

Contact: Aimee Webster
(312) 988-1178
awebster@dbsalliance.org
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Website Connects Patients with Advancements in Mental Health Research

(CHICAGO, IL, May 2, 2012)—WeSearchTogether, a partnership between the University of Michigan Depression Center and the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA), announces the launch of a website devoted to connecting mental health researchers and participants: www.WeSearchTogether.org.

More than 21 million Americans live with depression or bipolar disorder, yet many of these individuals receive less than effective care. Research seeks to address this issue by answering fundamental questions about early detection, treatment, and prevention of mood disorders. Research and the participants involved are essential to increased knowledge of mood disorders, but researchers often experience barriers in engaging adequate numbers of participants in mood disorder research studies, causing many studies to experience delays in finding breakthroughs.

“The pace of research is being slowed down by a lack of research participants. WeSearchTogether.org will help foster communication, trust, and bridge the gap between potential participants – many of whom have legitimate questions about their involvement – and researchers. By working together, we *will* improve lives,” explained John Greden, M.D., Founding Chair of the National Network of Depression Centers (NNDC) and Executive Director of the University of Michigan Depression Center (UMDC).

WeSearchTogether.org has created a unique forum for communication between patients and highlights the latest clinical trials and research advancements within the mental health field. The website provides detailed information on mental health clinical trial participation, allows people to browse study listings, gives testimonials from study participants and researchers, and matches people with specific research participation opportunities.

“We at DBSA are proud to partner with the University of Michigan Depression Center in a groundbreaking research effort that relies on the shared commitment and wisdom of both individuals living with mood disorders and the researchers who play a critical role in supporting our recovery. WeSearchTogether lays the groundwork to promote meaningful research, responsive to the needs and concerns of people living with mood disorders, on a national level,” said DBSA President Allen Doederlein.

WeSearchTogether.org is furthering the partnership’s mission of bringing communities and researchers together to connect individuals with depression and bipolar disorder research participation opportunities.

###

*Established in 2001, the **University of Michigan Depression Center (UMDC)** is the first center of its kind devoted entirely to bringing depression into the mainstream of medical research, care, education and public policy. It is at the forefront in changing the paradigm of how depression is understood and treated. The mission of the University of Michigan Depression Center is to detect*

depression and bipolar disorders earlier, treat more effectively, prevent recurrences and progression, counteract stigma, and improve public policy.

For more information, please visit www.DepressionCenter.org or call 1-800-475-MICH (6424).

*The **Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)** is the leading patient-directed national organization focusing on depression and bipolar disorder. The organization fosters an environment of understanding about the impact and management of these life-threatening illnesses by providing up-to-date, scientifically-based tools and information. DBSA supports research to promote more timely diagnosis, develop more effective and tolerable treatments and discover a cure. The organization works to ensure that people living with mood disorders are treated equitably. Assisted by a scientific advisory board comprised of the leading researchers and clinicians in the field of mood disorders, DBSA has more than 1,000 peer-run support groups across the country. Nearly five million people request and receive information and assistance each year. DBSA's mission is to improve the lives of people living with mood disorders.*

For more information, please visit www.DBSAAlliance.org or call (800) 826-3632.

*To help direct the focus of WeSearchTogether, the University of Michigan Depression Center and DBSA established a diverse, multidisciplinary Consumer-Researcher **Steering Council** to ensure equal representation and commitment by consumers and researchers in the project. The Council is currently made up of 4 people living with a mood disorder and 3 mental health researchers. This Council facilitates discussions and planning of future directions of depression research.*