



## Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

**Contact:** Maria Heim, DBSA  
312/988-1160  
[mheim@dbsalliance.org](mailto:mheim@dbsalliance.org)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ##

### **GENERAL HOSPITAL ACTOR MAURICE BENARD PARTNERS WITH THE DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR SUPPORT ALLIANCE**

*DBSA aims to raise awareness of bipolar disorder with public service announcement*

**(CHICAGO- July 24, 2006)** – Popular *General Hospital* actor Maurice Benard, who plays moody mobster Sonny Corinthos on the hit ABC daytime drama, recorded a public service announcement (PSA) on behalf of the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA). The PSA ran at the close of Monday's program, resulting in a barrage of phone inquiries from viewers to the national non-profit organization.

Benard is a passionate advocate for mood disorders, having been diagnosed with bipolar disorder at the age of 22. Benard has enjoyed a long career as an actor on daytime dramas, as well as appearing on stage and in films despite his condition.

In an example of art mirroring life, Benard's *General Hospital* character, Sonny, was demonstrating symptoms of bipolar disorder with reckless spending, delusional thinking and other tell-tale signs of the disorder. The episode culminated with a doctor on the program diagnosing Sonny with bipolar disorder.

In the PSA, Benard directs viewers to DBSA's website, [www.DBSAAlliance.org](http://www.DBSAAlliance.org), or to call 1-800-826-3632 to learn about depression and bipolar disorder.

"Maurice's bravery and desire to educate the public, paired with DBSA's mission to improve the lives of people living with mood disorders is a partnership that we hope will lead many thousands more people get the help, hope and support they need," DBSA President Sue Bergeson said.

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*The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) is the nation's leading patient-directed organization focusing on depression and bipolar disorder. The organization, which has more than 1,000 support groups nationwide, fosters an understanding about the impact and management of these life-threatening illnesses by providing up-to-date, scientifically-based tools and information. Assisted by a 65-member scientific advisory board, comprised of the leading researchers and clinicians in the field of mood disorders, DBSA supports research to promote more timely diagnosis, develop more effective and tolerable treatments and discover a cure. More than 4 million receive information and assistance each year. For more information, please visit [www.DBSAAlliance.org](http://www.DBSAAlliance.org) or call 800/826-3632.*