The American Cancer Society and Pfizer Launch Community Grants Focused on Racial Disparities in Breast Cancer Mortality

ATLANTA, Jan. 27, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- The American Cancer Society and Pfizer have approved grants totaling more than $2.5 million in nine communities focused on reducing racial disparities and helping optimize outcomes for women facing a breast cancer diagnosis. The grants, funded by Pfizer Global Medical Grants and overseen by the American Cancer Society, are the first in the Integrated Approach to Breast Health Equity Competitive Grant Program, a three-year collaboration working to promote equitable outcomes for all women living with breast cancer

While breast cancer death rates have decreased consistently since 1989, attributed both to improvements in early detection (through screening as well as increased awareness of symptoms) and treatment, not all women have benefitted equally from these advances. In fact, in the most recent period (2013-2017), black women had a breast cancer death rate that was 40% higher than white women, despite having historically lower incidence rates. This disparity is magnified among black women under 50, among whom the death rate is double that of white women.

"We know that cancer affects populations differently, including racial and ethnic minority groups bearing an unequal burden of cancer across the United States. Differences in breast cancer mortality among black and white women are particularly striking," said Laura Makaroff, D.O., senior vice president, Prevention and Early Detection, for the American Cancer Society. "The need to address health disparities in communities across the country is critical. These grants will serve to inform our efforts as we continue the ongoing work of fighting inequity in health and healthcare."

Factors contributing to the breast cancer mortality disparity between black and white women include differences in stage of cancer diagnosis, tumor characteristics, and access to timely and high-quality prevention, screening and treatment.

"Optimizing care for people living with cancer, regardless of their race, socioeconomic status, geographical location or tumor stage or subtype, is a key priority for us at Pfizer," said, Dany Habr, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Pfizer Oncology. "But, addressing disparities in cancer care can't be done by one organization or even a few. That is why we are proud to partner with the American Cancer Society on this initiative, and we look forward to seeing the impact of these projects on the breast cancer community."

In a highly competitive process, each applicant was asked to provide local solutions to local problems across the breast cancer continuum. The awardees will pursue a variety of efforts, from cancer screening to support in cancer survivorship, for women that could otherwise go unserved.

The awardees chosen for funding beginning in January 2020, are:

- Georgetown University Medical Center, DC
- Massachusetts General Hospital and Boston Medical Center, MA
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC
- MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper, NJ
- Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, NY
- Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton, OH
- The Ohio State University, OH
- Rhode Island Department of Health, RI
- University of Washington, WA

About The American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of 1.5 million volunteers dedicated to saving lives, celebrating lives, and leading the fight for a world without cancer. From breakthrough research, to free lodging near treatment, a 24/7/365 live helpline, free rides to treatment, and convening powerful activists to create

awareness and impact, the Society is attacking cancer from every angle. The Society does not endorse any product or service. For more information go to www.cancer.org

SOURCE American Cancer Society

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