American Cancer Society Honors Exceptional Volunteers with the Margot S. Freudenberg National Volunteer Award

Award honors individuals or groups for their leadership with the Hope Lodge Program

ATLANTA – October 2, 2017 – Outstanding volunteers have been honored with the 2017 Margot S. Freudenberg National Volunteer Award, a prestigious honor given to volunteers for their contributions and leadership to the Hope Lodge program.

“We are extremely honored to recognize these extraordinary awardees for showing exceptional dedication to improve the quality of life of cancer patients by their contributions to the Hope Lodge program,” said Howard Heino, vice president, Hope Lodge Operations “Their commitment and passion to the Hope Lodge program’s mission and values help elevate the patient experience and Hope Lodge environment.”

The Margot S. Freudenberg National Volunteer Award recognizes individuals and organizational groups who consistently provide volunteer service and outstanding contributions to the Hope Lodge program’s goal of improving the quality of life of cancer patients. This award is named after Margot S. Freudenberg the founder of the first Hope Lodge facility in Charleston, South Carolina in 1970. Margot was actively involved in Hope Lodge until she was 105, and is the longest serving American Cancer Society volunteer to date.

This year’s recipients include **Wanda Smith**, Greenville, NC; and **Lord of Life Lutheran Church**, Maple Grove, MN.

Wanda Smith is a six-year volunteer with the McConnell-Raab Hope Lodge working over 150 hours annually. She works tirelessly to support the mission of the Hope Lodge program in all aspects. Wanda hosts a bi-monthly Look Good Feel Better workshop at the Hope Lodge, and helps with a Caring Conversations support group that meets monthly. She’s established a program “Wiggin out with Wanda” – where she gives scarfs and head wraps to patients, and recruits cosmetologists to perform demonstrations on styling and engage with patients. She is always willing to do whatever she can to help no matter the task. Wanda also works at the front desk and greets everyone that comes in, making them feel right at home. She is constantly spreading cheer and gives out positive vibes. Wanda is also the Relay For Life Team Captain for the Hope Lodge team and is instrumental in planning events and fundraisers to help raise money for the American Cancer Society’s programs.

Lord of Life Lutheran Church has been actively volunteering with the Richard M. Schulze Family Hope Lodge for the past six years. Their contributions and generosity to the program has made such a tremendous impact that everyone feels Hope Lodge is truly their home away from home. Members of Lord of Life come in twice a month to serve home cooked meals to guests and provide lay care ministry for those interested. In addition, members are constantly donating much needed items to the Hope Lodge. They’ve also created an impactful donation known as “Grab-N-Go” which include thousands of bags of water and snacks prepared and ready for patients to take to their treatments. Another way Lord of Life has contributed to the success of the Hope Lodge program is through a fundraising cookbook created by members of the church and includes recipes from the meals prepped at Hope Lodge. Community members can purchase the cookbooks and all proceeds benefit the Hope Lodge.

The Margot S. Freudenberg National Volunteer Award is presented annually to an individual and a group in recognition of outstanding contributions to the Hope Lodge program. Now a nationwide program of the American Cancer Society, 31 Hope Lodge facilities serve patients across the country including one in Puerto Rico.

To learn more about the American Cancer Society awards programs, visit cancer.org.