American Cancer Society Expands Efforts to Reduce Burden of Cancer in Underserved Communities

Walgreens and its Customers Enable $6.4 Million Gift to Assist with Community-Based Cancer Education and Screening Programs

ATLANTA, Sept. 17, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The American Cancer Society will provide more people in underserved communities with access to cancer screenings and community-based cancer education thanks to the generosity of Walgreens and its customers. The $6.4 million gift, raised through customers via electronic donations at checkout, will help fund the American Cancer Society's ongoing community-based initiatives aimed at reducing cancer disparities in communities with higher burdens of the disease.

The $6.4 million goes towards the Walgreens Way to Well Commitment® program that helps support the Society's Community Health Advocates implementing Nationwide Grants for Empowerment and Equity (CHANGE) program, which provides grant opportunities to increase breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening rates in communities with a high burden of cancer. Since 2011, CHANGE has implemented 98 projects within underserved communities across the country; educating nearly 300,000 individuals about cancer risk and prevention, and providing nearly 118,000 cancer screenings.

"The American Cancer Society is committed to finishing the fight against cancer in every community," said John R. Seffrin, Ph.D., chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society. "We are grateful to Walgreens for its support of our lifesaving work, especially in communities that carry a disproportionate burden of cancer."

"Walgreens' purpose is to help people get, stay and live well, and our Way to Well Commitment is dedicated to providing resources that aid with the prevention and detection of today's leading diseases," said John Gremer, director of community affairs at Walgreens. "We'd like to thank our customers for their contributions that help us impact countless people across the country."

The Walgreens Way to Well Commitment® program, which focuses on improving everyday health through the prevention and early detection of today's leading diseases, has been a supporter of the Society's CHANGE grant program since 2011, but its overall corporate support of the American Cancer Society spans two decades and has helped raise a total of $23 million to date. In addition to funding the CHANGE program, Walgreens serves as a corporate enrollment site for Cancer Prevention Study 3 (CPS-3), the historic research study that's helping the American Cancer Society discover more ways to prevent cancer and save lives.

According to the American Cancer Society, early detection of cancer, which usually results in less extensive treatment and better outcomes, can also be achieved through screening for some cancers – screening is known to reduce deaths from cancers of the breast, colon, rectum and cervix. However, racial and ethnic minorities and uninsured individuals are more likely to develop and die from cancer due to socioeconomic status and cultural barriers to high quality cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment services.

As part of a comprehensive cancer prevention and early detection effort, the American Cancer Society aims to eliminate cancer disparities by collaborating with community partners to increase awareness of ways to reduce the risk of cancer and the importance of regular screening.

About the American Cancer Society
The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers saving lives and fighting for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. As the largest voluntary health organization, the Society's efforts have contributed to a 20 percent decline in cancer death rates in the U.S. since 1991, and a 50 percent drop in smoking rates. Thanks in part to our progress nearly 14 million Americans who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will celebrate more birthdays this year. As we mark our 100th birthday in 2013, we're determined to finish the fight against cancer. We're finding cures as the nation's largest private, not-for-profit investor in cancer research, ensuring people facing cancer have the help they need and continuing the fight for access to quality health care, lifesaving screenings, clean air, and more. For more information, to get help, or to join the fight, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

About Walgreens
As the nation's largest drugstore chain with fiscal 2012 sales of $72 billion, Walgreens (www.walgreens.com) vision is to be the first choice in health and daily living for everyone in America, and beyond. Each day, Walgreens provides more than 6 million customers the most convenient, multichannel access to consumer goods and services and trusted, cost-effective pharmacy, health and wellness services and advice in communities across America. Walgreens scope of pharmacy services includes retail, specialty, infusion, medical facility and mail service, along with respiratory services. These services improve health outcomes and lower costs for payers including employers, managed care organizations, health systems, pharmacy benefit managers and the public sector. The company operates 8,105 drugstores in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Take Care Health Systems is a Walgreens subsidiary that is the largest and most comprehensive manager of worksite health and wellness centers, medical practices, and in-store convenient care clinics, with more than 700 locations throughout the country.

SOURCE American Cancer Society