

ACTIONS

SPRING 2013 | ISSUE 24 CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM | OF THE PREVENT CANCER FOUNDATION



CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES
CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM
OF THE PREVENT CANCER FOUNDATION

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2013 Prevent Cancer Annual Spring Gala: The Beauty of Italy & “Festa della Donna”

One point three million dollars raised to advance cancer research, fund cancer screenings for the medically underserved.



Left to right: Bo Aldigé, Senator Patrick Leahy and Marcella Leahy and Debbie Dingell

Regardless of where in the world you were on March 8, 2013, there was a celebration going on. Globally, men and women alike celebrated International Women’s Day. In Italy, it was Festa Della Donna – when the appreciation of women is shown with the gift of beautifully scented mimosa branches. Mimosas also garlanded the spectacular tables at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC, as the doors were opened to more than 900 guests who came to support the 19th Annual Spring Gala of the Prevent Cancer Foundation.



Angela Stewart with Bobbi Barrasso (right)

The Spring Gala is the Foundation’s signature fundraising event held each year under the patronage of a host country. This year, His Excellency the Ambassador of Italy, **Claudio Bisogniero** and his wife, **Laura Denise Bisogniero** served as Honorary Patrons – especially appropriate since 2013 is a year-long celebration of Italian culture in the United States. The evening was as successful as it was lovely – 1.3 million dollars were raised to invest in national research grants, fellowships and two programs for medically-underserved women in Washington, DC: ¡Celebremos la Vida! (free breast and cervical cancer education, screening and treatment for Latinas) and free mammograms aboard the GW Mammovan.



Left to right: General Jim Jones, Linda Daschle, Jane Harman and Tom Daschle

The mood was festive, the food was scrumptious, and the band had everyone out of their seats and on to the dance floor. However, the most memorable part of the evening came when two remarkable women shared their personal battles

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SAVE THE DATE

HEALTHY STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WEBCAST

Tuesday, June 18, 2013, 2pm Eastern
www.preventcancerwebcast.org

PREVENT CANCER FOUNDATION 5K WALK/RUN

Sunday, September 29, 2012
 Nationals Park, 8am - Noon

Bring your family for a day of food & fun!

CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM

21th Anniversary Awards Luncheon

Thursday, October 3, 2013
 Cannon Caucus, Noon

LOG-IN

Log-in to the Congressional Families Website for resources, op-eds and upcoming dates:

www.preventcancer.org/congressionalfamilies

Username: family / Password: 2parties1goal

{ new } BEGINNINGS

Dear Congressional Family Members,



In January, we began the 113th Congress with the swearing in of 12 new Senators and 67 new Representatives. That means that some of you are receiving our **ACTIONS** newsletter for the first time. Welcome! The Congressional Families Cancer Prevention program was developed to educate House, Senate, Administration, Supreme Court and diplomatic spouses about reducing risks for cancer. We hope you will communicate what you learn to inform and

inspire your respective constituencies to get screened, adopt or maintain healthy lifestyles, learn and share their family histories and communicate more effectively with their health care professionals.

We also have some new beginnings here at the Prevent Cancer Foundation – the umbrella organization for the Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program. I have had the privilege of serving as executive director of this program for nearly 10 years as part of the public affairs team. My colleague through my entire time – **Lisa Hughes** – has recently moved on to a new opportunity after 14 years of service at the Foundation. Lisa worked with former executive directors **Linda Bachus** and **Tamra Bentsen**. We will be filling Lisa's job soon but no one can fill her shoes. We also welcome **Stephanie Salvador** as the third person on our team. Those who participate in our seminars, op-ed initiative or attend our Annual Awards Luncheon (this year to be held on October 3) will no doubt have contact with Stephanie. Please read more about her on page 3.

And of course, spring is a time of new beginnings for us all. Trees green, flowers bloom, weather warms and our personal energy rises. It is the perfect time to renew a commitment to move more and eat light, healthy foods. So plan some walks to enjoy nature or play out in the sun – and remember to wear sunscreen, hats, sunglasses and UV protective clothes!

I hope to see you all soon. In the meantime, I wish you and your families good health.

Lisa McGovern
 Executive Director

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PREVENTING CANCER AROUND OUR NATION: FOCUS ON MINORITY CANCER AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

The Prevent Cancer Foundation is spotlighting our 2012 Community Grants recipients who have made an impact in reducing cancer disparities with their innovative community-level programs. The Foundation's Community Grants program supports organizations across the U.S. that focus on helping to prevent cancer or detect it early. Over the past six years, the program has provided the resources needed to fund several projects that help improve cancer screening access, awareness and prevention education to Hispanics, African Americans, Alaska Natives and American Indians. The Foundation has supported many culturally appropriate educational activities at barbershops, powwows, health fairs, churches, sporting venues and through peer-to-peer outreach in order to reach medically underserved populations.

Powwow for Hope: Dancing for Life, Love & Hope. With support from the Prevent Cancer Foundation, the American Indian Cancer Foundation hosted their

annual Powwow for Hope that brought together several tribal nations across the Midwest to honor cancer survivors and increase awareness and education among American Indian families.



Community Grantee the American Indian Cancer Foundation hosts a Powwow on cancer prevention & early detection



Women's Resource Center, a Community Grantee, provides free screenings to low-income women with a mammogram mobile unit

Women's Resource Center (WRC).

Leveraging the Foundation grant along with community volunteers, the WRC was able to eliminate barriers to quality health care for many women of the Fort Collins, Colorado community. The WRC was able to provide at-risk and low-income women from diverse communities with free mammograms, cancer patient navigators and wellness education.

Play it Safe in the Sun, Utah! With this education outreach, the Utah Department of Health Cancer aimed to educate coaches, youth and parents participating in local recreation soccer leagues on the dangers of the sun and the need for sun safety in order to reduce skin cancer risk. This Foundation funded grant project continues to provide skin cancer awareness outreach to many low-income Hispanic families in Utah.

A NEW FACE: STEPHANIE SALVADOR JOINS THE CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES' PUBLIC AFFAIRS TEAM



We are pleased to welcome **Stephanie Salvador** as our new Public Affairs Policy and Advocacy Associate at the Prevent Cancer Foundation. Stephanie is a recent graduate of the University of Virginia where she majored in Government. Before coming to the Foundation, she interned for several senators on Capitol Hill, gaining valuable experience and an interest in health policy. She is bilingual and plans to use her language skills to help us expand our reach. Stephanie looks forward to her work with the Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program. You are quite likely to correspond with her by email if you are interested in our op-ed program and will see her at upcoming events.



19th Annual Spring Gala

Continued from page 1

with cancer and reminded us all why we were there and the need to continue to fight to prevent and beat this disease.

Senator Dianne Feinstein presented the 2013 Cancer Champion award to her fellow Californian and friend, **The Honorable Ellen Tauscher**, who served in the United States House of Representatives from 1997 until her resignation in 2009 to join the State Department. Ellen explained how her Stage II-III esophageal cancer required “removing my entire esophagus and rebuilding it with my stomach.” The audience, that included members of Congress, the diplomatic community, and leaders in the cancer community, were inspired by Ellen’s story and her strength. Shortly thereafter, they heard from another powerful voice: **Julie Delgado**, a talented vocalist who is currently undergoing treatment. Julie sang at a previous gala and returned this year as part of the “Lighting the Way to Prevention” fundraising opportunity. Her voice moved people to open their hearts and wallets to contribute to vital research and programs supported by the Prevent Cancer Foundation.

If you didn’t join us for this year’s Spring Gala, we hope you can join us next year – tentatively scheduled for Friday, March 7.

Mark your calendars now!

Know Your Family History

With Mother’s day right around the corner and Father’s day coming up, many of us will be spending time getting together with family and loved ones. On these special occasions, we often share a lot about ourselves, so why not share some of the most important information—your family medical history?

A family medical history is a record of health information about a person and his or her close relatives. A complete record includes information from three generations of relatives, including children, brothers and sisters, parents, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, grandparents and cousins. Families usually have many factors in common, including their genes, environment and lifestyle. Together, these factors can provide hints of medical conditions that may run in a family. The most common, most deadly forms of diseases facing Americans tend to run in families, such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke and cancer. A family history of cancer is considered to be an important risk factor for several forms of the disease, including breast, colon, prostate and ovarian cancers.

By noticing patterns of diseases among relatives, health care professionals can determine whether an individual, other family members or future generations may be at an increased risk of developing a particular condition. Knowing your family medical history allows you to take steps to reduce your risk of many of these diseases. Any family history that concerns you should be discussed with your health care professional. Based on your family history, you may be advised to change the type and frequency of screenings or determine the appropriate use of other prevention strategies. For instance, women with a family history of breast cancer might opt for a more aggressive and frequent schedule of cancer screenings such as mammograms or MRI scans. Men with a family history of prostate cancer might want to begin the discussion with their healthcare professional about having or not having a PSA test.

The easiest way to get information about family medical history is to talk to relatives about their health. Have they had any medical problems and when did those occur? With many family gatherings coming up soon, it’s a great time to discuss these issues. And remember, while we would all do well to eat healthier, exercise more, stop smoking and maintain a healthy body weight, people with a family history of cancer have even more reason to take care of their bodies.

Eight Steps to Prevent Cancer

1. Don’t use tobacco.
2. Eat a variety of healthy foods.
3. Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight.
4. Protect your skin from the sun.
5. Practice safer sex.
6. Drink alcohol in moderation, if at all.
7. Follow cancer-screening guidelines.
8. Follow cancer-immunizing guidelines.

To learn more, please visit www.preventcancer.org

Miss DC Promotes Knowing Your Family Health History: Makes Bold Choice Based on Her Own



Shining blue eyes, flowing blonde hair, a megawatt smile, an unusual talent for roller figure skating and a flawlessly fit body—Allyn Rose is the very picture of a perfect pageant queen. However, this year's 24-year-old Miss D.C. has drawn a lion's share of both praise and criticism for her controversial decision that has shocked many. Rose has decided to undergo a double mastectomy and have surgery to remove both of her breasts as a preventive measure against her own high risk of developing breast cancer.

Rose was 16 when her mother Judith, passed away from breast cancer, a disease that has also claimed the lives of both her grandmother and great aunt. "My mom was first diagnosed at 27 with really invasive stage three breast cancer. She

had her right breast removed at 27 and her cancer went into remission. Twenty years later it came back in the other breast.

Rose went through her mother's old journal, finding comfort and guidance in her words. "One of the first lines was her apologizing for having to leave me. She had written me this letter and said 'as a kid, you need your mom for a lot of years and not just a few—I'm sorry that you're not going to have me for a long time,'" said Rose. "And I think I was able to put myself in my mom's position at that point and feel what it was like to be a mother. I realized what it would be like to have to say that to your daughter in a letter, to write down everything you want her to know about life in a handful of pages and how difficult that must have been for her." After reading her mother's letter, she decided that having a double mastectomy was the best option for her. She maintains an extremely optimistic view of the surgery, emphasizing that her life is more important than how it will change the way she looks.

Rose is spending her year as Miss D.C. working on a platform of empowering women to take control of their own health, teaching them to be proactive in their health care—especially educating about early cancer prevention. Rose maintains that the bottom line is knowing your family history. "If you don't know, then do your research, that's a vital point of knowing your own body and what you're susceptible to in order to live your life and live as long as you possibly can. I was very lucky that my mom was vigilant about her health and impressed that on me," said Rose.

—Liona Chan, contributing writer

BREAST CANCER PREVENTION EDUCATION IN WASHINGTON, DC

On March 18, 2013, the Prevent Cancer Foundation was honored to be one of three cancer organizations invited to share information at the "Strong Women Fighting, Preventing and Curing Breast Cancer" forum. Hosted by Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, the meeting took place at George Washington University Hospital as an outreach to the Congresswoman's D.C. constituents in celebration of National Women's History Month.



The Foundation had the opportunity to share educational information about our new outreach project, *Campeonas contra el cáncer de seno* (Champions against Breast Cancer), and meet with other health professionals and members of the public.

The *Campeonas* project is an outgrowth of our ¡Celebremos la vida!

(Let's Celebrate Life!) program — a breast and cervical cancer education and early detection program for medically underserved women in the Hispanic community. The *Campeonas* training prepares Latinas, age 40 or older, who have been screened for breast cancer and are committed to advocating for women's health, to encourage their friends and family to be screened.



The Friday before Memorial Day is
Don't Fry Day™
www.skincancerprevention.org

CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES MISSION AND HISTORY

The Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program is a nonpartisan outreach effort of congressional families who have joined forces to spread the message of early detection of preventable cancers. Specifically, we focus on raising awareness to prevent breast, cervical, colon, lung, oral, prostate, skin and testicular cancers.

The program was founded in 1991 by the Congressional Club in partnership with the Prevent Cancer Foundation, a non-profit organization devoted to preventing cancer through scientific research and education.

Our advisory board consists of more than 140 spouses of Members of Congress, the Administration and the Supreme Court. Advisory board members receive copies of our newsletters, are invited to luncheon seminars, and are kept abreast of news and initiatives related to healthy living and cancer prevention. We encourage our advisory board members to engage in activities in their home states, nationwide, and internationally and we support them in those efforts.

To join the Congressional Families' advisory board, fax, mail or email the following information to the address below: your name, congressional district, preferred phone number, fax number and email address.

**Early detection saves lives.
Please join us.**



Editor Lisa McGovern

Assistant Editor Stephanie Salvador

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