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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.....June 17, 2005  
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## **Leading experts address changes in maternity care at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual DONA International Conference**

### **Leading doula organization hosts international conference on Capitol Hill**

More than 300 doulas from around the world will come together on Capitol Hill to learn more about maternity care at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual DONA International Conference, July 21 - 24.

DONA International is the world's leading association representing doulas—professionals who provide advocacy and emotional, physical, and informational support to women and childbearing families before and during birth, and during the postpartum period. The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual DONA International Conference brings together many of the world's leading experts in maternity care, including the organization's five founders.

“There is so much happening in the field of maternity care and it affects families and women who are expecting babies today, people who have grandchildren, who are hoping to start a family—practically everyone,” says Ann Grauer, DONA International president. “If I were an expectant parent, I'd want to know that my doula obtained information from the largest and most trusted resource for doulas, DONA International.”

DONA International's five founders, Drs. Marshall Klaus and John Kennell, Phyllis Klaus C.S.W., M.F.C.C., Penny Simkin, PT, and Annie Kennedy, all renowned experts in childbirth and newborns, will be in attendance. They were instrumental in launching the modern doula profession.

Four of the founders will make presentations. Simkin will speak on the backlash against doulas by the medical profession, suggesting ways to prevent or reverse it. Phyllis Klaus will discuss prenatal and perinatal psychology. Marshall Klaus will talk about kangaroo care, an approach developed to care for premature infants that has been found to be beneficial to all newborns. John Kennell will speak about what other societies can show us about childbirth.

- more -

## **DONA International conference/add one**

“DONA International members have a chance to talk with our founders, which is an incredible experience,” says Grauer. “The founders give very freely of their time and believe in doulas 100%.”

Other experts will address such topics as:

- Helping parents prepare for the early postpartum weeks
- Breastfeeding
- Emotional support for women in labor
- Multi-cultural, community-based doula programs
- Creating meaningful rituals
- Enhancing caregiver/patient communication
- Mood disorders
- Obstetric anesthesia
- Childbirth education
- Research on labor, birth and the postpartum period
- Intimate partner violence and pregnancy
- The emotional changes of parenthood
- Epidurals
- Supporting lesbian and bisexual women in childbirth
- And more

Other notable conference happenings include:

- The DONA International Board is expected to present a revised DONA Birth Doula Position Paper, which defines the organization’s position on the evidence-based benefits of having a birth doula, the doula’s proper role and the doula’s responsibilities.
- A reading of the exciting new play: *Birth*.