



**For Immediate Release**

Contacts:  
Joseph O'Brien, President  
National Scoliosis Foundation  
(781) 341-6333

Patty Lavelle, Publicist  
Five Star Publications  
(402) 523-6403

## **Author Elizabeth Golden and Dancer Sarah Patellos to Serve as National Spokespersons for the National Scoliosis Foundation**

### **Teenage girls will kick off National Scoliosis Awareness Month in June 2008**

**Stoughton, MA (January, 2008)**—Yale University student Elizabeth Golden, who survived scoliosis surgery to become a nationally-ranked squash player, will serve as one of two spokespersons for the National Scoliosis Foundation. The other spokesperson, Sarah Patellos, a junior in high school, is back to competitive dancing after recovering from her scoliosis surgery this past summer.

Elizabeth Golden, 18, author of *When Life Throws You a Curve: One Girl's Triumph Over Scoliosis* (Five Star Publications, June, 2008), will speak to audiences about her experience at age 13 with scoliosis through diagnosis, spinal surgery, and recovery.

"When I was going through the pain of an operation and the fear of not knowing how it all would turn out, I relied on the support of my family and friends as well as the stories of other people who had been through it," Golden said. "Through this book and through speaking for the NSF, I hope to give other girls confidence in knowing that having scoliosis is not the end of the world, and can, in fact, make you a stronger and more confident person."

Sarah Patellos, 16, is featured in an upcoming video by the National Scoliosis Foundation to be released nationally in schools for viewing along with scoliosis screening programs. Sarah said, "The early detection and treatment of scoliosis is so important. I am excited to be giving help and hope to patients and their families through the video, speaking, and raising funds for research."

"We are thrilled to have Elizabeth and Sarah as our Teen Spokespersons and to kick off National Scoliosis Awareness Month in June," said NSF President and CEO Joseph O'Brien. "It is of tremendous value for patients and their families to hear from their peers that you can go on living with scoliosis. Elizabeth and Sarah didn't let the diagnosis stop them from pursuing their dreams and they give hope and reassurance to the thousands of young people facing an unknown road."

Scoliosis, or curvature of the spine, affects 2-3% of the population, an estimated 6 million people in the United States, and there is no cure. Scoliosis impacts infants, adolescents, and adults worldwide. The primary age of onset is 10-15 years old, occurring equally among both genders. However, girls are eight times more likely to progress to a curve magnitude that requires treatment. Scoliosis can impact the quality of life with limited activity, pain and reduced respiratory function. However, early detection and treatment can often stop progression and minimize the effects.

#### **About Elizabeth Golden**

Elizabeth Golden of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was diagnosed with scoliosis at age 13, in the seventh grade. After surgery to correct curvatures in her spine, she was able to play varsity tennis and squash in high school, and went on to become a nationally-ranked squash player. She is currently a student at Yale University in New Haven, CT, where she is still active in those and other sports. For more information on her book, please visit [www.WhenLifeThrowsYouACurve.com](http://www.WhenLifeThrowsYouACurve.com).

#### **About Sarah Patellos**

Sarah Patellos of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, began wearing a Boston brace for idiopathic scoliosis in fourth grade. A "model brace wearer" for six years, she was involved with Boston brace international as a patient model for their trainings and print material. A worsening curve led to spinal fusion surgery in July 2007. She is now fully recovered, and returned to dance in a competition with her team. Sarah is a junior in high school.

#### **About the National Scoliosis Foundation**

The National Scoliosis Foundation (NSF) is a patient-led nonprofit organization helping children, parents, adults, and health-care providers to understand the complexities of spinal deformities such as scoliosis. Since 1976, NSF has provided Help & Hope to patients and their families and is focused on finding the cause, prevention, and cure of scoliosis. NSF promotes public awareness, provides reliable information, fosters ongoing research in the field, and nurtures the community of those affected by scoliosis. For more information, please visit [www.scoliosis.org](http://www.scoliosis.org).