

Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program®

of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®



SPRING/
SUMMER
2021

ACTIONS

WWW.CONGRESSIONALFAMILIES.ORG

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF BUILDING BIPARTISAN BRIDGES TO PREVENT CANCER

Thirty years ago, **Rep. Doris Matsui**, then a congressional spouse, had an idea. As president of the Congressional Club, she sought to harness the talents, energy and geographic diversity of the bipartisan Club's spouses to join in service to fellow Americans through education and outreach activities. Rep. Matsui joined forces with **Carolyn "Bo" Aldigé**, Founder and CEO of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®, a trusted resource in the cancer community, to establish the Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program®. The rest, as they say, is history.

The Program originally focused on breast and prostate cancer awareness and prevention. As science advanced and progress was made in preventing and detecting other cancers, the Program expanded to include lung, skin, colorectal, cervical, testicular and oral cancers, as well as HPV-related cancers.

Over the years, we have created new initiatives and strengthened our founding activities. In addition to our popular op-ed program, in the past few years, "Posting with a Purpose" has allowed spouses, and more recently members of Congress, to reach their constituents through social media. We have traveled in bipartisan groups to spouses' home states to highlight local organizations working to reduce cancer in medically underserved populations. And we have supported spouses who have organized educational events in their communities by providing information, materials and speakers.



Inaugural Action for Cancer Awareness Awards Luncheon held in 1993

Technology has made it possible for even more spouses to join our events through webinars and webcasts. These educational briefings have included such vital topics as social determinants of health, young-onset colorectal cancer and cancers caused by viruses.

We have honored some of our nation's most renowned leaders at our signature Action for Cancer Awareness Awards luncheon, giving members and spouses the opportunity to personally meet and thank cancer prevention champions, including the late **Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg**, chef **José Andrés**, actor **Patrick Dempsey**, CVS (for removing tobacco products from its stores), and television host **Robin Roberts**.

(continued on page 4)



L to R: Congressional Families Program Executive Directors Past and Present, Linda Bachus (AL), Lisa McGovern (MA) and Tamra Bentsen (TX)



**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,

Here we are, more than a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Many Americans have received their vaccinations and are eager to reunite with loved ones. We are getting closer to the “new normal” we have been looking forward to.

COVID-19 has been at the forefront of many minds since early 2020, and it sometimes feels like someone hit the pause button on life. But know this: innovations and developments in the cancer world have continued! Multi-cancer early detection (MCED) tests are being developed that could use a blood test and our understanding of the human genome to help detect cancers for which there are no currently available screening tests. In March, **Rep. Terri Sewell** and **Sens. Mike Crapo** and **Michael Bennet** introduced the Medicare Multi-Cancer Screening Coverage Act of 2021, leading the effort to modernize Medicare and ensure seniors have access to this breakthrough cancer screening technology. The Prevent Cancer Foundation, the Congressional Families Program’s umbrella organization, and more than 300 organizations expressed support for the legislation, which would pave the way for the most vulnerable Americans to have access to lifesaving tests once they are approved by the FDA.

You may also have missed important cancer screening recommendation updates in the past several months. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recently released updates to its lung and colorectal cancer screening guidelines. Both updated recommendations would expand access to screening. Learn more about these screening recommendations and how they might apply to you on page 5 and remember to get your screenings Back on the Books if you have delayed them.

We also have significant milestones to celebrate this year—2021 marks the 30th anniversary of the Congressional Families Program and the 50th anniversary of the National Cancer Act of 1971. Take a moment to think of how far we have come as a nation in the fight against cancer—a word that was historically whispered and rarely coupled with “prevention.” The Prevent Cancer Foundation and Congressional Families Program are proud of our role in making—and keeping—prevention and early detection as part of the national strategy to reduce cancer rates and deaths. And we couldn’t do it without you. It takes many drops to create a wave of change.

Warmly,

Lisa McGovern, Executive Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 17, 2021

Prevent Cancer Advocacy Workshop
Virtual

SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

27th Annual Prevent Cancer Gala

The 2021 Prevent Cancer Gala will be held under the gracious patronage of His Excellency, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Lee Soo Hyuck and Ms. Hye Kyung Hwang.

OCTOBER 19, 2021

29th Annual Congressional Families Action for Cancer Awareness Awards Luncheon
Washington, DC

Additional event details available at www.preventcancer.org.

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. Op-eds can be personalized and tailored for local use. Thank you to the following members and spouses who have recently requested state-specific information to personalize their op-eds and share vital cancer prevention and early detection messages in their home communities:

- William Coleman – New Jersey
- Leah Dunn – Florida
- Jennifer Hagedorn – Minnesota
- Mikey Hoeven – North Dakota
- LeeAnn Johnson – Ohio
- Wayne Kye, D.D.S. – New York

Learn more about how you can educate the public about cancer prevention and early detection at www.congressionalfamilies.org.

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50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL CANCER ACT OF 1971 CELEBRATES PROGRESS AGAINST CANCER

Fifty years ago, President Richard Nixon signed the National Cancer Act of 1971 into law, declaring a War on Cancer and paving the way for remarkable advancement in the study and treatment of these diseases. The Act created the infrastructure needed for a nationally coordinated approach to cancer; designated the National Cancer Institute (NCI) director as a presidential appointment; set up the National Cancer Advisory Board and President's Cancer Panel; allowed for a bypass budget directly to the president; and created the first cancer centers and cancer control programs. It also expanded the National Clinical Trials Network.

Since the Act's passage, we have made significant progress against cancer. In the last several decades, the rates of new cancer cases and cancer deaths have declined. According to the American Cancer Society, the cancer death rate hit a peak in 1991, but has since seen a 31% drop, with the greatest one-year declines in the most recent two years of data (from 2016 to 2017 and 2017 to 2018). Much of this decline is due to reduced lung cancer rates because fewer people are smoking, but there have also been long-term declines in breast, prostate and colorectal cancer rates. Advances in screening and treatments for each of these cancers have contributed to the falling rates.

We have also seen the development of highly effective vaccines, such as the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, which can prevent most cases of cervical cancer and at least five other types of cancer. The hepatitis B vaccine and hepatitis C tests and treatment prevent or cure these viruses which are leading causes of liver cancer.

As the cancer community celebrates 50 years of the National Cancer Act, we must recognize we have a long way to go. Cancer is still the second most common cause of death in men and women in the U.S. Cervical cancer is highly preventable with the HPV vaccine and screening, but it remains the second leading cause of cancer death among women in their 20s and 30s. Cancer disparities persist, with Black Americans having the highest death rates for most cancers. The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to cause more late-stage or missed cancer diagnoses as many Americans delayed medical appointments. We are sure to face more challenges ahead, but with continued collaboration and infrastructure put in place by the National Cancer Act, we can continue to see great progress.

WHAT ARE NCI-DESIGNATED CANCER CENTERS AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

The National Cancer Act of 1971 established a network of 15 cancer care centers, which has now grown to 71 centers in 36 states and Washington, D.C. These leading centers offer cutting-edge cancer treatments and clinical trials with resources dedicated to fostering research programs and faculty and facilities that will lead to further innovation in cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment. Every year, approximately 250,000 patients will receive their cancer diagnoses—even more will receive treatment—at these centers. Some centers also provide public education and outreach programs to medically underserved communities.

Sources:

"Why Commemorate 50 Years of the National Cancer Act?" National Cancer Institute, posted to the NCI website February 8, 2021. <https://www.cancer.gov/news-events/nca50/commemorate-national-cancer-act-50-years>

"National Cancer Act of 1971." National Cancer Institute, updated on NCI website February 2, 2021. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-nci/overview/history/national-cancer-act-1971>.

"NCI-Designated Cancer Centers." National Cancer Institute, updated on website June 24, 2019. <https://www.cancer.gov/research/infrastructure/cancer-centers>



Arkansas legislators present a check to the UAMS Foundation.

THE QUEST FOR NCI DESIGNATION IN ARKANSAS: SPOTLIGHT ON MARTHA MCKENZIE HILL

Cancer centers must meet rigorous standards for research to receive NCI designation, and not every state currently has one—including Arkansas where efforts are underway to change that. It is a thorough process that involves the work of many including **Martha McKenzie Hill**, spouse to Rep. French Hill of Arkansas. Martha serves on the Advisory Board of the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)—the state's only academic medical center—which is seeking NCI designation. Currently, the closest centers are in Memphis, Oklahoma City and Dallas, meaning some patients could have to travel hundreds of miles for treatment. In Arkansas, there is a demonstrated need for access to cutting-edge cancer treatment, care, education, prevention, and outreach, particularly in rural Arkansas and where there are medically underserved communities. In connection with her volunteer Rockefeller Board duties, Martha was inspired to join legislators and others working in public-private partnership to gain NCI designation for the state. We look forward to following UAMS on this journey.

Check out our new **Real Spouses of Capitol Hill** video series! Hear from congressional spouses promoting health and wellness in their home states through outreach and education. Watch the series at preventcancer.org/rsoc.

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF BUILDING BIPARTISAN BRIDGES TO PREVENT CANCER

(continued from page 1)

How has this program thrived for 30 years? The answer is YOU. Spouse leadership has been key to our success: a congressional spouse serves as executive director of the Program, guided by a bipartisan, bicameral executive council of 18 spouses and an advisory committee of more than 170 members. Trust in each other and the information provided by the Prevent Cancer Foundation have been instrumental in building relationships with each other and the public. Thank you for using your visibility and voices to help us reduce cancer deaths and ensure that fewer families hear the frightening words, “You have cancer.” Please continue sharing information and motivating healthy lifestyle choices to prevent cancer or detect it early, when treatment options are most promising. Together, we can save lives.



A group of members and spouses at the 25th Annual Action for Cancer Awareness Awards luncheon in 2017.



L to R: Bill Sandmeyer, Rep. John Garamendi (CA), Dr. Lisa Kennedy Sheldon, Lisa McGovern, Norma Cárdenas (spouse of Rep. Tony Cárdenas, CA), Laina Marshall (spouse of Sen. Roger Marshall, KS), Barbara Grassley (spouse of Sen. Chuck Grassley, Iowa), Sherry Mitchell (spouse of then-Rep. Paul Mitchell, MI), Pat O'Halleran (spouse of Rep. Tom O'Halleran, AZ), Brian Monahan, M.D., at a 2018 seminar.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: PATTI GARAMENDI

MAKE IT A DATE—WITH YOUR DOCTOR

Our Congressional Club Liaison **Patti Garamendi** talks about how she and husband **Rep. John Garamendi** of California prioritize their health by coordinating medical appointments.

Congress is busy, schedules are challenging, and many of us are toggling between our home states and D.C., making it hard to schedule routine medical and screening appointments. But it is so important to create a plan—and stick to it, no matter what.

Every year, John and I schedule a very special date—at our annual check-up with our beloved physician of 25 years. We knew it was important, even this past year, to keep this tradition. We felt safe with the protocols the facility had in place for the medical professionals and patients, such as mask-wearing, enhanced cleaning, social distancing and limited appointments. I've learned from the Prevent Cancer Foundation that many Americans delayed their medical appointments this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic; now is the time to get those back on the books. John and I do everything the same day, so it keeps us on schedule. It's always a good feeling to know that things are okay. Take a minute now and make your appointment. And encourage your loved ones to do the same.

To learn more about rescheduling your medical appointments and cancer screenings during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit preventcancer.org/backonthebooks.



IS YOUR APPOINTMENT BACK ON THE BOOKS?



If you cancelled or postponed a routine cancer screening during the pandemic, it's time to get your appointment **Back on the Books**. Early detection saves lives—maybe even yours.

Call your doctor today if you're due (or overdue!) for your:

- ▶ Mammogram
- ▶ Pap test/HPV test
- ▶ Colorectal cancer screening (colonoscopy or at-home stool-based test)
- ▶ Lung cancer screening
- ▶ Skin check
- ▶ Hepatitis C screening
- ▶ Prostate cancer test
- ▶ Dental appointment

More info and resources at
preventcancer.org/backonthebooks

NEWS YOU CAN USE: IMPORTANT CANCER SCREENING UPDATES

In the past few months, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) has released two major updates related to cancer screenings. The USPSTF issues recommendations with a letter grade (an A, B, C, or D grade or an I—Insufficient Evidence

to Make a Recommendation) based on the evidence and the benefits and potential harms of a service. Under the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies must cover screening services with an “A” or “B” grade, so these recommendations are crucial

to ensuring Americans have access to affordable preventive services. As you continue to get your routine medical screenings **Back on the Books**, make sure you are following the most current guidelines detailed below.

COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING

What's the news? In May, the USPSTF released a new recommendation for colorectal cancer screening, giving a “B” recommendation for screening adults of average risk ages 45-49. (There was previously no recommendation for colorectal cancer screening for this age group.) The recommendation for those at average risk ages 50-75 remains an “A” grade.

What does it mean?

The recommendation is in response to an alarming trend of increased colorectal cancer cases in people younger than 50, known as “young-onset” colorectal cancer, in recent years. Incidence rates of young onset colorectal cancer cases have increased by 2% each year since 1990. The median age of diagnosis has now dropped from 72 to 66.

This will remove a significant financial barrier and increase access to lifesaving screenings for thousands of Americans. The American Cancer Society had already changed its recommendation in 2018 for colorectal cancer screening to begin at 45 (down from age 50) for those at average risk.

LUNG CANCER SCREENING

What's the news? In early March, the USPSTF released new guidelines on lung cancer screening, giving a “B” grade for screening of adults ages 50-80 with a 20 pack-year history who currently smoke or have quit within the last 15 years. (A “pack-year” is the equivalent of smoking one pack per day for a year.)

What does it mean? The updated recommendation lowers the eligible screening age by five years and lowers the pack-year requirement, effectively expanding screening access to millions more smokers or former smokers. (The previous recommendation was for ages 55-80 with a 30 pack-year history.) According to The Washington Post, the change means that 15 million

people—nearly twice the previous number—are now eligible for lung cancer screening. The expanded eligibility should be particularly beneficial to Black Americans and women, who tend to smoke fewer cigarettes than white men but still have a higher risk of lung cancer.

To learn more about these and other screening recommendations, visit preventcancer.org/cancer-screening-101.

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



CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM®

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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

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.

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) and other relevant occurrences, such as World Cancer Day. We encourage you to share these educational posts with your followers on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Remember to use #CongressionalFamilies and tag @PreventCancer to coordinate our efforts and 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.

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

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ▶ Sydney Barron – AZ | ▶ Laina Marshall – KS |
| ▶ Rep. Gus Bilirakis – FL | ▶ Rep. Jim McGovern – MA |
| ▶ Rep. Brendan Boyle – PA | ▶ Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks – IA |
| ▶ Rep. Mo Brooks – AL | ▶ Rep. Markwayne Mullin – OK |
| ▶ Rep. Michael Burgess, M.D. – TX | ▶ Jane Mryan – IN |
| ▶ Dr. Desera Crow – CO | ▶ Rep. Donald Payne, Jr. – NJ |
| ▶ Rep. Jason Crow – CO | ▶ Rep. Scott Perry – PA |
| ▶ Rep. John Garamendi – CA | ▶ Kaira Rouda – CA |
| ▶ Lorena Saenz Gonzalez – TX | ▶ Leslie Small – GA |
| ▶ Rep. Paul Gosar, D.D.S. – AZ | ▶ Rep. Adam Smith – WA |
| ▶ Nicole Beus Harris – MD | ▶ Amanda Soto – FL |
| ▶ Rep. Alcee Hastings – FL | ▶ Rep. Marilyn Strickland – WA |
| ▶ LeeAnn Johnson – OH | ▶ Rep. Randy Weber – TX |
| ▶ Wayne Kye, D.D.S. – NY | ▶ Rep. Nikema Williams – GA |

