

Contact: Simi Singer
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
310-298-2242
Simi.Singer@cshs.org

Contact: Dan Weinberg
Velo Club La Grange
310-435-1764
media@lagrange.org

La Grange Cycling Club Hosts Top Bicycle Racers at Cedars-Sinai Grand Prix

(Los Angeles, June 25, 2006) – With rising gas prices and concerns about the environment and obesity, Americans have increasingly turned to bicycling as a means of transportation, recreation, and exercise. Yet few have experienced the thrill of competitive cycling at a professional level. This will change on June 25, 2006, as the **Cedars-Sinai Grand Prix** promises to be one of the most exciting bicycle racing competitions in the region. Taking place on the campus of West L.A. College in the heart of Culver City, the **Cedars-Sinai Grand Prix** offers the community an up-close look into the world of amateur and professional bicycle racing — a world most people usually only see on television in races like the famous Tour de France.

Velo Club La Grange, California's oldest and largest cycling club, has partnered with several community and wellness groups to bring together a unique event that will appeal to a broad spectrum of cyclists — from spectators and first-time amateurs to professional racers. Over \$15,000 of cash and prizes will be sure to draw some of the top professionals and elite amateurs from across the Western United States to the streets of West Los Angeles.

As a first in elite racing, La Grange's professional coaches will conduct two racing clinics on the actual race course to allow first-time and beginning riders to "Learn to Race Like a Pro." The clinics will teach bike handling, race strategy, bike safety, and cycling etiquette. The clinics are free to all participants and will take place on June 10 and June 14 (see www.lagrange.org for more details).

In another first, La Grange has teamed up with the U.S. Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) in a demonstration of how visually impaired cyclists can experience the thrill of bicycle racing. Partnering blind athletes with sighted riders on two-person (tandem) bicycles, La Grange aims to increase awareness of the talent and invincible will of athletes with disabilities.

The events kick off at 8 AM on Sunday, June 25 and will feature racing categories by age and gender, including Juniors, Masters, and Pro's. Typically a highlight of the day, the Pro's race will take place at 1:40 PM and will include 75 grueling minutes on the West L.A. College course, including a 200-foot vertical climb on each lap, followed by a sharp descent in which the advanced riders will reach speeds of 50 miles per hour.

To raise money for the Scott Bleifer Memorial Scholarship Fund, La Grange will raffle off a number of prizes including a Tour of California Felt bike, a complete Cannondale bike, and a Floyd Landis-autographed winner's jersey from the Tour of California.

The race will also feature an all-day exposition center for spectators and family to sample healthy food from various Kahala brands, receive massages from L.A. Sports Massage, test nutritional products and the latest products from Helen's Cycles, Cannondale Bicycle Corporation, Saris/CycleOps, and receive free tips and advice on wellness and exercise. Cedars-Sinai Medical Center will be anchoring the exposition area with booths from the Orthopedic Center and the Wellness Solutions Program with demonstrations of its VO2 Max test. The test measures heart and lung capacity and metabolic rates. Results are used to create customized programs to help individuals achieve specific fitness goals. Other major partners include Helen's Cycles, Cannondale Bicycle Corporation, *Bicycling* Magazine, Thomas S. Byrnes Attorney at Law, 1031Market.com, Alpha & Omega Construction Services, Inc., and CycleOps Performance Training Products.

Admission and parking are free.

About Cedars-Sinai Medical Center: Cedars-Sinai is among the nation's most dynamic and innovative academic medical centers. For 18 consecutive years, it has been named Los Angeles' most preferred hospital for healthcare needs and personalized care by an independent survey of area residents. It is internationally renowned for its diagnostic and treatment capabilities as well as its broad spectrum of programs and services.

About Velo Club La Grange: La Grange is the largest and oldest cycling club on the West Coast with over 400 members nationwide. The club was founded by Raymond Fouquet in 1969 and fields one of the top amateur racing teams in the country. Past members include a Tour de France stage winner, an Olympic gold medalist, and several U.S. National and California state champions.

Along with the Club's dedication to bicycle racing, the club welcomes new and inexperienced riders with a passion for cycling. La Grange is very active in the cycling and fitness communities. Our continuing public policy work with state and local government has led to major improvements in safety for all users of California roads. In addition, the Club has partnered with the Association of Blind Athletes and Meals on Wheels and sponsors an annual scholarship with the help of the Union Bank of California. La Grange enjoys the financial support of several corporations committed to promoting healthy and active living, including Kahala Corporation and Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

For more information, directions and a full list of prizes and sponsors, visit www.lagrange.org.

###