

American Cancer Society Receives Walmart Foundation Grant to Increase Access to Breast and Colon Cancer Screenings in Underserved Communities

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ATLANTA, July 25, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The American Cancer Society is the recipient of a two-million dollar grant from The Walmart Foundation to set up community health advisors in select underserved communities. The grant will provide \$300,000 each to increase access to breast cancer screening for African American women in three communities – Jackson, Miss. (Hinds and Madison Counties); Minneapolis, Minn.; and Portsmouth, Va. In addition, 30 communities* across the country will each benefit from \$30,000 grants to support existing community health advisor programs for breast and colon cancer screening.

According to the American Cancer Society, more than half of cancer deaths could be prevented if more emphasis were placed on early detection and healthier lifestyles, including maintaining a healthy weight through diet and exercise, avoiding tobacco, and getting recommended cancer screening tests.

"We are grateful to the Walmart Foundation for its collaboration with the Society, and for this commitment of additional resources to help us deliver on our lifesaving mission within these communities," said Terry Music, chief mission delivery officer, American Cancer Society. "The Walmart Foundation's community-based investment will help the Society make a positive impact in these communities by providing resources and information to help people stay well."

According to the American Cancer Society's Cancer Facts and Figures (2011), disparities predominantly arise from inequities in work, wealth, income, education, housing, and overall standard of living, as well as social barriers to high-quality cancer prevention, early detection and treatment services. Additionally, persons with lower socioeconomic status are more likely to engage in behaviors that increase cancer risk such as tobacco use, physical inactivity, and poor diet due to environmental or community barriers to opportunities for physical activity and access to fruits and vegetables.

The American Cancer Society has implemented programs across the country to help reduce cancer disparities, including community based initiatives such as the Patient Navigator Program, which helps patients and families through the complex medical system. Since 1999, the Society has funded 117 studies totaling \$99 million devoted to the poor and medically underserved, and the Society's intramural research department focuses resources on community-based interventions and disparities research.

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end suffering from cancer. As a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping people stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early; by helping people get well by being there for them during and after a cancer diagnosis; by finding cures through investment in groundbreaking discovery; and by fighting back by rallying lawmakers to pass laws to defeat cancer and by rallying communities worldwide to join the fight. As the nation's largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing more than \$3.5 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, more than 11 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

*The 30 recipient communities (\$30,000 each) are: Pine Bluff, Ark.; Tucson, Ariz.; Eight Counties in California (Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Kern, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Cruz, and Monterey); Miami, Fla.; Orlando, Fla. (two grants); Tallahassee, Fla.; Tampa, Fla.; Savannah, Ga.; Chicago, Ill.; Eastern Kentucky; Detroit, Mich.; Tribal Communities in Michigan; Camden, N.J.; Newark, N.J.; Cortland, N.Y.; New York City, N.Y.; Charlotte, N.C.; Greenville, N.C.; Winston-Salem, N.C.; Cleveland, Ohio; Harrisburg, Pa.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Charleston, S.C.; Columbia, S.C.; Greenville, S.C.; Houston, Texas; Houston, Texas (Montgomery County); Richmond, Va.; and Seattle, Wash.

SOURCE American Cancer Society
