



Media Contacts:

Theresa Garnero
(831) 917-0749 | tgarnero@danceoutdiabetes.org

Anjie Coplin
(214) 200-8056 | CoplinA@Aetna.com

News Release

**FREE DANCE CLASSES, HEALTH SCREENINGS OFFERED TO
SAN FRANCISCANS BY DANCE OUT DIABETES AND THE AETNA
FOUNDATION**

SAN FRANCISCO, February 28, 2012 – People with diabetes, their families and others are invited to get up and dance their way to better health at free monthly dance classes that also feature medical screenings, nutrition advice and weight-management education in a supportive setting.

Offered by the nonprofit Dance Out Diabetes, the classes are held from 1 – 3 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month throughout 2012 at the African American Art & Culture Complex, 762 Fulton Street, San Francisco. The class on March 10 will feature soul line dancing with instructor CC Brown.

The program is offered at no charge to participants through the generous support of the Aetna Foundation and by the African American Art & Culture Complex, which donated the use of its dance studio. Reservations are recommended and can be made at

www.danceoutdiabetes.org or by calling 1-877-765-4386.

“As a nurse with more than 25 years in diabetes education, I know that diabetes can be isolating for people and challenging for them to manage on their own,” said Theresa Garnero, founder and executive director of Dance Out Diabetes. “That’s why we have structured our dance program to be a fun, supportive way to help people with diabetes manage their weight, celebrate their physical selves and access free health screenings.

“Additionally, we encourage our participants to bring their family and friends with them to class as a way to engage loved ones with the management of their disease,” said Garnero.

The city of San Francisco is not immune to today’s current diabetes epidemic. According to the Institute for Alternative Futures, 10 percent of adults in the city have diabetes and an additional 30 percent have pre-diabetes or undiagnosed diabetes. Excess weight and a sedentary lifestyle are among the risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes. Diabetes disproportionately affects African-American and Hispanic populations.

“Community-based programs that help at-risk people be physically active and access a healthy diet are key strategies in combating obesity and its related diseases like diabetes,” said Sharon Dalton, vice president of the Aetna Foundation and director of its regional grant making. “We are pleased to support Dance Out Diabetes and make its dance program available at no charge for residents of the Bay area.”

Dance Out Diabetes’ program targets people of all ages with type 1 or type 2 diabetes, pre-diabetes, or those at risk of developing the disease. Classes provide dance instruction in hip-hop, swing and line dancing, among the many fun dance moves taught by professional dance instructors. When the music stops, participants can have key health markers tested, such as glucose, A1C (3-month glucose), blood pressure and weight, and receive feedback about the results from certified diabetes educators. Nutrition tips and weight management techniques are offered by trained specialists during class.

In addition to Dance Out Diabetes’ dance and health monitoring classes, the nonprofit offers health monitoring support on its website and by telephone with certified diabetes educators.

About Dance Out Diabetes

Dance Out Diabetes is an innovative, structured exercise dance program that includes several types of dances for the non-dancer, all ages, types of diabetes, friends and family. Primarily a volunteer-based organization, Dance Out Diabetes increases access to quality health care and education with onsite certified diabetes educators who perform ongoing health checks for participants, a *Weigh Wise* monthly weight management newsletter written by a registered dietitian expert, and referral program to local primary care providers and health care facilities. Founded by renowned diabetes nurse educator and award winning author, Theresa Garner, the vision of Dance Out Diabetes is to have FUN while managing health through dance and education in a relaxed and informal setting. Check out www.danceoutdiabetes.org for in-depth details.

About the Aetna Foundation

The Aetna Foundation, Inc. is the independent charitable and philanthropic arm of Aetna Inc. Since 1980, Aetna and the Aetna Foundation have contributed \$394 million in grants and sponsorships, including \$15.6 million in 2010. As a national health foundation, we promote wellness, health, and access to high-quality health care for everyone. This work is enhanced by the time and commitment of Aetna employees, who have volunteered more than 2.3 million hours since 2003. Aetna's current giving is focused on addressing the rising rate of adult and childhood obesity in the U.S.; promoting racial and ethnic equity in health and health care; and advancing integrated health care. For more information, visit www.AetnaFoundation.org.

About the African American Art & Culture Complex (AAACC)

Since 1989, the AAACC has been committed to empowering our youth, promoting the work of emerging local artists, and serving as a vital resource for residents and visitors alike. Located in the heart of San Francisco – in the city's historic Jazz Preservation District – the AAACC facility encompasses 30,000 square feet of community arts space. It includes a new dance studio where Dance Out Diabetes meets.

Visit www.aaacc.org for more information.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

Reporters, videographers and photographers are welcome to cover the March 10 Dance Out Diabetes class, 1 – 3 p.m. at the African American Art & Culture Complex, 762 Fulton Street, San Francisco.