American Cancer Society to Present Highest Honor to Matthew L. Myers, Douglas R. Lowy, and Mark Schiffman for Outstanding Contributions to Cancer Fight

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

The American Cancer Society -- the nation's leading voluntary health organization -- will present its highest honor, the Medal of Honor, to three Americans who have made outstanding contributions to the fight against cancer. This year's winners, who will receive their awards at a ceremony during the American Cancer Society's annual meeting in Atlanta are: Matthew L. Myers for Cancer Control; Douglas R. Lowy, M.D., for Basic Research; and Mark Schiffman, M.D., M.P.H., for Clinical Research. The Medal of Honor, originally called the American Cancer Society Award, was first given in 1949.

Matthew L. Myers, president and chief executive officer of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, will receive the Society's Medal of Honor for Cancer Control. He is being honored for his relentless work to eliminate tobacco use among children. By changing public attitudes and public policies on tobacco, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, which is a leader in the fight to reduce tobacco use in the US and around the globe, strives to prevent kids from smoking, help smokers quit and protect everyone from secondhand smoke. The Campaign also acts as a counter force to the tobacco industry and its special interests.

Mr. Myers has spent the past 25 years participating in nearly every major tobacco-related legislative effort in the United States. In 1997, Mr. Myers participated in the negotiations with the state attorneys general that led to the historic 1997 settlement with the Liggett Tobacco Company, and later participated in the negotiations between the tobacco industry and the state attorneys general that led to the June 20, 1997 agreement between those parties. He then served as one of the leading spokespersons in the debate that followed in Congress and worked with Senator John McCain on his 1998 comprehensive tobacco legislation. On January 1, 2000, Mr. Myers became the Campaign's President succeeding Bill Novelli. Later that year, Mr. Myers was named by President Clinton to co-chair a Presidential Commission to examine the economic problems being experienced by tobacco farmers and their communities and recommend possible solutions.

His work has been instrumental in the passage of some of our country's toughest laws regarding the use of tobacco. In 2004, Mr. Myers was awarded the Harvard School of Public Health's highest honor, the Julius B. Richmond Award, for his work preventing tobacco marketing to children.

Douglas R. Lowy, M.D., will receive the Society's Medal of Honor for Basic Research. Dr. Lowy is being honored for his critical contributions to basic science and his research leading to the development of the highly effective human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, which was carried out in close collaboration with his NCI colleague, John Schiller. This vaccine has the potential to prevent at least 200,000 deaths from cervical cancer per year.

Dr. Lowy received his M.D. from New York University School of Medicine in 1968. Between 1970 and 1973, he was a Research Associate in the Laboratory of Viral Diseases, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and the National Institutes of Health. He trained in Internal Medicine at Stanford University and Dermatology at Yale University, and started his laboratory at the National Cancer Institute in 1975. He has been Chief of the Laboratory of Cellular Oncology since 1983, has received the Wallace Rowe Award for Virus Research, and has been a member of many scientific advisory boards, grants committees, and editorial boards.

Dr. Lowy, deputy director for the Division of Basic Sciences at the National Cancer Institute, has also done pioneering research on murine retroviruses and ras oncogenes and continues to be a recognized leader in the discussion of global public health issues and the HPV vaccine.

Mark Schiffman, M.D., M.P.H., will receive the Society's Medal of Honor for Clinical Research. Dr. Schiffman is being honored for his tremendous dedication to molecular epidemiology relating to the human papillomavirus. Dr. Schiffman's ambitious natural history and biomarker immunology research studies, combined involving more than 40,000 subjects, have and will help determine the most effective strategies for cervical cancer prevention.

Dr. Schiffman received an M.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.P.H. in epidemiology from The Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health. He joined the National Cancer Institute (NCI) as a staff fellow in 1983, and was appointed chief of the Interdisciplinary Studies Section in the Environmental Epidemiology Branch in 1996. Dr. Schiffman received a Fulbright Scholarship in 1977 to carry out epidemiologic studies in Senegal. He received the PHS Citation, Achievement, Commendation, and Outstanding Service Medals for his work in molecular epidemiology. He currently serves as a senior investigator in the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics at the NCI.

Medal of Honor recipients for 2007 are chosen by the American Cancer Society's National Awards Committee. Past honorees include George N. Papanicolau, M.D., inventor of the Pap test; Robert C. Gallo, M.D., recognized for his achievements in pioneering the field of human retrovirology; Judath Folkman, M.D., a leading researcher in the field of antiangiogenesis; 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 free1-800-ASC-2345 or visit http://www.cancer.org/.

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