American Cancer Society to Present Highest Honor to Katie Couric, Alice T. and William H. Goodwin Jr., Mary-Claire King and Patrick O. Brown for Outstanding Contributions to Cancer Fight

Society's Medal of Honor, Founded in 1949, to Be Awarded Tonight

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The American Cancer Society will present its highest honor, the Medal of Honor, to five Americans who have made outstanding contributions to the fight against cancer. This year's winners, who will receive their awards at the American Cancer Society's annual meeting in New York City, are: Katie Couric, Medal of Honor for Cancer Control; Alice T. and William H. Goodwin Jr., Medal of Honor for Cancer Philanthropy; Mary- Claire King, Ph.D., Medal of Honor for Clinical Research; and Patrick O. Brown, M.D., Ph.D., Medal of Honor for Basic Research. The Medal of Honor, originally called the American Cancer Society Award, was first given in 1949.

Katie Couric, anchor and managing editor of CBS Evening News with Katie Couric, will receive the Society's Medal of Honor for Cancer Control. She is being honored for her exemplary leadership role in raising public awareness of colorectal cancer, for her support of cancer research, for personally demonstrating the importance of early detection testing for colorectal cancer and for boosting nationwide screening rates by undergoing a colonoscopy on the Today Show in 2000. Couric's on-air demonstration of a safe colonoscopy procedure yielded a 20-percent increase in the number of colonoscopies performed across the United States and earned her the George Foster Peabody Award.

After losing her husband, Jay Monahan, to colorectal cancer in 1998, Couric embraced the fight against the third leading cause of cancer death in both men and women in the United States. In March 2002, she launched the National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance in association with the Entertainment Industry Foundation and Lilly Tartikoff to fund new medical research in colorectal cancer and educational programs encouraging prevention and early detection of the disease through proper screening.

Couric was also instrumental in establishing the Jay Monahan Center for Gastrointestinal Health at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell in March 2004, dedicated to the memory of her late husband. The Monahan Center provides a comprehensive, fully integrated multi-disciplinary program that stresses education and prevention in addition to diagnosis and treatment of gastrointestinal cancers.

Alice T. and William H. Goodwin Jr. will receive the Society's Medal of Honor for Cancer Philanthropy for their donations to cancer research and higher education. In 2002, the Goodwins created the Commonwealth Foundation for Cancer Research and have pledged $88.5 million to six cancer centers throughout the country through this foundation. The following cancer centers are recipients of donations valued in the millions of dollars from the Commonwealth Foundation for Cancer Research: the Virginia Commonwealth Health System's Massey Cancer Center; Memorial-Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York, N.Y.; John Hopkins University's Oncology Center in Baltimore, Md.; University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas; the Mayo Clinic Cancer Center in Rochester, Minn.; and the Cancer Center in Charlottesville, Va.

The Goodwins have also contributed approximately $80 million to support research that helped lead to the development of Gleevec, a groundbreaking drug used to treat chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) and gastrointestinal stromal tumors (GIST). They are generous donors to the American Cancer Society, where William currently serves as a key leader in the South Atlantic Division's Patient Resource Navigation system capital campaign. Their philanthropic efforts also extend outside of cancer research. They have donated millions of dollars to the Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Engineering Foundation, Darden Graduate School of Business Administration at the University of Virginia, and the University of Virginia.

According to Business Week, the Goodwins have donated 60 percent of their wealth to cancer research and education. The Goodwins are also listed on Business Week's 2005 Most Generous Philanthropists list.

William H. Goodwin Jr. is the founder and current chairman of the board of CCA Industries Inc., a diversified holding company with assets in various investments and real estate holdings, including The Jefferson Hotel in Richmond, Va., and the Sea Pines Resort in Hilton Head Island, S.C.

Mary-Claire King, PhD., will receive the Medal of Honor for Clinical Research. She was recognized for her visionary work in delineating breast cancer genetics and is credited for proving the existence of the first gene for hereditary breast cancer, now known as BRCA1.

Dr. King is an exemplary researcher whose work has changed the face of breast cancer and genetics research. In 1990, she proved that mutations in a single gene, BRCA1, can cause breast cancer in many high-risk families. This groundbreaking work has changed the field of human genetics and saved the lives of thousands of women.

Dr. King has a long history of promoting human rights applications of genetics. Early in her career, she carried out research and taught in Chile, and since 1983, she has provided genetic tests to victims of Argentina's "Dirty War" that have reunited grandparents with their kidnapped grandchildren. King has joined a collaborative effort between Israeli and Palestinian scientists to identify genes that cause deafness in children.

Dr. King is an American Cancer Society Professor in the Department of Medicine (Division of Medical Genetics) and the Department of Genome Sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle, and an affiliate member of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Patrick O. Brown, M.D., Ph.D. will receive the Medal of Honor for Basic Research. The award acknowledges his revolutionary development of low-cost, accessible automated microarrays, and his life-saving contributions to the field of functional genomics.

Dr. Brown is chiefly known for helping to revolutionize biology by making automatic microarray analysis technology easily accessible. This technology can be used to analyze thousands of genes at once and assess changes in gene expression that differentiate a normal cell from its cancerous counterpart.

Dr. Brown's most important contribution was developing the basic experimental and computational methods for studying global gene expression patterns. His development of the DNA chip has allowed scientists easy and inexpensive access to assessing changes in gene expression, which in turn has produced insights into critical genetic information for diseases such as leukemia, lymphoma, prostate cancer, and early stage breast cancer.

Dr. Brown is a biochemistry professor at Stanford University and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator. In 2001, Time magazine selected him as one of "America's Best in Science and Medicine" in the field of genomics.

Medal of Honor recipients for 2006 are chosen by the American Cancer Society's National Awards Committee, which is chaired by the immediate past president of the Society, Stephen F. Sener, M.D. Past honorees include George N. Papanicolaou, M.D., inventor of the Pap test; Robert C. Gallo, M.D., recognized for his achievements in pioneering the field of human retrovirology; Judah Folkman, M.D., a leading researcher in the field of anti-angiogenesis; C. Everett Koop, M.D., former U.S. Surgeon General; former U.S. President George H.W. Bush and former First Lady Barbara Bush; advice authors Ann Landers and Abigail Van Buren; Benno Schmidt Sr., former chairman of the board of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center; and Dennis Slamon, M.D., director of the Revlon/UCLA Women's Cancer Research Program at UCLA's Jonsson Cancer Center, who contributed to the development of the drug Herceptin(R) (trastuzumab), a therapy that treats an aggressive form of breast cancer by targeting the HER2 protein.

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.

Note to Editors: Electronic photos available upon request

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