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Featured Speaker Bios

**Dr. Jennifer Brokaw, MD (Keynote Speaker)**
Dr. Brokaw founded Medical Consult and Advocacy Services in 2008 to meet the needs of many people with serious medical illness and the needs of their loved ones. She is a Board Certified Emergency Physician with 14 years of experience. Since moving back to the San Francisco Bay Area in 2001, she has been an Associate Clinical Instructor of Emergency Medicine at San Francisco General/UCSF and has also been on the staff of CPMC/Davies Emergency Department. As a medical advocate she advises clients about medical decision making, coordinates care with both primary doctors and specialists and provides support and advisement to families of patients in the hospital.

**Dr. Virgilio Gerald H. Evidente, MD**
Director, Movement Disorders Center of Arizona, LLC, University of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines
Neurology, Medical College of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
More than 15 years of experience in diagnosing and treating all types of movement disorders. More than 10 years of experience in deep brain stimulation (DBS), from proper screening of patients, pre-operative preparation, intra-operative brain mapping, and post-operative stimulator programming. Fellowship-trained in the field of movement disorders, deep brain stimulation, and botulinum toxin administration. Frequent speaker and lecturer in various educational venues including the American Academy of Neurology Annual and Fall Conferences. Extensive experience and expertise in the administration of all types of botulinum toxin in the market (Botox®, Dysport®, Xeomin®, and Myobloc®). Historically involved in over 70 research studies since 1996. Over 80 peer-reviewed publications as of early 2012.

**Barbara Karnes, RN**
Award Winning End of Life Educator and Award Winning Nurse
Barbara Karnes is a Registered Nurse and author who noticed, after her experience at the bedside of hundreds of people before they died, that each death she witnessed was following an almost identical script. Each person was going through the stages of death in almost the same manner and most families had the same questions. It was after these realizations that Barbara sat down and wrote the widely popular Gone From My Sight, that changed the industry. Barbara has been instrumental in creating one of the most important tools in the Hospice movement today: The patient/family educational booklet. Since 1994, Barbara has traveled across the country continuously providing workshops and giving lectures.

**Dr. Connie Mariano, MD**
Dr. Connie Mariano was born in Sangley Point, Philippines, the eldest daughter of a career Navy enlisted serviceman and his wife, a dentist. Dr. Mariano graduated as Valedictorian from Mar Vista High School in Imperial Beach, California, in 1973. She received her Bachelor’s Degree with honors from Revelle College at the University of California at San Diego in 1977. In 1981, Dr. Mariano received her Medical Degree from the Uniformed Services University School of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland, the nation’s military medical school. She was commissioned as Lieutenant in the United States Navy upon graduation. Completing 24 years of active duty service, Dr. Mariano retired from the Navy in June, 2001 with the rank of Rear Admiral. She became the first Filipino American in history to become a Navy Admiral on July 1, 2000.

**Dr. Lorree Ratto, Ph.D., FT**
Associate Professor
Chair, Medical Humanities and Healthcare Leadership
Director, Medical Simulation and Standardized Patients
A. T. Still University – School of Medicine in Arizona
Lorree Ratto, PhD, FT, serves as Chair of Medical Humanities and Healthcare Leadership and is Director of Medical Simulation and Standardized Patients at SOMA. She joined the inaugural faculty in 2007 after spending 10 years working in hospice as a counselor. She teaches communication and behavioral sciences with an emphasis on teaching medical students to practice patient-centered compassionate care through the practice of narrative medicine. Dr. Ratto’s research interests include studying death anxiety among medical students and studying the effects of practicing mindfulness in mitigating stress related to medical education and residency.

**Cameron Svendsen, LCSW**
Palliative Care Alliance, VP of Operations
Cameron Svendsen is a licensed clinical social worker and has 25 years of invested service in the health care industry. In several business and educational development roles over the past decade, Cameron has promoted palliative care during the changing national perception toward how we care for chronic and seriously ill patients. With the ultimate objective of filling the gap in the medical system, PCA provides palliative care for patients living with a chronic or serious illness but who aren’t yet ready or eligible for hospice or home health. Cameron is an avid public speaker and promoter of several health care industry topics and dedicated to the significant expansion of the Palliative Care Alliance endeavor for communities and health care silos across the country.