

American Cancer Society Recognizes Volunteers For Their Critical Role To Help Fight Cancer

National Volunteer Week is April 19 to April 25

Atlanta 2009/04/17 -In celebration of the 36th annual National Volunteer Week (April 19 to April 25), the American Cancer Society recognizes and celebrates the efforts of its more than three million volunteers nationwide who are making a difference for people facing cancer. Sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network, National Volunteer Week began in 1974 when President Richard Nixon signed an executive order establishing the week as an annual celebration of volunteering. Every president since has signed a proclamation promoting National Volunteer Week.

There has never been a better time to volunteer. Volunteers for the American Cancer Society help the organization save lives by helping people stay well, helping people get well, by finding cures, and by fighting back. This is the 25th year of Relay for Life, the world's largest movement to end cancer. Through more than 5,000 events in 20 countries, this overnight community event engages volunteers in organizing events and teams that celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost and fight back against the disease. More than three million Americans, including 500,000 survivors, participate every year.

The American Cancer Society fights cancer on many fronts, and as such, the organization's premier event to raise funds and awareness to fight breast cancer, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer, involves nearly 500,000 people across the country in an inspiring, non-competitive walk. This event unites communities to honor and celebrate breast cancer survivors, educate women about the importance of early detection and prevention and raise money to fund lifesaving research and support programs to further the progress against breast cancer.

For volunteers who want to get involved with the American Cancer Society in efforts that directly touch cancer patients and help them to get well, there are a number of opportunities for engagement. The organization's dedicated volunteers provide direct assistance and service to people facing cancer through many patient programs and services. A few of the patient service programs that individuals can volunteer for include: Road to Recovery, where volunteers drive patients to and from treatment; Look Good...Feel Better, where volunteers help women overcome treatment related-side effects by teaching them skills to help their appearance; and Reach to Recovery, where breast cancer survivors volunteer to provide one-on-one support to newly diagnosed breast cancer patients.

The Society's nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, also has a grassroots volunteer network of hundreds of thousands of volunteers who work to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority.

The American Cancer Society listens, shares, heals, and nurtures a spirit of hope and a culture of caring through voluntarism. To learn more about how you can save lives while fulfilling your own through volunteering, visit our Web site, www.cancer.org/volunteer.

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. Founded in 1913 and with national headquarters in Atlanta, the Society has 13 regional Divisions and local offices in 3,400 communities, involving millions of volunteers across the United States. For more information anytime, call toll free 1-800-ACS-2345, or visit www.cancer.org.

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