

Anthem Foundation, American Cancer Society Reach Underserved Communities Through the Power of Partnership

ATLANTA, May 2, 2017 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Grants from the Anthem Foundation to the American Cancer Society's CHANGE Grant program have had a positive impact on underserved communities across the country. Through \$1.5 million in grant funding from the Anthem Foundation beginning in 2013, the American Cancer Society partnered with 19 health centers to address the unequal burden of breast cancer, providing education on the importance of early detection and screening in underserved communities.

The fight against cancer requires that we harness the power of partnership. Our strategic partners provide funding that is essential to the ability to provide culturally relevant programs and resources, and our community partners are key in reaching populations who need us most.

Consider the cancer burden among African Americans. Although the overall racial disparity in cancer death rates is decreasing, in 2012, the death rate for all cancers combined was 24 percent higher in black men and 14 percent higher in black women than in white men and women, respectively. Despite similar breast cancer incidence rates, death rates among black women are 42 percent higher than white women. This disparity persists despite similar mammography rates among black and white women.

"No objective has been more difficult to realize in health care than the goal of health equity. We face many barriers and the solutions aren't simple, but we owe it to the most vulnerable among us to do everything we can to achieve this goal," said Dr. Richard Wender, chief cancer control officer for the American Cancer Society. "Solving the problem starts with recognizing and embracing the challenge. We must engage with members of minority groups to create a culture of health within communities. When it comes to health, ZIP code is more important than genetic code. The only way to truly create a culture of health is through sustained, multi-sector community engagement."

The American Cancer Society is committed to addressing the unequal burden of cancer by reaching individuals in underserved communities in collaboration with community partners like Anthem Foundation. Together, the organizations strive to promote health equity and ensure equal access to cancer education and screenings for all individuals.

Since 2011, the American Cancer Society has awarded 524 CHANGE (Community Health Advocates implementing Nationwide Grants for Empowerment and Equity) grants equaling \$23.7 million to community health system partners to reach communities experiencing a higher burden of cancer by providing outreach, education, screening navigation, and access to no- or low-cost cancer screening exams. Through the grant-funded work, grant recipients have collectively provided more than 2.4 million outreach and education interventions, and contributed to more than 795,000 breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screenings provided at low or no cost.

Thanks to the generous funding of the Anthem Foundation, the American Cancer Society expanded its efforts to address the unequal burden of cancer by reaching individuals in underserved communities.

SOURCE American Cancer Society

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