**Twenty-Fourth Annual Congressional Families Luncheon Honors Cancer Prevention Leaders**

“Screening Matters” was the theme of the 24th Annual Action for Cancer Awareness Awards Luncheon—and the importance of early detection was made clear by the personal stories of honorees, presenters and other guest speakers.

The event honored Patricia Mica (spouse of Rep. John Mica, Florida), Summer Sanders (Olympic champion and television host) and Amy Robach (ABC’s “Good Morning America” news anchor) for publicly sharing their personal experiences to raise awareness about cancer and the importance of being screened to detect it early, when it is most treatable.

The program opened with remarks from Greg Simon, Executive Director of the Cancer Moonshot Task Force (led by Vice President Joe Biden), who outlined the Task Force’s work to accelerate progress in innovation by breaking down silos and facilitating collaboration among stakeholders.

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi echoed Mr. Simon’s sense of urgency to make progress and noted that nearly every family is touched by cancer, remembering a treasured colleague Rep. Mark Takai (Hawaii), who recently lost his life to pancreatic cancer.

The Congressional Families Program Executive Director Lisa McGovern then took the podium and provided a brief description of the Program, which began in 1991 through a partnership between the Congressional Club and the Prevent Cancer Foundation. Prevent Cancer Foundation’s Founder and President Carolyn “Bo” Aldigé spoke about the Foundation’s 30 years of work in bringing the critical role of prevention to the forefront of the fight against cancer. Master of Ceremonies Paula Zahn (Investigation Discovery Channel) presided over the remaining program, periodically pausing to recognize Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol who came to support the Program and its mission.
Dear Congressional Family Members & Friends,

On September 22, our Program hosted its 24th Annual Action for Cancer Awareness Awards Luncheon honoring congressional spouse Pat Mica of Florida, who recently completed her treatment for colon cancer; breast cancer survivor Amy Robach of “Good Morning America;” and Olympic Gold Medalist and television host Summer Sanders, a three-time melanoma survivor. Each shared powerful stories of finding and facing cancer and emphasized the importance of being screened for colon, breast, skin and other preventable cancers. Many spouses and Members of Congress were on hand to hear the message in person. If you were unable to join us (or would like to hear their remarks again!), please watch our luncheon video at www.congressionalfamilies.org. You will be moved and inspired to make and keep your screening appointments; I was.

While planning for the luncheon, I became acutely aware that I was not practicing what I was preaching. I was due for my annual mammogram in May. June, July and August flew by—I was very busy working, traveling back and forth to Massachusetts, getting our son Patrick ready for college, helping our daughter Molly get to and from summer school and participating in social groups. The next thing I knew, it was September. No mammogram.

Every day at work, I felt a nagging sense of guilt. Here I was focusing on people whose lives had been saved by cancer screenings, yet I hadn’t scheduled my own. I finally just picked up the phone and made a mammogram appointment for September 23—the day after the luncheon. I was so proud of myself when it was done. Building on that success, I immediately made an appointment for a full physical; a dermatology appointment is next, to check my many moles from a sun-filled youth.

It is important to take charge of our health at every age, but especially as we get older. Cancer is predominantly a disease of aging. We are often diligent about making sure our children, spouses and other loved ones get seen and get screened, but we neglect scheduling our own medical appointments. Don’t let that happen! Your family and loved ones need you healthy, and you owe it to them as well as to yourself.

So this Thanksgiving, I am giving thanks for my health, for good medical care and for our ability to afford it. I feel truly blessed. And I am thankful for the opportunity to urge all of you, my friends, to make those screening appointments—and keep them. We need you healthy, too!

Wishing you a happy, healthy holiday season,

Lisa McGovern, Executive Director

THANK YOU FOR YOUR OP-ED OUTREACH!

Each month, the Congressional Families Program offers Members and spouses template op-eds about cancer prevention and early detection to be personalized and tailored for local use. Thank you to the following Members and spouses who requested state statistics in the past few months to share this vital information in their home communities:

Bobbi Barrasso – Wyoming
Rep. Dan Benishek – Michigan
Amy Carter – Georgia
Monica Conyers – Michigan
Vera Davis – Illinois
Rep. Debbie Dingell – Michigan
Diana Enzi – Wyoming

Brenda Fleischmann – Tennessee
Barbara Grassley – Iowa
Mikey Hoeven – North Dakota
LeeAnn Johnson – Ohio
Dr. Wayne Kye – New York
Marcelle Leahy – Vermont
Mary McKinley – West Virginia

Debbie Meadows – North Carolina
Elizabeth Roskam – Illinois
Rep. Roger Williams – Texas

Learn more about how you can educate your community on cancer prevention and early detection at www.congressionalfamilies.org/resources.
The Prevent Cancer Foundation is wrapping up the first year of its multi-year education campaign, Think About The Link®. Launched in January, this initiative increases awareness of the connection between certain viruses and cancer, focusing on human papillomavirus (HPV), hepatitis B and hepatitis C. The objective is to increase screenings for the viruses, increase immunization rates for HPV and hepatitis B, and raise awareness of—and access to—treatment options for hepatitis C.

In its inaugural year, Think About The Link® reached audiences with a briefing on Capitol Hill (featuring remarks by Rep. Debbie Dingell and Dr. John Schiller, Deputy Director, National Cancer Institute’s Center for Cancer Research), as well as through grassroots events in key states including New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Texas and California. In addition, more than 300,000 daily visitors to Times Square can see a 10-second advertisement promoting the campaign through November 30.

The Prevent Cancer Foundation recently announced that country music singer, songwriter and activist Naomi Judd will join the campaign as a spokesperson in the second year. Ms. Judd, who is a former registered nurse and a hepatitis C survivor, will share her personal journey with hepatitis C to raise awareness about viruses and related cancers. Stay tuned for announcements on future events featuring Ms. Judd.

Are you or someone you know a health care professional or advocate? Every year the Prevent Cancer Foundation hosts the Dialogue for Action® on Cancer Screening and Prevention conference to convene a diversity of stakeholders committed to realizing the lifesaving potential of cancer screening for all communities. The Dialogue emphasizes evidence-based cancer screening and prevention, covering issues related to primary prevention and guideline-based cancer screenings (for colorectal, cervical, breast and lung cancers) and additional cancer screenings (such as for ovarian and prostate cancers).

The 2017 Dialogue will be held in McLean, Virginia, on April 19-21. Hot topics will include health equity, trends in cancer prevention and early detection, the “One Million Patients” initiative, and Big Data. The audience (including primary care physicians, medical specialists, nurses and nurse practitioners, physician assistants, public health educators, researchers, insurers, advocates and survivors) is encouraged to take the dialogue back to their communities and workplaces to promote appropriate screening and prevention. State-of-the-art presentations and interactive, dynamic conversations provide participants with tools and effective strategies for use in both clinical and public health settings.

To learn more, visit www.preventcancer.org/dialogue-for-action.
Awards Luncheon
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Patricia Mica was presented the first award for Congressional Leadership by Caroline Aderholt (spouse of Rep. Robert Aderholt, Alabama). Ms. Mica has been a leader in the Republican spouse community for decades and a long-time supporter of the Congressional Families Program. A year ago she was diagnosed with colon cancer and her treatment was completed this summer. Ms. Mica encouraged the audience to not put off screenings or avoid warning signs, and is creating a support system for those with cancer in her home community.

Summer Sanders’ award for Excellence in Cancer Awareness was presented next by fellow melanoma survivor Marcella Leahy (spouse of Sen. Patrick Leahy, Vermont). Ms. Sanders, who has faced three melanoma diagnoses, uses her platforms on television and social media, as an athlete and program host, to focus on skin cancer prevention and early detection. She stressed the importance of knowing your body, looking for changes and advocating for yourself if something seems strange.

Amy Robach was presented the final award for Distinguished Service in Journalism by Alfredia Scott (spouse of Rep. David Scott, Georgia). Prodded by her “Good Morning America” producers and co-host Robin Roberts (a breast cancer survivor and past Congressional Families honoree), Ms. Robach agreed to an on-air mammogram shortly after her 40th birthday. The mammogram led to her breast cancer diagnosis—the first in her family. Ms. Robach has become a passionate advocate for women to begin receiving regular mammograms at age 40.


The audience departed the luncheon with a renewed commitment to cancer prevention and excitement for next year’s 25th anniversary luncheon. Congratulations to our honorees!
A Walk in the Park for Cancer Prevention at the 8th Annual Prevent Cancer 5K

More than 700 runners, walkers and dogs gathered at Nationals Park on September 25—a brisk but sunny fall morning—for the 8th Annual Prevent Cancer 5K Walk/Run and Health Fair. The event raised more than $290,000 to support cancer prevention through research, education, outreach and advocacy. This year’s 5K event was part of “DC Calls It Quits,” a week-long initiative of the DC Tobacco Free Coalition and the DC Department of Health to “inspire, equip and support DC residents to quit smoking.”

Participants, donning Prevent Cancer Foundation’s signature green or their own creatively designed team shirts, were greeted by a face painter, the Washington Nationals’ Teddy mascot and volunteers eager to cheer them to the finish line. Fitness instructor GeniLee energized the crowd with a warm-up routine before the runners and walkers hit the course, weaving through Nationals stadium and the Navy Yard neighborhood, then back to the park for the finish line.

When participants returned to the park they received goodie bags (for both humans and their four-legged friends) and Subway sandwiches to refuel. Then they could explore the health fair, which featured free flu shots (courtesy of Walgreens) and oral and skin cancer screenings from local dentists and dermatologists. Attendees could also take a walk through the Prevent Cancer Super Colon® to learn more about colorectal cancer, practice their swings at the batting cages, pose for photos at a photo booth and visit the Captain Cookie food truck. Check out photos at www.facebook.com/preventcancer.

It’s never too early to start fundraising for next year’s 5K! It’s a great way to spend time with family and friends while getting a little exercise and supporting cancer prevention. Recruit your team now and stay tuned for an announcement for the 2017 Prevent Cancer 5K!

Obesity & Cancer

According to experts, in the near future obesity will overtake tobacco as the leading preventable cause of cancer in the United States. Approximately two-thirds of American adults and one-third of children are overweight or obese. The good news is that even a modest weight loss of 5–10 percent of body weight can have a big payoff in health benefits. Here are some tips to use or share:

Healthy Weight Tips

- Increase Daily Activity
- Eat Moderately
- Be Slow and Steady
- Make Realistic Goals
- Turn the TV Off
- Sleep Right
- Keep a Log
- Skip Sugary Drinks
- Slow and Steady

Obesity Increases the risk of dying from many cancers.

These include cancers of the:
- Breast
- Cervix
- Colon and Rectum
- Esophagus
- Gallbladder
- Kidney
- Liver
- Multiple Myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
- Ovary
- Pancreas
- Prostate
- Stomach
- Uterus

Stop Cancer Before It Starts!
CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES
MISSION AND HISTORY

The Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program is a bipartisan effort, founded in 1991, to increase the public’s understanding of cancer prevention and early detection. Families of Senate, House, Cabinet, Supreme Court and the Diplomatic Corps are invited to work within their respective constituencies to educate the public. The Congressional Families Program offers educational events, materials and resources, enabling its members to bring the message of cancer prevention and early detection back to their communities.

www.congressionalfamilies.org

The Prevent Cancer Foundation is one of the nation’s leading voluntary health organizations and the only U.S. nonprofit focused solely on cancer prevention and early detection. Founded in 1985, it has elevated cancer prevention to prominence and fulfills its mission through research, education, outreach and advocacy across the country. Our public education programs have applied this scientific knowledge to inform the public about ways they can reduce their cancer risks.

STOP CANCER BEFORE IT STARTS!®
www.preventcancer.org

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