American Cancer Society Seeks Volunteers to Help Decide Who Gets Research Grants

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The American Cancer Society is looking for individuals with or without formal science training who have a strong personal interest in the battle against cancer to serve on peer review committees to help decide which researchers should be funded by the organization's research and training grants. These "stakeholders" have often had an intimate experience with the disease, such as having had a family member with cancer, having been a cancer caregiver, or even having had a personal battle with cancer.

"Stakeholders bring a unique perspective to the American Cancer Society's peer review committees," said Elmer E. Huerta, M.D., M.P.H., the Society's national volunteer president. "They bring the passion of personal experience to the process of evaluating the relevance of grant applications to cancer control, and help make sure our stringent research grant review process reflects many points of view."

Stakeholders are recruited from around the U.S. to be trained and assigned to one or more of the approximately 20 peer review committees in the Society's Extramural Grants Division, charged with reviewing grant applications. In addition to stakeholders, each committee includes five to 20 researchers, clinicians, and other experts. Together, their role is to identify the most outstanding applications for funding.

Since its inception in 1946, the American Cancer Society's Research and Training Program has funded about $3.1 billion in cancer research and health professional training. As the largest source of non-federal funding of cancer research in the United States, the Society funds approximately $120 million in grants annually. This program has led to critical progress in cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, and can count 42 Nobel Laureates among those it has funded.

The Society's stakeholders' program ensures that every research proposal submitted is reviewed not only by scientists, but by those directly impacted by cancer research breakthroughs -- even if they have little scientific training. "Stakeholders bring an invaluable perspective to help decide how best to allocate the funds that the Society earmarks for cancer research," said Otis W. Brawley, MD, the Society's national chief medical officer. They play a key role in helping the committee decide which of the more than 1,600 applications submitted for research dollars each year receive funding."

Those interested in becoming stakeholders in the American Cancer Society peer review process can submit nominations to: David P. Ringer, PhD., MPH, Managing Director of Operations, American Cancer Society, National Home Office, 250 Williams Street, Suite 600, Atlanta, GA 30303-1002. Dr. Ringer can be faxed at 404-321-4669 or emailed at david.ringer@cancer.org.

The Stakeholder nomination period ends December 10, 2007.

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 http://www.cancer.org/.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
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