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**Celiac Disease Awareness Event Joins Medical Professionals and Food Industry**  
*NFCA hosts education day in Northwest Arkansas*

**Ambler, Pennsylvania- (June 16, 2009)-** The National Foundation for Celiac Awareness (NFCA) is set to host the first Northwest Arkansas Celiac Awareness & Education Day on Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 in Springdale, Arkansas. This landmark event held from 9:30am to 3:30pm will expand awareness and education among critical professional populations, impacting how those with celiac disease are able to manage their disease through a lifelong gluten-free diet.

This innovative program welcomes food manufacturers, food and hospitality industry representatives, and medical professionals from around the country for a day of educational programming, a networking luncheon, and vendor fair featuring gluten-free merchants.

**Event and Venue Information**

**Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup> 2009**  
**9:30am – 3:30pm**

**The Holiday Inn Conference Center**  
**1500 S. 48<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Springdale, Arkansas**  
**(479) 751-8300**

The Northwest Arkansas Celiac Awareness & Education Day program includes two educational sessions entitled, Hot Topic: The Gluten-Free Industry, and Hot Topic: Advancing Awareness and Driving Diagnosis.

**Hot topic: The Gluten-free Industry**

Addressing the gluten-free marketplace, considerations for restaurants and chefs, manufacturer roles and responsibilities, and FDA labeling regulations.

**Hot Topic Advancing Awareness and Driving Diagnosis.**

Reframing celiac disease; diagnosing and treating celiac patients, gluten-free 101 (for patients, physicians, and dieticians), gluten in medication, and case study findings.

Recognized celiac disease and gluten-free diet experts, dietitians Shelley Case and Ann Lee, will headline the educational session panels. Other featured presenters include Fayetteville native Dr. Craig Brown and NFCA president Alice Bast.

Northwest Arkansas area resident Carolyn McKinley will also be the honoree and spokesperson for the event. Carolyn has been a valued NFCA volunteer since 2007, and her passionate efforts on behalf of the cause of celiac awareness stem from her experience with the autoimmune disorder. Carolyn also leads the celiac support groups in Northwest Arkansas and Southwest Missouri chapters.

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The networking luncheon sponsored by Thai Kitchen will showcase gluten-free fare provided by local chefs. Gluten-free industry leaders from across the nation will offer product sampling throughout the day in the gluten-free vendor fair area.

Tickets for The Northwest Arkansas Celiac Awareness & Education Day can be purchased online through the NFCA website, [www.celiaccentral.org](http://www.celiaccentral.org), or by phone (215) 325-1306 x.101.

There are a variety of ticket options and prices range from \$15-\$40. A \$5 discount for health professionals and students, culinary students, and children is available. All guests will receive goodie bags filled with gluten-free treats from a variety of event sponsors with admission.

For additional event information, visit the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness website, [www.CeliacCentral.org](http://www.CeliacCentral.org).

Celiac disease is an autoimmune digestive disease that damages the small intestine and interferes with absorption of nutrients from food. It is triggered by consumption of the protein called gluten, which is found in wheat, barley and rye. Left untreated, people with celiac disease can develop further complications such as other autoimmune diseases, osteoporosis, thyroid disease, and some cancers. An estimated 1 in 133 Americans have celiac disease, yet 97% remain undiagnosed. The only existing therapeutic option for those with celiac disease is a lifelong adherence to a 100 percent gluten-free diet.

About the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness:

NFCA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness and funding for celiac disease that will advance research, education and screening amongst medical professionals, children and adults. Visit [www.celiaccentral.org](http://www.celiaccentral.org) or call 215-325-1306 for further information.

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