**Media Contact:** Nadine Jolson, Jolson Creative PR 310-614-3214 jolsoncreativePR@mac.com



**CNN Hero Susan Burton’s Charity Achieves Beauty Through Adversity**

***14th Annual A New Way of Life Fundraising Gala Presented Dec 9th 2012***

Los Angeles, CA (November 27, 2012), Positively transforming the lives of formerly incarcerated women, gala host/actor Jason Isaacs, special celebrity presenters Wilmer Valderrama, Lennie James, David Marciano, Tony Denison, along with congratulations from the office of Congresswoman Maxine Waters and returning media sponsor Reelz Channel are all joining together in hopes of raising $200,000 for **CNN Top Ten Hero Susan Burton’s** **A New Way** **of Life Reentry Project’s** Fundraising Gala on Sunday, **December 9th, 2012**.

During the **inspirational evening, the charity will celebrate the beauty of their residents’ personal transformations, shared accomplishments, and honor their dear friends and supporters at** the star-studded gala, **“Diamonds and** **Pearls: Beauty through Adversity**,” held at the Omni Hotel, 251 South Olive Street in downtown Los Angeles. A Red Carpet VIP Reception will kick off the night at 5:00pm followed by a silent auction, dinner, award presentations, music by Gongfarmer Collective and special performance by American Idol Season 9 semi-finalist Michelle Delamor. The host for the evening is award-winning actor and A New Way of Life supporter, Jason Isaacs, best known for his portrayal of Lucius Malfoy in the Harry Potter films.

Gala guests will also preview a film by critically acclaimed directors Emma Hewitt and Tessa Blake about Susan Burton and the women of A New Way of Life. ‘SUSAN’ is a documentary about hope, heartache and how one woman can change the world. The film will premiere in its entirety on Saturday Dec 8th on WIGS, the #1 channel for scripted drama on YouTube, created by directors Jon Avnet (*Black Swan, Fried Green Tomatoes*) and Rodrigo Garcia (*Albert Nobbs, In Treatment*). It can be viewed at: www.youtube.com/wigs

## After spending two decades in the criminal justice system and finding freedom and sobriety in 1997, Burton founded A New Way of Life Reentry Project. To date, the non-profit organization has helped transform the lives of over 600 formerly-incarcerated women and their children. For her efforts, Burton received a CNN Top Ten Hero award in 2010 and the prestigious Citizen Activist Award from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Susan has appeared as a guest on the Ricki Lake Show and has also been seen on *The Talk* and Dr. Drew’s *Lifechangers*. She is currently featured in the newly published book, “Everyday Heroes: 50 Americans Changing The World One Nonprofit At A Time.”

“*It’s been a thrilling year of big challenges and big victories; I have truly experienced the beauty of adversity*,” stated Burton.

The awards presented by **David Marciano**(*EMMY winning show Homeland),* **Wilmer Valderrama**(*That 70’s Show*), award winning actor **Tony Denison**(*Major Crimes/The Closer*), and **Lennie James** (*Snatch*), include the ***Community Partner Award*** presented to Ferris and Mildred Harper, the ***Community Champion Award*** to UCLA-Critical Race Studies (CRS) Department, the ***Synergy Teamwork Award***to The Women's Foundation-Race Gender & Human Rights Donor Circle, and the ***Movement Builder Award***presented to Dorsey Nunn, Executive Director of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children.

The fundraiser has received strong community, corporate and media support through the generous contributions from: Pink Diamond Presenting Sponsor: The Orange County Chapter of World Vision’s Women of Vision; White Diamond Sponsor: V-Day; Baroda Pearl Sponsors: The Office of Los Angeles County 2nd District Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Coalition for Responsible Community Development, Drug Policy Alliance and “A Little Bit of This” online store; Media Sponsor: Reelz Channel; Supporters: The Atlas Family Foundation, Community Coalition, McKinney & Associates, DUB Magazine and the University of Southern California School of Social Work.

TICKETS: http://www.anewwayoflife.org/2012-sponsorship/

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**About A New Way of Life Reentry Project**: A New Way of Life Reentry Project provides housing and support services to formerly incarcerated women in South Central Los Angeles, facilitating a successful transition back to community life. The mission of ANWOL is to help women and girls break the cycle of entrapment in the criminal justice system and lead healthy and satisfying lives. Since its founding in 1998, AWNOL has helped transform the lives of more than 600 women and their children. As a community advocate, A New Way of Life works to restore the civil rights of people with criminal records to housing, employment, public benefits, and the right to vote. For more information: [www.anewwayoflife.org/](http://www.anewwayoflife.org/)

**About Pink Diamond Sponsor-World Vision’s Women of Vision Orange County Chapter:** WOMEN OF VISION, a volunteer ministry of WORLD VISION, is a partnership of Christian women who are called to invest their time, intellect, compassion, creativity and finances to meet the needs of impoverished and oppressed women and children.  As women who believe that God works through human hands and hearts, we seek to educate and motivate women of diverse ages, backgrounds and circumstances to use their God-given resources to meet human needs in their own communities and around the world. On a local level, Orange County’s Women of Vision, Women of Vision Juniors and Young Women of Vision take the time to personally visit and bring gifts, spreading holiday cheer for the women and children living in A New Way of Life’s reentry homes during the Christmas season.

**About White Diamond Sponsor-V-DAY:** V-Day is a global activist movement to end violence against women and girls. V-Day is a catalyst that promotes creative events to increase awareness, raise money, and revitalize the spirit of existing anti-violence organizations. V-Day generates broader attention for the fight to stop violence against women and girls, including rape, battery, incest, female genital mutilation (FGM), and sex slavery.

Abo**ut Media Sponsor-REELZCHANNEL-TV:** About Movies(r) is the only cable and satellite network devoted to entertaining and informative programming that is all about movies, including the celebrities, fashion, music and stories behind the stories. REELZCHANNEL reaches more than 64 million homes on DIRECTV channel 238, Dish Network channel 299, Verizon FiOS TV channel 233, AT&T U-verse channels 799/1799HD and cable systems nationwide.

**About Baroda Pearl Sponsor-Los Angeles County, Second District Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas**: Founder of the Empowerment Congress, arguably the region’s most successful twenty year experiment in neighborhood-based civic engagement, Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas is widely regarded as the foremost advocate of neighborhood participation in government and leader of the Neighborhood Council movement. He has advanced the interests of county residents on a variety of fronts, including transportation, job creation, local hiring, economic, work force development and health care; he has worked tirelessly to jump start the opening of the new Martin Luther King, Jr. hospital.

**About Baroda Pearl Sponsor-Coalition for Responsible Community Development (CRCD):** CRCD leads initiatives to foster a safe and economically vibrant neighborhood – a place where young people can thrive and contribute to neighborhood revitalization. With effective partnerships, CRCD promotes public safety and civic pride, trains and hires unemployed youth to remove graffiti and beautify the neighborhood, engages young people in education, training, and career-building; builds permanent supportive housing for transition-age youth- including former foster youth and other low-income residents, and strengthens small businesses to promote economic growth.

**About Baroda Pearl Sponsor-Drug Policy Alliance:** The [Drug Policy Alliance](http://www.drugpolicy.org/) **envisions** a just society in which the use and regulation of drugs are grounded in science, compassion, health and human rights, in which people are no longer punished for what they put into their own bodies but only for crimes committed against others, and in which the fears, prejudices and punitive prohibitions of today are no more. The organization’s **mission** is to advance those policies and attitudes that best reduce the harms of both drug use and drug prohibition, and to promote the sovereignty of individuals over their minds and bodies.

**About Baroda Pearl Sponsor-“A Little Bit of This”:** Created for the consumer with limited time to shop, this online store offers a great selection of 100% original designer fragrances and high-fashion jewelry for both men and women at discount prices. [www.alittlebitofthisonline.com](http://www.alittlebitofthisonline.com)

**About Gift Bag Sponsor Hot Rock Jewelry:** A trendy, upscale jewelry boutique for today’s fashion conscious Women and Men. They specialize in one-of-a-kind jewelry creations in gold, platinum, silver, and copper using highly faceted gemstones, beads, and mineral specimens, to create stunning designs to your specifications. www.hotrockjewelry.com