$1.5 Million WellPoint Foundation Grant Supports American Cancer Society's Work to Reduce Cancer Screening Disparities

ATLANTA (February 13, 2014) – The American Cancer Society will be able to provide more individuals in underserved communities with access to life-saving cancer screenings and community-based cancer education, thanks to a $1.5 million grant from the WellPoint Foundation. The funds will be distributed as grants to local community organizations and health centers in 14 states working to advance the American Cancer Society's priority efforts to increase awareness, education, and screening for breast, cervical and colorectal cancers.

Through the 14 grants, community health system partners within underserved areas will work to reduce the cancer burden and provide access to education and screening resources that assist individuals in preventing cancer and finding cancer early.

"We at the American Cancer Society know that to finish the fight against cancer, we must increase cancer education and screening in underserved communities," said John R. Seffrin, Ph.D., chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society. "Donations from corporate partners like the WellPoint Foundation will enable us to expand our reach into communities with a disproportionate cancer burden, provide services to encourage cancer prevention, early detection and early treatment, and ultimately, save more lives."

The American Cancer Society collaborates with community health partners to reach individuals in areas with higher burdens of cancer and limited access to cancer screening. Through the Community Health Advocates implementing Nationwide Grants for Empowerment and Equity (CHANGE) program, the Society provides grant opportunities to increase breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening rates in those communities. Since 2011, CHANGE has implemented and sustained approximately 100 grant-funded projects within underserved communities across the country; educating over 328,000 people about cancer risk and prevention, and providing over 123,000 cancer screenings.

"The American Cancer society and its partners are doing incredible work across the country," said Lance Chrisman, WellPoint Foundation Executive Director. "These grant funds will be put to good use in the continued fight against cancer by helping to make sure that screening and early detection is available for those who need it the most."

According to the American Cancer Society, disparities predominantly arise from inequities in work, wealth, income, education, housing, and overall standard of living, as well as social barriers to high-quality cancer prevention, early detection and treatment services. Additionally, persons with lower socioeconomic status are more likely to engage in behaviors that increase cancer risk such as tobacco use, physical inactivity, and poor diet due to environmental or community barriers to opportunities for physical activity and access to fruits and vegetables.

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 WellPoint Foundation

The WellPoint Foundation is the philanthropic arm of WellPoint, Inc. and through charitable contributions and programs, the Foundation promotes the inherent commitment of WellPoint, Inc. to enhance the health and well-being of individuals and families in communities that WellPoint, Inc. and its affiliated health plans serve. The Foundation focuses its funding on strategic initiatives that address and provide innovative solutions to health care challenges, as well as promoting the Healthy Generations Program, a multi-generational initiative that targets specific disease states and medical conditions. These disease states and medical conditions include: prenatal care in the first trimester, low birth weight babies, cardiac morbidity rates, long term activities that decrease obesity and increase physical activity, diabetes prevalence in adult populations, adult pneumococcal and influenza vaccinations and smoking cessation. The Foundation also coordinates the company's annual associate giving campaign and provides a 50 percent match of associates' campaign pledges. To learn more about the WellPoint Foundation, please visit www.wellpointfoundation.org.

# # #

Contact:

Elissa McCrary

American Cancer Society

(404) 417-5823

elissa.mccrary@cancer.org