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First Lady Anita Perry Honorary Chair of Second Annual Girls Now! Conference

AUSTIN, TX, April 1, 2009 – In some ways it's the best time to be a girl, and in other ways, the worst. Girls enjoy a voice unequalled in generations past but issues like bullying and low self-esteem manifest for girls in much more complicated ways these days and new unreachable standards of beauty surface daily.

As a positive counter to the challenges girls face, the Girls Empowerment Network of Austin (GENaustin) presents the Second Annual Girls Now! Conference, on Saturday, November 14, 2009 at the Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders. In the wake of last year's successful turnout of more than 400 girls and 200 adults, this year's one-day seminar focused on Body Image, Bullying and Being a Girl welcomes a couple of new additions: Honorary Chairwoman, First Lady Anita Perry and new programming for high school girls.

"As First Lady of Texas, one of my priorities has always been the empowerment of women," says Mrs. Perry. "But the process of empowering the women of tomorrow, begins by giving the girls of today the tools and resources they need to achieve self-confidence and success. Programs such as Girls Now! give girls those essential tools."

The Girls Now! Conference was founded through the collaboration of *The Ladies Room with Lolis* radio program, the Ann Richards School, GENaustin and *Latinitas Magazine*, and welcomed partnering organizations such as Girlstart, SafePlace, Theater Action Project and Con Mi Madre.

Girls Now! celebrates the First Lady's interest in empowering girls.

"She is not only the 'First Lady' she is also known as the 'First Nurse' of Texas, for her active involvement in a number of women's healthcare issues, such as domestic abuse prevention and breast cancer awareness," said Conference Director Lolis Garcia-Baab. "First Lady Perry is well-known for her development and management of the Texas Conference for Women, one of the inspirations for the Girls Now! Conference, making her the ideal candidate to chair this groundbreaking collaborative event."

The Girls Now! Conference features a range of workshops for girls (grades 5-12), parents, educators and social workers on everything from Internet safety to teen violence. This year, the Conference will feature more workshops, a continuing education course for teachers and a Spanish track for parents. Tickets are \$10.00 (scholarships are available) and registration will be online at www.genaustin.org

For more information about the Girls Now! Conference contact Lolis Garcia-Baab, Girls Now! Conference Director at lolis@genaustin.org or at 512-841-4042 or visit www.genaustin.org

About GENaustin

GENaustin (The Girls Empowerment Network of Austin) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. GENaustin fosters healthy self-esteem in girls by engaging them to explore and define their personal values and build skills that empower them with confidence and courage to make wise choices. Visit www.genaustin.org

About Girls NOW! Conference

The Conference is a one-day seminar, designed for girls and their parents and educators to explore the issues of Body Image, Bullying and Being a Girl through group presentations and hands-on interactive sessions led by nationally recognized experts that are designed to identify the problems and offer solutions. Visit www.girlsnowconference.org

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