

Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program®

of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®



FALL/
WINTER
2021

ACTIONS

WWW.CONGRESSIONALFAMILIES.ORG

GOING BEYOND THE PINK: CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES HOSTS BREAST CANCER DISPARITIES WEBINAR



L to R:

Lacey Schwartz Delgado

Richard Wender, M.D.

Linda Goler Blount, MPH

Paris Thomas, MS, MCHES

An August 2021 Prevent Cancer Foundation® survey found that 42% of women do not know when they should be screened for breast cancer. The numbers are even greater for younger women and women of color, who are disproportionately impacted by breast cancer. On Wednesday, October 20, 2021, more than 100 congressional spouses and members of the Hill community gathered for a Congressional Families Program webinar on “Understanding Breast Cancer Screening Guidelines and Overcoming Disparities” to learn more about what is being done to address these issues.

Lacey Schwartz Delgado, Emmy-nominated producer, writer, and director, who is also spouse of Rep. Antonio Delgado of New York, moderated the panel of distinguished speakers.

Richard Wender, M.D., Chair, Family Medicine and Community Health, Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, gave an overview of the various guideline-issuing organizations and why and how they differ in their breast cancer screening recommendations. He

encouraged women at average risk to begin screening at age 40 or by 45 at the latest (The Prevent Cancer Foundation supports the recommendation that women at average risk begin annual screening at age 40). He also explained the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on screening rates.

Linda Goler Blount, MPH, President & CEO, Black Women’s Health Imperative, went more in-depth on the disparities between white and Black women in the U.S and what we know and do not know about why these disparities exist. She stressed that lack of representation in research and clinical trials is one area of concern that exacerbates the issue.

Paris Thomas, MS, MCHES, Director of Program Operations, Equal Hope, spoke about the Chicago-based organization’s work using a successful evidence-based model for understanding and reducing disparities in the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. (Equal Hope received a \$25,000 grant from the Prevent Cancer Foundation this year to support its breast and cervical cancer screening program). **Vera Davis**, spouse of Rep. Danny Davis of Illinois, introduced Ms.

Thomas, as the organization serves their district. Ms. Thomas demonstrated the exceptional progress Chicago has made in reducing breast cancer disparities and how the organization adjusted to the pandemic.

The program concluded with a lively Q&A (**Donalynne Schaffer**, community outreach worker, represented Equal Hope) and a call to action from Congressional Families Program Executive Director **Lisa McGovern** for registrants to get their routine cancer screening appointments back on the books and share the message with their communities.

TAKE ACTION

If you missed the webinar, the recording is available on-demand (preventcancer.org/102021cfwebinar). You can also find resources and panelist presentations in our digital toolkit. (preventcancer.org/cfbreastcancertoolkit)



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

INSIDE

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	2
BACK ON THE BOOKS SURVEY	3
STAY SKIN HEALTHY WEBINAR	3



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking back at my spring letter, I seemed very optimistic about the year ahead! We had milestones to commemorate, promising vaccines helping life return to “normal,” and exciting developments in the cancer world.

And plans were well underway for our 29th Annual Action for Cancer Awareness luncheon to be held in October, but as we got closer to the date, we felt that the right decision for us was to cancel this year’s traditional luncheon and look forward to next year. **So please SAVE THE DATE: September 21, 2022, for the next luncheon!**

The good news is that congressional spouses take pride in our ability to be flexible, and we were able to quickly pivot to a celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Congressional Families Program to be held in December. Plans for a bipartisan reception are underway as I write! We look forward to being together to reflect on our history of spouses uniting for three decades (!) to help increase the public’s understanding of cancer prevention and early detection. This year also marks the 50th Anniversary of the National Cancer Act and we will take time to consider the progress that has been made in the war on cancer and ready ourselves for the battles ahead.

Finally, as we gather with loved ones during the holiday season, we encourage you to spend a few minutes of your time together talking about your family health history. There are perhaps no greater gifts than the gifts of family, knowledge and health.

Wishing you and your family a safe and healthy holiday season,

Lisa McGovern

Lisa McGovern, Executive Director

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

GRAIL



Bristol-Myers Squibb



ORACLE

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 13, 2022

Prevent Cancer Health Fair & 5K Walk/Run
Nationals Park, Washington, DC

SEPTEMBER 21, 2022

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 participated in our op-ed program to share vital cancer prevention and early detection messages in their home communities:

- ▶ Scott Fischbach – MN
- ▶ Patti Garamendi – CA
- ▶ Lorena Gonzalez – Texas
- ▶ Mikey Hoeven – ND
- ▶ LeeAnn Johnson – Ohio
- ▶ Wayne Kye, D.D.S. – NY
- ▶ Marcia Latta – Ohio
- ▶ Nicole Beus Harris – MD
- ▶ Martha Hill – AK
- ▶ Karen Sessions – Texas
- ▶ Rep. Nikema Williams – GA

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

PANDEMIC DELAYED CANCER SCREENINGS, BUT MANY PLAN TO GET BACK ON THE BOOKS

Many Americans have delayed or postponed routine cancer screenings due to the pandemic. As vaccinations have increased, people have begun to return to their normal activities, but many still need to reschedule these missed or postponed appointments.

In August, the Prevent Cancer Foundation released a survey showing the toll the pandemic has taken on women's health. Approximately 74% of women who received a COVID-19 vaccine were hesitant to visit a doctor's office during the first year and a half of the pandemic, and 31% of the women who did not schedule a breast or cervical screening expressed worry about being exposed to the coronavirus. More than a quarter of women surveyed did not schedule a breast cancer screening during the pandemic; numbers were similar for cervical cancer screenings. With the rollout of vaccinations making women more comfortable about visiting their doctors' offices, 65% say they plan to prioritize scheduling breast and cervical screenings before early 2022.

The pandemic was not the only reason some women had missed routine screening appointments. Nearly a

quarter of women ages 40-60 say it's been more than three years since their last appointment with their OB-GYN or primary care provider. Almost 40% reported having worries about feeling pain or discomfort and/or feelings of awkwardness during a routine breast or cervical cancer examination.

Unfortunately, an information gap may be impeding many women from getting screenings when they need them. Half of women in the U.S. ages 21-60 don't know how often

they should be screened for cervical cancer and 42% don't know how often they should be screened for breast cancer. (See graphic for more survey highlights.)

If you have delayed a routine cancer screening, now is the time to get that appointment Back on the Books. Encourage your loved ones to do the same. Early detection saves lives. Learn more at preventcancer.org/backonthebooks.



STAY SKIN HEALTHY WITH DR. PATRICIA LUCEY

On Thursday, July 22, the Congressional Families Program co-hosted a webinar with the Congressional Club—"Stay Skin Healthy: Ask the Expert"—featuring board-certified dermatologist **Dr. Patricia Lucey**. Dr. Lucey, who was voted a top doctor in 2020-2021 by Virginia Living, Washingtonian and Arlington magazines, specializes in melanoma and skin cancer prevention and detection, as well as general dermatology, surgery and cosmetics.

Lisa McGovern kicked off the seminar

with an overview of the Congressional Families Program and the Prevent Cancer Foundation's Stay Skin Healthy campaign. The campaign launched in July 2020 and is aimed at educating young adults about protecting their skin from the sun. Dr. Lucey gave the engaged audience of congressional spouses an informative presentation on the different types of skin cancer, the meanings of SPF, UVA and UVB rays, physical and chemical sunscreens, and tips for protecting your skin as you age.

TAKE ACTION

Skin cancer prevention is necessary year-round, so we encourage you to share this vital information with your home communities regardless of the season! You'll find valuable information and sharable social media posts at stayskinhealthy.org.



PREVENT CANCER FOUNDATION SELECTED AS FIRST LADY'S LUNCHEON CHARITY

We are so grateful and honored that the Prevent Cancer Foundation was one of two charities recognized with a donation at the 2021 First Lady's Luncheon hosted by the Congressional Club. The October 22 event, attended by more than 1,700 congressional spouses and their guests from across the country, as well as spouses of the President's Cabinet, Supreme Court and Congressional leadership, honored **First Lady Dr. Jill Biden** and championed bipartisan community service. The luncheon was chaired by **Patti Garamendi (CA)** who serves as liaison between the Club and the Congressional Families Program. The recognition is especially meaningful this year as the Prevent Cancer Foundation's Congressional Families Program, founded in partnership with the Congressional Club in 1991, celebrates its 30th anniversary of congressional spouses working across the aisle and across the country to fight cancer.

Dr. Biden participated in the Congressional Families Program as a Senate spouse, and in 2000, she received the Congressional Families Leadership Award at the annual Action for Cancer Awareness Awards luncheon. The Congressional Club's contribution was made in honor of the Biden family's decades of work devoted to fighting cancer and in memory of their beloved son, Beau.

*L to R: Patti Garamendi (CA)
and Dr. Jill Biden*

Photos courtesy: Congressional Club

BBB WISE GIVING ALLIANCE SPOTLIGHTS CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES PROGRAM'S FOCUS ON TRUST

This June, the Congressional Families Program was highlighted in Better Business Bureau's (BBB) Wise Giving Alliance's Inspiring Collaboration article series. The series showcases impactful examples of organizations embracing collaboration and joining forces to make change happen. **Lisa McGovern** and **Carolyn "Bo" Aldigé**, Founder and CEO of Prevent Cancer Foundation, were also featured in a video interview (www.preventcancer.org/bbbinterview) with **H. Art Taylor**, President and CEO of BBB Wise Giving Alliance, about the Program. The conversation centered around the importance of trust in building relationships within the congressional community; as communicators of awareness messaging within our home districts; and working with the Prevent Cancer Foundation as a trusted resource. The Wise Giving Alliance helps donors find trustworthy charities to support. The Prevent Cancer Foundation proudly meets the 20 standards for charity accountability set by the Alliance.



A NUDGE FROM BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR BARBARA GRASSLEY: GET SCREENED

Barbara Grassley, spouse of Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa, is a longtime breast cancer survivor and screening advocate. Mrs. Grassley first learned of her cancer in 1987 when she noticed a large lump in one of her breasts and went to see her doctor to get checked. She later found out it was breast cancer. Mrs. Grassley received a radical mastectomy in one breast and a lumpectomy in the other and has been cancer-free since.

Since 2008, Senator and Mrs. Grassley have co-chaired the Health Awareness and Screening booth at the Iowa State Fair, in partnership with the Prevent Cancer Foundation and John Stoddard Cancer Center, to provide cancer education and screening to Iowans.

“When people come up to me [at the state fair] to say hi, a lot of them don’t know that [I’m] a survivor,” Mrs. Grassley said. “[They] think that I’m here just because I’m a senator’s wife. It’s because I’m a survivor. That’s why I’m here.”

The main message Mrs. Grassley wants to impart to others is the importance of getting routine cancer screenings.

“It’s important, period. That’s why I’m still here and we do what we do,” Mrs. Grassley said.



Barbara Grassley at the Health Awareness and Screening booth at the Iowa State Fair

In their partnership with the Prevent Cancer Foundation and John Stoddard Cancer Center at the Iowa State Fair, Mrs. Grassley said she and her husband value the work to spread awareness of cancer screening and the importance of early detection.

“I’m just so glad people stop [at the booth] because who knows with that little nagging feeling that you get. If it’s nothing, that’s great, but if it is [something], then good for you for checking in time,” Mrs. Grassley said. “Just keep putting one foot in front of the other and just keep on keeping on. It’s better to catch it early than to wait.”

As people get their screenings rescheduled from pandemic cancellations and delays, Mrs. Grassley said she hopes people don’t hesitate and are able to get back on schedule.

She believes everyone should get their appointments scheduled and make sure their family, friends and neighbors are aware of the importance of screening as well.

“Well, you know, it never hurts to encourage your neighbor either. Say to them you’re having your check up and ask, ‘When is yours?’” Mrs. Grassley said. “Just a little nudge here and there... Just keep on getting checked!”

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Prevent Cancer Foundation and John Stoddard Cancer Center did not have a booth at the 2021 Iowa State Fair. We hope this long-term partnership will continue in 2022.



WELCOME COLLEEN OCHOA PETERS TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

We are pleased to welcome **Colleen Ochoa Peters** (spouse of Sen. Gary Peters of Michigan) to the Congressional Families Program Executive Council. A longtime member of the Advisory Committee, Colleen has been an active participant in the program and attended past seminars and luncheons. In 2018, she joined with **Cindy Bergman** (spouse of Rep. Jack Berman of Michigan) in a bipartisan spouse tour of McLaren Northern Michigan Hospital, a Prevent Cancer Foundation community grantee in her home state.

THINKING OF YOU

For many in our congressional community, this past year has brought the unfortunate news of cancer diagnoses. Some are fighting these battles publicly while others have chosen to keep their fights more private. Whether you are fighting your battle publicly or privately, we send you all the strength and support as recovery continues.

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®

of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®

1600 Duke St, Ste. 500, Alexandria, VA 22314

Cassie Smith, Editor

Lisa McGovern, Assistant Editor

Congressional Families Cancer Prevention

A Program of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®

1600 Duke St, Ste. 500, Alexandria, VA 22314

tel: 703.837.3697

Congressional Families Cancer Prevention

is a program of the



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:

- Rep. Gus Bilirakis – FL
- Rep. Brendan Boyle – PA
- Rep. Buddy Carter – GA
- Rep. Madison Cawthorn – NC
- Deserai Crow – CO
- Sydney Gallego – AZ
- Rep. John Garamendi – CA
- Lorena Saenz Gonzalez – Texas
- Nicole Beus Harris – MD
- Mary Scott Himes – CT
- LeeAnn Johnson – Ohio
- Wayne Kye, DDS – NY
- Rep. Jim McGovern – MA
- Rep. David McKinley – WV
- Rep. Kweisi Mfume – MD
- Rep. Ed Perlmutter – CO
- Rep. Stacey Plaskett – U.S. Virgin Islands
- Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger – MD
- Rep. Pete Sessions – Texas
- Leslie Small – GA
- Rep. Adam Smith – WA
- Amanda Soto – FL
- Rep. Marilyn Strickland – WA
- Rep. Filemon Vela – Texas
- Rep. Roger Williams – Texas

