The American Cancer Society Awards $500,000 in Grants to Help Reduce Colorectal Cancer Disparities in American Indian and Alaska Native Populations

Grants to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screenings in Five Communities Across the Country

ATLANTA, July 17, 2017 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The American Cancer Society has awarded $100,000 in grants to five community health centers across the country to reduce colon cancer disparities in American Indian and Alaska Native populations through the Community Health Advocates implementing Nationwide Grants for Empowerment and Equity (CHANGE) Grant Program. The grants are $100,000 each and span two years. The grantees are: Arctic Slope Native Association in Barrow, Alaska, Fond du Lac Services Division in Cloquet, Minnesota, Keweeenaw Bay Indian Community in Baraga, Michigan, Native Americans for Community Action in Flagstaff, Arizona, and Riverside San Bernardino County Indian Health Inc. in Grand Terrace, California.

"CHANGE grants serve as a catalyst for partners to implement and sustain interventions to effectively engage and mobilize patients and implement systems and policies that are essential to increasing access to timely cancer screenings and appropriate follow-up," said Laura Makaroff, DO, Senior Director, Cancer Control Intervention for the American Cancer Society. "Racial and ethnic minority and uninsured individuals are more likely to develop cancer, and die from it, than the general U.S. population. The American Cancer Society is committed to addressing the unequal burden of cancer."

Colorectal cancer is one of only two cancers that can be prevented through the detection and removal of precancerous lesions. Yet despite the disproportionate impact of the disease on the American Indian and Alaska Native population, screening rates remain low in these populations. The funded organizations will focus on addressing colorectal cancer disparities in American Indian and Alaska Native communities to improve colorectal cancer outcomes.

Since 2011, corporate funders have contributed $21.8 million to fund the American Cancer Society's CHANGE Grant Program. The primary goal of the CHANGE Grant Program is to increase cancer screening rates within communities experiencing cancer disparities. The Society has awarded over 524 grants to community-based partners to implement evidence-based interventions that provide culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach and education to empower and mobilize the community to access screening resources and help ensure follow-up care is available. Since 2011, these grant recipients have reached individuals with more than 2.4 million outreach and education interventions and contributed to more than 795,000 breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening exams provided at low or no cost.

SOURCE American Cancer Society

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