



The Raw Beauty Project NYC Teams Up with the Reeve Foundation to Host a Groundbreaking Photography Exhibit

To challenge the definition of beauty, The Raw Beauty Project NYC will unveil photos of twenty women living with physical disabilities

New York, NY, (September 20, 2014)— To ignite a global conversation and transform stereotypes, The Raw Beauty Project NYC has partnered with the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation to showcase an exhibit of photographs featuring twenty women living with various types of disabilities. Proving there is no singular definition of beauty, the photographs will be unveiled at ACA Galleries on September 20, 2014, with proceeds from the event benefitting the Reeve Foundation.

Often, women living with disabilities are depicted as victims or defined by their injury or condition. The Raw Beauty Project NYC aims to redefine beauty by challenging stereotypes, celebrating courageous stories and breaking down barriers for the millions of women living with physical and sensory challenges. The twenty women—whose disabilities range from spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, spina bifida, to cerebral palsy—posed for renowned photographers for the upcoming exhibit.

One of the models, Wendy Crawford, was part of the original Raw Beauty Miami exhibit in 2006. When Crawford, a former fashion model, was 19-years-old, she was in a car accident that resulted in a spinal cord injury. Since her injury, Crawford has been outspoken on the need to evolve the definition of beauty, which has become limiting and unattainable for women living with disabilities.

“There are millions of women living with and without disabilities who battle society’s perception of what is beautiful on a daily basis”, said Crawford, who is also the founder of mobilewomen.org an online resource and blog for women with physical disabilities. “It is the goal of Raw Beauty to prove there are no limits on beauty or capabilities. We are showing through the photographs and the women’s stories that it is possible to move past obstacles and embrace life! The Raw Beauty Project is a celebration of all women. Those who will be attending the exhibit, will be moved, touched and inspired to do the same in their own lives.

Beyond Crawford, models include well-known disability advocates such as Angela Rockwood and Danielle Sheypuk. To capture the photographs, The Raw Beauty Project enlisted photographers whose resumes include *Vanity Fair*, *Allure*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Glamour*, *GQ*, *Nylon Magazine*, as well as work with Mercedes, Tommy Hilfiger, Club Monaco, Target, Old Navy and Tresemme. Interestingly enough,

one of the photographers, Walter Chin, photographed Wendy Crawford as a young model prior to the accident.

“When Wendy asked me to join The Raw Beauty Project, I realized that this was a chance to shift perceptions and ignite a dialog on the importance of supporting and celebrating women living with disabilities,” said Chin. “We have let these stereotypes persist for too long and the only way to break the cycle is to show the beauty and bravery of women with disabilities. To me, this campaign is telling twenty stories of inspiration through the lens of a camera to encourage millions of women worldwide to join the Raw Beauty movement.”

To drum up excitement for the campaign and photography exhibit, The Raw Beauty Project NYC also launched a 30-day social media challenge asking supporters to post photos of people who embody the spirit of Raw Beauty and tag #RawBeautyNYC to help fuel the cause.

For additional event details and information on the models and photographers, visit www.rawbeautynyc.com.

About The Raw Beauty Project XXX

About the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

The Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation is dedicated to curing spinal cord injury by funding innovative research and improving the quality of life for people living with paralysis through grants, information and advocacy. We meet all 20 of the Better Business Bureau’s standards for charity accountability and hold the BBB’s Charity Seal. For more information, please visit our website at www.ChristopherReeve.org or call 800-225-0292.

###

Media Contact:

Rebecca Laming
(973) 379-2690 ext. 7115
rlaming@christopherreeve.org