

New Volunteers Selected to Lead American Cancer Society

Richard C. Wender is First Primary Care Physician to be Elected President

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The American Cancer Society, the largest voluntary health organization in the United States, elected 11 new officers to its volunteer 2006-2007 National Board of Directors during its annual meeting this week in New York, N.Y., including the first-ever primary care physician to serve as president. The National Assembly and the National Board of Directors are the Society's governing bodies and have been comprised of locally elected volunteers since the organization's inception in 1913.

Leading the Society and the Board will be the newly elected President Richard C. Wender, M.D., of Philadelphia, Pa., and Chair Anna Johnson-Winegar, Ph.D., of Middletown, Md. Respectively. Other officers elected were Elmer E. Huerta, M.D., M.P.H., of Washington, D.C., president-elect; Marion E. Morra, M.A., Sc.D., of Milford, Conn., chair-elect; G. Van Velsor Wolf Jr., J.D. of Phoenix, Ariz., vice chair; Nancy Brakensiek, CPA, of Albuquerque, N.M., treasurer; George W. P. Atkins of Atlanta, Ga., secretary; Elizabeth "Terry" T. H. Fontham, M.P.H., Dr.P.H., of New Orleans, La., first vice president; Alan G. Thorson, M.D., FACS, of Omaha, Neb., second vice president; Carolyn D. Runowicz, M.D., of Avon, Conn., immediate past president; and Sally West Brooks, R.N., M.A. of Palm Springs, Calif., immediate past chair.

"The American Cancer Society's history of progress in the fight against cancer is unmatched, and its pursuit of its mission to eliminate cancer as a major health issue is as aggressive today as it has ever been," said Dr. Wender, the Society's new president. "It is a great honor and privilege to lead an organization that is making a significant difference in the lives of millions of Americans touched by cancer, and working to ensure that fewer of them will ever hear the words 'You have cancer.'"

Dr. Wender, a practicing family physician, is alumni professor and chair of the department of family and community medicine at Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University and Hospital in Philadelphia. He served as chair of the Society's Incidence and Mortality Committee for the past two years. He is a member of the editorial advisory boards for the Society's journal *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians* and *Patient Care*.

In addition to being a practicing family doctor, Dr. Wender's major area of academic focus is cancer prevention and screening. Working with the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC), he helped to develop "A Call to Action," a national training program for clinicians about colorectal cancer prevention and screening. He has also served as a co-investigator of a National Cancer Institute-funded study of tailored interventions to increase colorectal cancer screening.

Dr. Wender began his volunteer work with the Society in the early 1980s. He is a past recipient of both the Society's St. George Medal and the National Divisional Award. He was previously the president of the Society's Philadelphia Division, the first president of the Pennsylvania Division, and an at-large member of the Society's National Board of Directors.

Dr. Wender succeeds Carolyn D. Runowicz, M.D., who will now serve as immediate past president. Dr. Runowicz is the director of the Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Connecticut Health Center in Farmington, Conn.

Anna Johnson-Winegar, Ph.D., is the new chair of the National Board of Directors. A Society volunteer for almost 30 years, Dr. Johnson-Winegar previously served as secretary, treasurer, vice chair, and chair-elect of the Society's National Board of Directors. She is also a past president of

both the Society's Maryland and Mid-Atlantic Divisions. She received the Society's St. George Medal for her work in the Maryland Division.

Prior to her retirement from government service in 2003, Dr. Johnson- Winegar was deputy assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Defense, where she was responsible for oversight, coordination and integration of the chemical/biological defense, counter-proliferation support, chemical demilitarization and assembled chemical weapons assessment programs. In 1998, she received the lifetime achievement award from Women in Science and Engineering.

Upon retirement from civil service, she received several awards, including the Department of Defense Superior Service Award and the Gold Medal from the National Defense Industrial Association.

In 2006, she received the Distinguished Alumna Award from Hood College, her alma mater. She currently does consulting work for government, academia and industrial clients.

Dr. Johnson-Winegar replaces Sally West Brooks, R.N., M.A., of Palm Springs, Calif., who remains on the board as immediate past chair. A 30-year Society volunteer at the local, state and national levels, Brooks is the founding president, an honorary life member, and an active volunteer with her local Society Unit.

Elmer E. Huerta, M.D., M.P.H., president-elect and longtime Society volunteer, is founder and director of the Cancer Preventorium at the Washington Cancer Institute at the Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C. In addition to his clinical duties, Dr. Huerta devotes a large portion of his time to research and educational work with the Hispanic/Latino community. He is also the producer of Cuidando su Salud (Taking Care of Your Health), the only nationally syndicated Spanish-language radio show produced by a Latino physician that promotes health and disease prevention.

Marion E. Morra, M.A., Sc.D., chair-elect, is co-principal investigator of the Cancer Information Service Research Consortium (CISRC) and associate clinical professor at the Yale School of Nursing. She is founder and president of Morra Communications, a medical and health communications consulting firm. Dr. Morra is the co-author of four best-selling cancer patient self-help books and an internationally recognized expert in cancer control and health communications.

G. Van Velsor Wolf Jr., J.D., vice chair and a 20-year Society volunteer, just completed two years as National Treasurer. He is the senior environmental attorney at the Phoenix office of Snell & Wilmer, a western multi-state general practice law firm. Dr. Wolf has served as president of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network(SM) (ACS CAN) Board of Directors, chairman of the Society's Arizona and Southwest Divisions and on numerous national committees.

Nancy Brakensiek, CPA, treasurer, has been a Society volunteer for more than 20 years. A retired certified public accountant with extensive nonprofit experience in a volunteer and consultant capacity, Brakensiek has served in different capacities as a member of the Society's California Division Board of Directors.

George W. P. Atkins, who will serve his second term as secretary, has been a Society volunteer since 1973 and serves on many national and Division committees. After a 33-year career in the banking industry, Atkins retired from Wachovia Bank, where his last position was as an executive vice president in the trust department. Atkins serves on the board of directors and co-chairs the governance committee for the Society's South Atlantic Division. He also served as chairman of the board, secretary and treasurer in the Society's former Southeast Division (serving Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina).

Elizabeth "Terry" T. H. Fontham, M.P.H., Dr.P.H., first vice president, is the first dean of Louisiana State University, School of Public Health, and a professor of epidemiology and pathology at the Louisiana State University School of Medicine. She has made significant contributions in

establishing the risk of lung cancer associated with involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke.

Alan G. Thorson, M.D., FACS, second vice president, is a clinical associate professor of surgery at both Creighton University and the University of Nebraska. He is the immediate past president of the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, and immediate past chair of the Society's Heartland Division and Health Promotions Advisory Group. Dr. Thorson is also the president of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network(SM), ACS CAN, the Society's sister organization for advocacy, and a member of the Colorectal Cancer Advisory Group.

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. Founded in 1913 and with national headquarters in Atlanta, the Society has 13 regional Divisions and local offices in 3,400 communities, involving millions of volunteers across the United States. For more information anytime, call toll free 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.

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