others to organize similar dialysis walks in other communities throughout the United States.

“On behalf of the kidney community, we are honored to recognize Ed as our first DPC Hero,” said Patricia Orna, DPC President. “This award program reflects the spirit of thousands of people involved within the community whose stories too often go untold and whose efforts make a difference in the lives of others. We are inspired by Ed’s continued support and work, and thank him for his service to the kidney community.”

The DPC Hero program has been created to spotlight individuals who have gone above and beyond to positively impact kidney care in their communities.

Kidneys perform multiple essential functions. When the kidneys fail to function adequately, a replacement therapy must be chosen to sustain life. With appropriate intervention, patients with complete failure of their kidneys can live full, productive lives.

A diabetic for 30 years, Ed was diagnosed with kidney failure in 2002 and immediately was placed on dialysis. In addition to his efforts in his local community, he has been very active as a DPC Patient Ambassador, recently traveling to Washington, D.C., to

meet with Congressional Members and their staffs and explain the importance of Medicare benefits that promote quality care for dialysis patients.

The DPC Hero award is open to caregivers, nephrologists, family members, patients, and other members of the kidney community who have empowered themselves or others.

Nominations for the DPC Hero award can be sent to [dpc@dialysispatients.org](mailto:dpc@dialysispatients.org) or contact 1-866-877-4242.

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