American Cancer Society Awards $16 Million in Grants to Establish Cancer Health Equity Research Centers

ATLANTA – Feb. 24, 2022 – The American Cancer Society has awarded over $16 million in grants to establish Cancer Health Equity Research Centers (CHERC) at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). The inaugural cohort of institutions includes the Arizona Board of Regents – University of Arizona; the University of Illinois at Chicago; Morehouse School of Medicine and Howard University. Each institution received a four-year grant of $4.08 million.

"The American Cancer Society believes that everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to prevent, find, treat and survive cancer," said Dr. Karen Knudsen, Chief Executive Officer of the American Cancer Society. "This funding is an important step to achieving health equity, which is essential to achieving our mission and it's a moral imperative."

The institutions selected in the initial cohort will implement solution-based research addressing cancer health disparities that will contribute to achieving health equity and reducing cancer mortality.

"Cancer is a disease that affects everyone, but it does not affect everyone equally," said Tawana Johnson-Thomas, Senior Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer for the American Cancer Society. "Many barriers can impact a person's ability to prevent, find, treat, and survive cancer. This funding will allow the CHERC to target cancer health disparities unique to a local or regional community."

Addressing the root causes of cancer health disparities in the context of the social determinants of health is needed to accelerate progress in health equity research. This requires addressing obstacles to health caused by poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments and health care.

"The American Cancer Society is concerned about the ongoing racial disparities and is committed to funding research that focuses on solutions," said William G. Cance, M.D. and Chief Medical and Scientific Officer at the American Cancer Society. "We believe the CHERC will support not only the workforce that cares for underserved populations but also will integrate with the community to determine creative solutions that directly address health disparities."

For further information: FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: American Cancer Society, Michele.Money-Carson@cancer.org