



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 4, 2015

**Thousands to raise awareness of rare brain tumor
ANAwareness Week set for May 10-16**

ATLANTA, Ga. – Thousands in the U.S. will take part in a national campaign to raise awareness of a rare brain tumor called an acoustic neuroma during **ANAwareness Week** May 10-16. There is relatively little information available to the general public on this benign, slow-growing tumor of the hearing and balance nerves. Leading the charge is the Acoustic Neuroma Association (ANA) that will host the third annual ANAwareness Week, a national campaign to make the public aware of the symptoms and treatment options and highlight the importance of early detection of acoustic neuromas.

While acoustic neuroma is rare, ANA's Medical Advisory Board reports that occurrence is nearly two in every 100,000 people and 2,500 to 3,000 are diagnosed annually in the U.S. The early symptoms include a reduction in hearing in the tumor ear, ringing in the ear, a feeling of fullness in the affected ear, balance issues and headaches. These early symptoms are sometimes mistaken for normal changes of aging or attributed to noise exposure earlier in life and therefore the diagnosis is often delayed.

That is why awareness campaigns such as ANAwareness Week are so important.

Chief Executive Officer of ANA Judy Vitucci says, "One of the biggest demands we face is that people simply have never heard of acoustic neuroma and are frightened by the possibility of a brain tumor. We strongly believe in public education, providing local and national support for patients and helping patients thrive in spite of their acoustic neuroma."

Recent medical publications suggest that the occurrence of acoustic neuromas is rising because of advances in magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). MRI with contrast is the preferred diagnostic test for identifying acoustic neuromas. Treatment options include observation of tumor, radiation and surgical removal. Determining the best treatment option depends on many factors such as the size of the tumor, the location of it, the patient's age and physical health. ANA strongly urges patients to get several medical opinions from physicians with substantial acoustic neuroma experience before deciding on a treatment option.

There is no known cause of acoustic neuroma; however, research is now underway with *The Yale University Acoustic Neuroma Study*, the first of its kind causation study to determine if there are genetic risk factors that lead to an acoustic neuroma.

ANAwareness Week is a national effort hosted by ANA during Brain Tumor Awareness Month each May. Supporters and sponsors raise awareness of the condition and funds to expand programs and

services by participating in races, runs, letter-writing campaigns, social media campaigns and more. “This type of large-scale effort is not possible without the support of the acoustic neuroma community and sponsorships by Accuray Incorporated, The Facial Paralysis Institute, House Clinic, Jackie Diels Facial Retraining, Johns Hopkins Medicine, Keck School of Medicine of University of Southern California, Miles & Stockbridge Foundation Inc., Mayo Clinic, Oticon Medical, Vanderbilt Skull Base Center and Weill Cornell Brain and Spine Center,” says Alan Goldberg, ANA President.

Located in metro Atlanta, ANA is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 representing 5,000 acoustic neuroma patients, caregivers, family members and medical professionals worldwide and providing information regarding all treatment types. For more information about acoustic neuromas and ANAwareness Week, visit www.ANAUSA.org.

###

MEDIA CONTACT: Judy B. Vitucci, Acoustic Neuroma Association, 877-200-8211, info@ANAUSA.org