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Angela Chitkara
Gutenberg Communications
New York
(646) 763-8853
angela@gutenbergpr.com

Congress 2008: A Historic Gathering of South Asian Women Professionals
During Women's History Month in March

The Largest Single Gathering of South Asian Women Professionals Held in the US Takes
Place March 15, 2008

*Filmmaker Mira Nair, Top Chef Host Padma Lakshmi and Actress Madhur Jaffrey join
Global Women Executives*

March 3, 2008 (New York, NY) - - South Asian Women's Leadership Forum, SAWLF, announced today details regarding its historic event, at the global headquarters of PricewaterhouseCoopers, in New York City. Through the annual Congress, scheduled for Saturday, March 15, 2008, SAWLF is committed to providing women entrepreneurs and professionals a forum in which to interact and learn from successful business and community leaders. Congress - SAWLF's signature event - unites hundreds of women professionals from all over the world to discuss the opportunities and challenges they face as they pursue their lives and careers.

Created in 2003, SAWLF is the first national, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of South Asian women professionals in the marketplace. Based in New York City, with chapters in Chicago and Washington DC, SAWLF serves as a primary business and networking platform for South Asian women. "Initially, we had a series of informal events and the response was strong today our membership base exceeds 4,000 women from across the US, UK and South Asia" says Simi Ahuja, SAWLF founder. "Our organization was created to capitalize on the experience of women in senior leadership roles and extend their knowledge to the growing number of South Asian women who have entered the US marketplace in recent years."

"As a mother and professional, I realize the value in supporting a platform for the next generation of women leaders. SAWLF is a valued resource for women within the South Asian community," said Sheila Hooda, Senior Managing Director and Head of Strategy and Business Development, TIAA-CREF.



The growing number of women entering the marketplace is reflected in the diverse experiences of the panelists and speakers that have been selected for this year's Congress. This year's Opening Keynote Presentation will examine the precedent for women in leadership roles by comparing and contrasting the US and South Asia. Speakers will also address the rapid global transition that has already begun, as women around the world work for multi-national organizations; manage cross-border transactions and teams; and impact global policy. Panelists will include, Shahla Aly, General Manager of Corporate and Business Groups Solutions Delivery Microsoft IT and Punita Kumar-Sinha, Senior Managing Director, The Blackstone Group.

"I thought there was an important opportunity for South Asian women to shape and influence mainstream perceptions of our community," recalls Ahuja. "I felt it was even more important that South Asian women were presented as experts and advisors - an examination of the mainstream media and business platforms did not indicate this was the case. As the interest in South Asia grows and thrives, organizations, like SAWLF, serve as a key resource to the media and Corporate America.

About SAWLF:

SAWLF strives to raise awareness and visibility for women in the marketplace and mainstream media through its speaker's bureau, monthly events, research and mentoring program as well as educational programs and networking opportunities. For additional information regarding SAWLF or Congress 2008, please visit www.southasianwomen.org or email: info@southasianwomen.org

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