

# Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program®

of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®



FALL/  
WINTER  
2019

## ACTIONS

WWW.CONGRESSIONALFAMILIES.ORG

### “Prevention at Every Age” at the 27th Annual Action for Cancer Awareness Awards Luncheon

As U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg entered the Members Room of the Library of Congress, a bipartisan audience—including members of Congress, congressional spouses and leaders in the cancer community—greeted her with a standing ovation. Cancer knows no political party, and perhaps no time was this more apparent than at the 27th Annual Action for Cancer Awareness Awards Luncheon.

The Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program® held its signature event on September 26, celebrating Justice Ginsburg, **LeeAnn Johnson** (spouse of Rep. Bill Johnson, Ohio), **Amanda Soto** (spouse of Rep. Darren Soto, FL) and **Patrick Dempsey**, actor, producer and founder of the Dempsey Center. The theme “Prevention at Every Age” highlighted each of their efforts to promote cancer prevention and early detection among Americans of all ages and across all populations.

**Congressional Families Program® Executive Director Lisa McGovern** began the program by acknowledging the recent death of journalist **Cokie Roberts** from breast cancer complications. Ms. Roberts was honored at the 2013 luncheon for her work to raise awareness and encourage screening. She was very special to this community having grown up in a congressional family herself (both



*L to R: Amanda Soto, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Lisa McGovern, Patrick Dempsey, LeeAnn Johnson*

parents served in Congress). She will be missed. **Prevent Cancer Foundation® Founder and CEO Carolyn “Bo” Aldigé** spoke passionately about the Foundation’s mission, followed by warm welcoming remarks from **Speaker Nancy Pelosi**.

Investigation Discovery’s **Paula Zahn**, who served as master of ceremonies, recognized members of Congress in attendance before beginning the awards portion of the program. More than 40 congressional spouses and over 40 members of Congress attended the event.

**LeeAnn Johnson** and **Amanda Soto** were each recognized with the *Congressional Families Leadership Award* for their contributions in their home communities and as members of the Program’s Executive Council.

LeeAnn, a registered dental hygienist, has used her expertise to identify signs of skin cancer in loved ones, encouraging them to get screened. She is active with Memorial Health System in her community and recently planned a hospital tour and cancer screening day in Belpre, Ohio, to educate residents in her home district.

Amanda is an active op-ed contributor and participant in the Program’s “Posting with a Purpose” campaign, raising awareness through social media. Inspired by a Program seminar highlighting the Prevent Cancer Foundation’s *Breast Health Education for Young Women Facilitator’s Guide*, Amanda organized two breast cancer awareness events featuring local

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**CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES  
CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM®**  
of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®

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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Dear Congressional Families members and friends,**

Like many of you, cancer has touched my family, and recently we have been hit again. It's devastating—but it's also motivating. I have never been more passionate about or committed to our efforts focusing on cancer prevention and early detection and supporting innovative research. Thank you for being part of this team.

Looking back on what the Congressional Families Program® and our members have accomplished this year brings me hope and gratitude. At our September 26th awards luncheon, we celebrated true cancer champions—U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Ruth Bader Ginsburg**, actor/producer and founder of the Dempsey Center **Patrick Dempsey** and congressional spouses **LeeAnn Johnson** and **Amanda Soto**. What an inspiring day to see a room filled with members of both parties coming together to renew our commitment to this fight. Cancer is a tough foe—there is no room for partisanship if we are going to beat it. When it comes to cancer, we are all on the same team. We must be.

As a shining example of our bipartisan work, I drove to Ohio in early November for a Cancer Prevention, Early Detection and Wellness Day organized with a local hospital by Executive Council member **LeeAnn Johnson**. (Read more on page 5.). It was a great opportunity for LeeAnn to showcase the resources and wonderful work being done in her district, using the vehicle of the Congressional Families Program®. **Please contact us about organizing an event or conversation in your district!**

In this issue, you will also read about the latest efforts to curb the youth vaping epidemic (page 3). There are still unknowns about e-cigarettes, but what we do know is they contain nicotine and other harmful chemicals, and teens who vape may be more likely to try cigarettes in the future. The lung cancer death rate has been declining because fewer people are smoking, but e-cigarettes might be creating a new generation of smokers. It is important that we talk to our own kids about this and educate our friends, neighbors and communities as well.

As we look ahead to the new year—and a new decade—I invite you to take action with our Program and in your community. Together, we can make America healthier!

Wishing you and your family blessings of a healthy and happy holiday season,

Sincerely,

Lisa McGovern, Executive Director

## UPCOMING EVENTS

March 25, 2020

**Prevent Cancer Advocacy Workshop**

*FHI 360 Conference Center, Washington, DC*

April 15-17, 2020

**Prevent Cancer Dialogue**

**Prevention | Screening | Action**

*Hilton Crystal City, Arlington, VA*

*Learn more at [www.preventcancer.org/dialogue-for-action](http://www.preventcancer.org/dialogue-for-action)*

Thursday, May 14, 2020

**26th Annual Prevent Cancer Spring Gala**

*National Building Museum*

*The 2020 Spring Gala will be held under the gracious patronage of His Excellency, André Haspels, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and Mrs. Bernie Haspels.*

## THANK YOU FOR TAKING ACTION: OP-ED OUTREACH

Each month, the Congressional Families Program® offers members and spouses the opportunity to submit op-eds about cancer prevention and early detection to their local media outlets. Thank you to the following members and spouses who have recently participated:

- ▶ Amy Carter – Georgia
- ▶ Pat Engel – New York
- ▶ Brenda Fleischmann – Tennessee
- ▶ Lorena Gonzalez – Texas
- ▶ Barbara Grassley – Iowa
- ▶ Mikey Hoeven – North Dakota
- ▶ LeeAnn Johnson – Ohio
- ▶ Marcia Latta – Ohio
- ▶ Laina Marshall – Kansas
- ▶ Mary McKinley – West Virginia
- ▶ Nancy Olson – Texas
- ▶ Julie Dann Schneider – Illinois
- ▶ Amanda Soto – Florida
- ▶ Rose Vela – Texas
- ▶ Rep. Roger and Patty Williams – Texas

Learn more about how you can educate the public about cancer prevention and early detection at [www.congressionalfamilies.org](http://www.congressionalfamilies.org).

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



**Bristol-Myers Squibb**

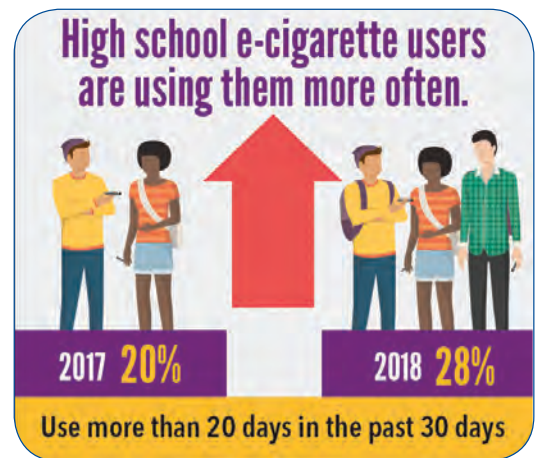


## COMBATING THE YOUTH VAPING EPIDEMIC

E-cigarette use among kids and teens has been in the news frequently in the past year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of high schoolers who vape increased by an alarming 78% in the past year alone—and in 2018, one in five high school students used e-cigarettes (the most commonly used tobacco product among youth). Now, with more than 2,051 reports (as of November 5) of a vaping-related lung illness since March, including 39 deaths, it's even more important to combat this epidemic.

Over the past few years, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has taken steps to squash e-cigarette use among youth. Here's a quick timeline:

- **August 2016:** FDA classifies e-cigarettes as tobacco products to be regulated by the agency.
- **September 2018:** FDA gives e-cigarette manufacturers 60 days to submit a plan for how they will prevent teens from using their products.
- **March 2019:** FDA issues proposed regulations to:
  - ban sales of flavored products to youth under age 18
  - add enhanced age verification requirements for products (which must be sold in age-restricted areas)
  - ban sales of products targeted to minors (e.g., candy flavored vaping products)
- **September 2019:** FDA issues a warning letter to Juul Labs Inc., which manufactures the most commonly sold e-cigarette in the U.S., for marketing its products as *modified risk tobacco products* (indicating they are less harmful than other tobacco products) without an appropriate FDA order in effect.
- **September 2019:** The Trump administration announces the FDA will finalize a policy in the coming weeks to remove all non-tobacco flavors of e-cigarettes, including mint and menthols, from the market. *Editor's Note:* Since this announcement, the administration has appeared to back away from a ban and no new policy has been announced as of press time.
- **October 2019:** FDA issues a warning to consumers to not use e-cigarette products that contain tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), given their possible connection to recent lung injuries. Consumers are advised to purchase vaping products from only licensed retailers and not to modify or add any substances, such as THC or other oils, to products.
- **November 2019:** The CDC identifies vitamin E acetate, an additive sometimes used in THC and other vaping products, as a potential culprit for the lung illness (other ingredients continue to be investigated).



SOURCE: Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011–2018. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), February 2019.

## CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

In addition to FDA action, several pieces of legislation have been introduced into Congress to curb youth tobacco use, including the *Stopping Appealing Flavors in E-Cigarettes for Kids (SAFE Kids) Act* by Senators Dick Durbin (IL) and Lisa Murkowski (AK) and Representatives Diana DeGette (CO) and Jamie Raskin (MD); the *Tobacco-Free Youth Act* sponsored by Leader Mitch McConnell (KY) and Senator Tim Kaine (VA); and the *Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2019* by Representatives Frank Pallone (NJ) and Donna Shalala (FL). Although this is great progress, there's still much to be done to curb vaping use among youth. If you know a teen who vapes, encourage them to visit [www.therealcost.betobaccofree.hhs.gov](http://www.therealcost.betobaccofree.hhs.gov) for resources and support to help quit.

## CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES LEND VOICES TO NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS CONGRESSIONAL PSA PROGRAM

Since 1985, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)—a Congressional Families Program® sponsor—has hosted the Congressional PSA program in off-election years. Members of Congress and their family members are invited to appear in television and radio PSAs featuring their choice of six nonprofit organizations, including the Prevent Cancer Foundation®. The Congressional Families Program® worked with NAB to develop a spot promoting the importance of screening. This year, more than 300 members of Congress and family members participated, and many recorded the cancer prevention PSA. These spots will be shown on local tv and radio stations through the end of the year. Thank you to participants for using your voices to educate constituents about cancer prevention and early detection. [To learn more about the Congressional PSA program, visit www.nab.org/cpsa.](http://www.nab.org/cpsa)



## ACTION FOR CANCER AWARENESS AWARDS LUNCHEON

(continued from page 1)

bilingual doctors in her home district to educate Florida women, with a focus on Latina communities.

**Patrick Dempsey** received the *Excellence in Cancer Awareness Award* for his leading role in founding the Dempsey Center and The Dempsey Challenge, the Center's run/walk/cycle fundraiser. The Dempsey Center, founded in 2008 and inspired by his mother's battle with ovarian cancer, provides free services to those affected by cancer, including acupuncture, counseling, yoga and nutrition classes. The Center serves residents in Maine and has sites in Lewiston—Patrick's hometown—and South Portland. Patrick gave an impassioned speech about the importance of working together to make progress in cancer prevention and early detection, and invited Dempsey Center Executive Director **Wendy Tardif** to share the stage.

**U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg** received the *Special Recognition Award* as a symbol of perseverance and dedication to fitness and wellness no matter one's age, health or professional obligations. Justice Ginsburg is a cancer survivor and began regularly exercising with a trainer as a way to strengthen her body following treatment for her first cancer diagnosis at age 66. At age 86, she continues her notoriously rigorous exercise regime, inspiring Americans of all ages to prioritize health and fitness to reduce their cancer risk.

"It was very moving to hear Justice Ginsburg's remarks, especially when she noted, 'There is nothing like an encounter with cancer to make one relish the joys of being alive,'" said Lisa McGovern. "The Justice continued saying, 'It is as though a special zestful spice seasons my work and days. Whatever I do comes with heightened appreciation that I am able to do it.'"

As the event concluded, attendees renewed their collective commitment to use their visibility and capacity to lower cancer rates through education, outreach, advocacy and research.



**L to R:** Paula Zahn, Carolyn "Bo" Aldigé, LeeAnn Johnson, Librarian of Congress Dr. Carla Hayden, Amanda Soto, Marcelle Leahy (spouse of Sen. Patrick Leahy, VT)



**L to R:** Martha Brooks (spouse of Rep. Mo Brooks, AL), Patti Garamendi (spouse of Rep. John Garamendi, CA), Mary McKinley (spouse of Rep. David McKinley, WV), Abby Blunt (spouse of Sen. Roy Blunt, MO), Rep. Jim McGovern (MA) and Katie Posey (spouse of Rep. Bill Posey, FL)



**L to R:** Patrick Dempsey, Rep. Chellie Pingree (ME) and Mary Herman (spouse of Rep. Angus King, ME)



**L to R:** Rep. Diana DeGette (CO), Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL), Sally Thornberry (spouse of Rep. Mac Thornberry, TX), Rep. Joe Kennedy (MA)



Speaker Nancy Pelosi



**L to R:** Lacey Delgado (spouse of Rep. Antonio Delgado, NY), Assistant Secretary Marie Royce and Terry Loeb sack (spouse of Rep. Dave Loeb sack, Iowa)

To view photos from the event, check out our Facebook album at [www.tinyurl.com/CFlunch19](http://www.tinyurl.com/CFlunch19).



## CANCER PREVENTION AT THE IOWA STATE FAIR



The Iowa State Fair is the place to be for presidential candidates every four years, and this year was no exception. But you can count on **Sen. Chuck and Barbara Grassley** of Iowa to be there every year! For more than ten years, they have served as honorary chairs of the Prevent Cancer Foundation® and John Stoddard Cancer Center Health Awareness and Screening Booth. The Grassleys reliably visit the booth and help distribute information on cancer prevention as dermatologists give free skin cancer checks. On this year's opening day alone, more than 800 people visited the booth and 62 people received skin cancer checks by a dermatology nurse practitioner.

The cause is a personal one for the Grassleys, as they credit early detection for saving Barbara's life after a breast cancer diagnosis more than 30 years ago. It is also personal for **Rep. Dave Loebsack** of Iowa, who visited the booth to meet fairgoers and show his support for cancer prevention. Rep. Loebsack's wife, Terry, is a melanoma survivor, and the Loebsacks are longtime advocates for cancer prevention and early detection. Learn more today about skin cancer and ways to reduce your risk at [www.preventcancer.org/skin](http://www.preventcancer.org/skin).



## LEEANN JOHNSON HOSTS CANCER PREVENTION, EARLY DETECTION AND WELLNESS DAY IN OHIO

On November 2, Executive Council member and 2019 Congressional Families Leadership honoree **LeeAnn Johnson**, in collaboration with Memorial Health System and the Congressional Families Program®, hosted a Cancer Prevention, Early Detection & Wellness Day in Belpre, Ohio. The event, which was open to the public, featured discounted cancer screenings, wellness demonstrations, healthy food samples and walk-through inflatable organs—a colon and a breast—that served as teaching tools to help people better understand healthy tissue and the stages of disease.

The event also included presentations by medical experts, followed by an enlightening question and answer discussion with the audience. **Dr. Molly McAfee**, a thoracic surgeon at Marietta Health System, discussed lung cancer screening and showed a video of minimally invasive lung surgery. **Dr. Vidas Dumasius**, a surgeon at Marietta Memorial Hospital, spoke on breast cancer screening and breast reconstruction options following cancer. **Lisa McGovern** gave attendees an overview of the work of the Congressional Families Program® and the Prevent Cancer Foundation® and applauded LeeAnn for her initiative in organizing the event to promote health and wellness in her community.

The Cancer Prevention Day was preceded on Friday by a private tour of Belpre Medical Campus and

Marietta Strecker Cancer Center and a discussion with Lisa, LeeAnn and more than 20 doctors and representatives from the Memorial Health System.

According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health, cancer deaths in 2016 were 11% higher in Ohio than the rest of the U.S.; the rate in Washington County, where the event was held, is even higher. Washington County is in rural Appalachia, where there are many obstacles to reducing cancer risk, such as poverty, cultural beliefs/practices, and access to health care, health insurance and screenings, so events like this are important to better reach the community.

"I am honored to have worked with my friend and fellow congressional spouse, Lisa McGovern, to hold a cancer prevention, awareness and screening event in Washington County," LeeAnn said. "Thanks to the support of the team at Marietta Memorial Health System and Strecker Cancer Center, it was a huge success. Every congressional district could do this. I'm certainly willing to help pass on our lessons learned to any of my fellow congressional spouses. If we work together, we can defeat this deadly disease."

**Interested in hosting an event in your district or state? Let's do it!**  
**Contact Lisa at**  
[Lisa.McGovern@preventcancer.org](mailto:Lisa.McGovern@preventcancer.org).

## CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES PROGRAM 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](http://www.congressionalfamilies.org)



## CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM®

of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®

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## Congressional Families Cancer Prevention

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The Prevent Cancer Foundation® is one of the nation's leading 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.

[www.preventcancer.org](http://www.preventcancer.org)

Do you know of a Member or spouse who might want more information about the Congressional Families Program? Contact Lisa McGovern at [lisa.mcGovern@preventcancer.org](mailto:lisa.mcGovern@preventcancer.org).

## POSTING WITH A PURPOSE: MAKING AN IMPACT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

The Congressional Families Program® distributes weekly social media posts for members and spouses to share, highlighting facts or tips related to monthly cancer observances (e.g., Lung Cancer Awareness Month) or another relevant occurrence, such as National Family Health History Day. We encourage you to share these educational posts with your followers on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Remember to use #CongressionalFamilies and tag @PreventCancer so we won't miss your post. If you aren't receiving this information and would like to, email Lisa at [Lisa.McGovern@preventcancer.org](mailto:Lisa.McGovern@preventcancer.org).

Thank you to the following members and spouses who have shared posts on social media in recent months:

- ▶ Rep. Buddy Carter – Georgia
- ▶ Deserai Crow – Colorado
- ▶ Dr. Maya Rockey Moore Cummings – Maryland
- ▶ Rep. Debbie Dingell – Michigan
- ▶ Laina Marshall – Kansas
- ▶ Rep. David McKinley – West Virginia
- ▶ Rep. Pete Olson – Texas
- ▶ Kaira Rouda – California
- ▶ Amanda Soto – Florida
- ▶ Rep. Darren Soto – Florida
- ▶ Rep. Dina Titus – Nevada
- ▶ Rep. Susan Wild – Pennsylvania
- ▶ Rep. Roger Williams – Texas

