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### Parkinson's Alliance Symposium Makes a Difference

**(West Hartford)** -The Make a Difference Parkinson's Alliance (MADPA) hosted their Second Annual Symposium at the University of Hartford on Saturday, July 18th, to a record crowd of over 150 people that were treated to presentations provided by a notable array of speakers sharing the latest work in the field of research and treatment of Parkinson's disease.

"We're elated with the positive response and pleased that MADPA's symposium attracted interest from a four state area. In keeping with our mission, this event supports continued education for people living with Parkinson's by bringing prominent movement disorders specialists and other professionals together to share the most current research and treatments for the disease." shared MADPA Executive Council Chair and event organizer Jill Baldwin.

The distinguished morning session presenters included Dr. Fiona Gupta (Hackensack University Medical Center) Dr. Michael Pourfar (NYU Lagone Medical Center), and Dr. Duarte Machado (Yale University Medical Center). Remarks addressed the latest advances in surgical and non-surgical treatments, and identifying and treating depression for People with Parkinson's (PWP).

The presenters agreed that the disease has a unique impact on each individual it afflicts. Dr. Pourfar shared, "It's often said, if you've treated one person with Parkinson's, you've just treated one person with Parkinson's." The symptom profile and progressive nature differs patient to patient. There was also concurrence that there has been a good deal of new treatment options available for the growing list of symptoms attributable to this progressive and degenerative disease.

The keynote speaker, Pam Quinn, renowned movement consultant (<http://pamelaquinn.net>), former dancer with the Mark Morris Dance Group and PWP, led the appreciative audience through a series of exercises that can be adapted in one's daily life at home and can have a favorable impact on everyday functioning. Her presentation complimented the afternoon breakout sessions led by Cristina Colon-Semenz Ph.D. candidate from BU along with Janice Flanagan from BeatPD Today, and Care Partner Discussion led by Joanne Cohen, MSW.

Steve DeWitte, Connecticut Advocate for Parkinson's founder and MADPA Executive Council member, credits the program committee with the continued success of the symposium. "We believe the continued growth is due to the ability to draw speakers that capably present the complexity of Parkinson's disease in a manner that can be understood by their audience. Our community takes their education seriously. Our speakers appreciate the degree of experience our community has, allowing for a more in-depth review of the presented topics. Everyone leaves stronger from his or her time together."

Susan Pelchat, MADPA Executive Council member and leader of the Torrington Area Parkinson's Support Group commented. "We find that the strong emphasis on Q&A allows PWP the opportunity to explore subjects in more depth than a traditional office visit with their treating neurologist might allow".

The "Ask the Doctor" session featured prominent local Movement Disorder Specialists: Dr. Adam Simmons, Hospital for Special Care; Dr. Michelle Lavallee, Associated Neurologists, Danbury; and Dr. Marisa Moro de Casillas, Neurology Associates, Norwich.

The organizers wish to express their appreciation to their sponsors: Medtronic, Inc., USWorldMeds, AbbVie, Impax Pharmaceuticals, ClearPoint, and Parkinson's Disease Advocate.

For more information please visit the MADPA website <http://www.allianceparkinsons.com>