

# American Cancer Society Honors Outstanding Individual Contributions to Cancer Fight

## Awards Honor Accomplishments in Service, Volunteerism, Humanitarianism and Palliative Care

ATLANTA— November 4, 2010— Five Americans whose unique talents and dedication have helped make progress in the fight against cancer today received prestigious awards from the American Cancer Society for their work in volunteerism, humanitarianism, distinguished service and palliative care. The Society, the nation's largest voluntary health organization, honors individuals whose work is helping to make the organization's goal of saving lives and creating a world with less cancer and more birthdays a reality. In gratitude for their inspirational service to mankind, the Society's National volunteer leaders presented these annual awards to these outstanding individuals in ceremonies during the organization's annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.

Olufunmilayo Olopade, M.B., B.S., F.A.C.P., received the Distinguished Service Award in recognition of major contributions and commitment in the field of cancer. Peter S. Sheldon, Esq., and Karen A. Moffitt, Ph.D., were both awarded the National Volunteer Leadership Award in recognition of long and exemplary volunteer service to the Society. Sister Mary Scullion received the Humanitarian Award for her efforts to begin an internationally recognized organization addressing the prevention of homelessness and alleviation of poverty. Anthony Back, M.D., received the Pathfinder in Palliative Care Award for his innovative contributions to the advancement of the field of palliative care.

**Olufunmilayo Olopade, M.B., B.S., F.A.C.P.**, of Chicago, American Cancer Society clinical research professor of medicine and human genetics, University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, received the Distinguished Service Award for her seminal contributions to understanding the root causes of aggressive breast cancer in women of African ancestry. By establishing and maintaining a large and growing database of high-risk individuals, Dr. Olopade has been able to examine the contribution of BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations in diverse populations and her laboratory was the first to describe recurrent BRCA1 mutations in extended African American families with breast cancer, a study she has extended to the founder population of African Americans in West Africa. Dr. Olopade seeks to further the understanding of genetic and epigenetic alterations which characterize human cancer in a way that will eventually lead to early diagnosis, more effective treatment and prevention of cancer.

**Peter S. Sheldon, Esq.**, of Lansing, and **Karen A. Moffitt, Ph.D.**, of Tampa, received the National Volunteer Leadership Award for their dedicated service to the American Cancer Society. Mr. Sheldon has been a Society volunteer at all levels of the organization for more than 20 years. His significant contributions in the strategic planning and launch of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network <sup>SM</sup> have significantly strengthened the Society's mission and transformed the way in which we work with lawmakers to make America a healthier place to live. Dr. Moffitt brings unparalleled leadership and passion in the fight against cancer to the Society's efforts to enhance access to cancer care for the uninsured and underinsured. She has advocated for millions of dollars in state and federal support for cancer research in Florida, changed the course of cancer by relentlessly pursuing tobacco control initiatives in the state, and helped create the R.O.C.K. College Scholarship Program for young cancer survivors.

**Sister Mary Scullion**, of Philadelphia, received the Humanitarian Award for her efforts to begin Project HOME (Housing, Opportunities, Medical Care and Education), which has become an internationally recognized

organization addressing the prevention of homelessness and alleviation of poverty. Her inspirational and innovative efforts on behalf of the underserved populations of Philadelphia have empowered adults, children, and families to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty, and ensured that everyone has sufficient social support, including access to a home, health care, and education, to help reduce health disparities and to help save lives from cancer.

**Anthony Back, M.D.**, of Seattle, director of palliative care and the program on cancer communication at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, received the Pathfinder in Palliative Care Award in recognition of his tireless personal passion for promoting palliative care and patient quality of life. Dr. Back has been a strong advocate for the development of palliative care in the United States for more than a decade. He has made significant contributions to advance palliative care, including his groundbreaking work creating collaborations of clinicians, teachers, and researchers committed to effective and compassionate communication with patients and their families. His remarkable work has helped make communication skills a core component of oncology practice. Dr. Back treats patients with colorectal, liver, pancreatic, and stomach cancer, and has also developed creative OncoTalk and OncoTalk Teach programs to improve doctor-patient communication and help transform teaching in clinical practices to benefit patients and families facing cancer and other life-limiting illnesses.

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end cancer for good. As a global grassroots force of three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping you stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early, helping you get well by being there for you during and after a diagnosis, by finding cures through groundbreaking discovery and fighting back through public policy. As the nation's largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing more than \$3.5 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, more than 11 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org).

Claire Greenwell  
American Cancer Society  
Phone: (404) 417- 5883  
Email: [claire.greenwell@cancer.org](mailto:claire.greenwell@cancer.org)

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