Stakeholders Bring Real World Perspective to American Cancer Society Research Grant Process

Twenty-two individuals chosen to participate in grants review process

ATLANTA –October 20, 2011—Twenty-two individuals with a strong personal interest in cancer have been chosen to participate in the American Cancer Society's research grants peer review process for 2012. These "Stakeholders," who have been part of the Society's grant review process since 1999, bring input from lay people and other external audiences as the Society makes research funding decisions. Stakeholders, who may or may not have formal science or oncology training, have a strong personal interest in cancer research. Many have a personal connection to the disease, such as having had a family member with cancer, having acted as a caregiver, or having had a personal battle with the disease. Their participation brings an important real-world perspective to the grant review process.

"These stakeholders enhance the peer review process by assuring a full discussion of the relevance of each grant application and how it will contribute to the advancement of cancer control," said Edward E. Partridge, M.D., American Cancer Society national volunteer president. "Their participation means that every one of the hundreds of research proposals we review twice a year is considered not only by scientists, but by others who have been affected by cancer."

No formal science training is required to serve as a stakeholder. They join clinicians, researchers, and other scientists for a two-year term to help decide which of the more than 1,700 applications received each year are worthy of funding. Stakeholders are recruited from around the United States to be trained and assigned to one or more of the approximately 20 peer review committees in the Society's Extramural Grants Division. In addition to stakeholders, each committee includes five to 20 researchers, clinicians, and other experts. Together, the review committees identify the most outstanding applications for funding.

Since its inception in 1946, the American Cancer Society's Research and Training Program has funded more than $3.6 billion in cancer research and health professional training. As the largest private source of cancer research funding in the U.S., the Society funds approximately $100 million in research grants every year. The program has funded 46 researchers who have won the Nobel Prize.

Stakeholders chosen to participate in the upcoming grants cycle are:

- Tom Martin, Long Beach, CA.
- Robert Antenucci, Warren, OH.
- Melody Beverly, Philadelphia, PA.
- Bonnie McFarland, Gallipolis, OH.
- Kristin Reilly, Richboro, PA.
- Glenn Spielman, Niskayuna, NY.
- Maria Cristy, San Juan, PR.
- Robert Evans, Naples, FL.
- Khaliah Fleming, Tampa, FL.
- Patricia O'Leary, Centerpoint, IN.
- Kristina Anderson, Albuquerque, NM.
- Susan Schulman, Salt Lake CITY, UT.
- JoAnn Aguirre , Keaau, HI.
- Stephanie Staggs, Austin, TX.
- Andre Walker, Chicago, IL.
- Bonnie Hufford, Knoxville, TN.
- Debra Washburn, Huntsville, AL.
- Candy Nardini , Waterloo, IA.
- Brenda Estella, Southborough, MA.
- Mei Wu, Newton, MA.
- Donna Adkins, Poquoson, VA.
- Kay Denham, Savannah, GA.

The nomination period for 2013 stakeholders is now open. Interested parties can read more about the program, including how to apply, at http://www.cancer.org/stakeholders, or email joseph.cotter@cancer.org.

The next Stakeholder nomination period ends December 30, 2011