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First Anniversary of New War on Cancer Marks Many Advances

Goals and strategies from the U.S. Surgeons General provided roadmap to take decisive action in making cancer prevention and survivorship a national priority

AUSTIN, Texas and TUCSON, Ariz., July 21, 2009 – While Lance Armstrong, founder and chairman of the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF), cancer survivor, and champion cyclist, battles through the daily demands of the Tour de France, the *National Call to Action on Cancer Prevention and Survivorship* that Armstrong helped launch one year ago continues to wage the new war on cancer.

In July 2008, Armstrong and the four most recent U.S. Surgeons General joined collaborators from across the United States to launch the *National Call to Action*.

“The *National Call to Action on Cancer Prevention and Survivorship* has served as intended – a battle plan to meet specific national goals to improve cancer prevention, recommended screenings, early detection, treatment, and survivorship. We continue to call on all sectors of society to take action and make the war on cancer a national priority,” said Richard H. Carmona, M.D., M.P.H., FACS, 17th U.S. Surgeon General (2002-2006) and president of the non-profit Canyon Ranch Institute.

Doug Ulman, president and CEO of the Lance Armstrong Foundation, said, “Since last July, we have made significant strides in the U.S. in the fight against cancer. But cancer claims eight million lives around the globe every year and the world is now our focus. It is efforts like the *National Call to Action on Cancer Prevention and Survivorship* that will help us succeed at reducing the burden of cancer worldwide.”

In the year since Armstrong and the U.S. Surgeons General issued the *National Call to Action*, many significant milestones in the new war against cancer have been met. Some highlights include:

- During the 2008 Presidential election campaign, President Barack Obama announced a plan to double the funding for cancer research by 2017. The plan is currently on track to reach that goal as funding in the proposed 2010 budget for the National Institutes of Health included \$6 billion for cancer research, an approximately 15 percent increase over 2009.
- In April 2009, President Obama signed the State Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act into law. This legislation expands access to health coverage for approximately 4 million children who currently lack health insurance. In order to help fund this expansion of coverage, the new law raises the current federal excise tax on cigarettes, a strategy that was included in the *National Call to Action*. Raising the cost of cigarettes is an effective way to reduce youth smoking, which in turn will lower cancer incidence and save health care dollars.

- The George Washington University (GW) Medical Center, with support from Pfizer and the Pfizer Foundation, announced the launch of The Center for the Advancement of Cancer Survivorship, Navigation, and Policy with a \$1.2 million commitment over three years. The new Center, launched in April 2009, is a unique collaboration of the GW Cancer Institute (GWCI) and the GW Department of Health Policy in the School of Public Health and Health Services. It seeks to advance patient navigation and cancer survivorship efforts both locally and nationally through training, research, policy analysis, outreach, and education.
- The Lance Armstrong Foundation and Penn Medicine announced in May 2009 a four-year partnership to further develop and disseminate the **LIVESTRONG** Care Plan Powered by Penn Medicine's OncoLink. This free service gives adult cancer survivors, their families, and physicians the ability to create an individualized plan of care using up-to-date treatment information based on Institute of Medicine recommendations, as well educating them about their options to maintain optimal health once they are out of treatment. The **LIVESTRONG** Care Plan can be accessed at www.livestrongcareplan.org.
- Tobacco products are now under the regulation of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In June 2009, President Obama signed landmark legislation granting the FDA unprecedented authority over the marketing of tobacco products with a mandate to improve health warnings and curb teenage smoking.
- New legislation and policy changes continue to be introduced, including efforts driven by Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison to include patient navigation in the ongoing health care reform debate, as well as Senator Kennedy's introduction of the 21st Century Cancer ALERT (Access to Life-Saving Early detection, Research, and Treatment) Act. ALERT is the first sweeping cancer legislation introduced since the National Cancer Act in 1971, which was authored by Senator Kennedy. ALERT is intended to remove the barriers that slow down cancer research, which can ultimately prevent patients from receiving potentially life-saving treatments.
- The American Cancer Society's Patient Navigator program continues to expand, currently providing assistance to approximately 45,000 individuals in over 140 programs around the country. Nearly doubling its reach every year, the program helps support cancer patients in making informed decisions to improve their quality of life, especially targeting earlier diagnosis and interventions among the medically underserved in both public and private hospitals.

Working to extend the positive effects of the *National Call to Action*, members of the *National Call to Action* community invite individuals and organizations to share their efforts and best practices in cancer prevention and survivorship. A link to a short survey can be accessed through the *National Call to Action* website at www.NCTAcancer.org. Answering the survey questions will help to identify and promote important programs and policies.

On another front in the new war on cancer, Richard Nares started the Emilio Nares Foundation in San Diego, CA after his son died of cancer. Nares was recently singled out for honors by President Obama during the 80th Major League All-Star Game in July. The Emilio Nares Foundation transports children to their cancer treatments and medical appointments and provides "Emilio Snack Bags" for children to take to their chemotherapy appointments. "You can wait hours for your appointment, and you can't leave your small child to go get a nutritious snack," said Nares. "I was lost when my son was diagnosed with cancer. I didn't know where to turn, so to have organizations to help at that point is just priceless. That is just one reason why the *National Call to Action* is so extremely important."

“National endeavors like the *National Call to Action on Cancer Prevention and Survivorship* help create more support for improving abilities and reducing barriers to navigating the health care system,” said Angelina Esparza, R.N., director of the Patient Navigation program at the American Cancer Society. “The federal government has come out quite strongly in this area and the support of the U.S. Surgeons General brings further attention to the need and helps strengthen the argument. With the downturn of the economy, we are seeing more need for navigator services for insured and under-insured alike. Finding these resources has become part of our not-impossible challenge to develop a coordinated effort to help patients.” Esparza also noted that the increased awareness of ensuring that all people can navigate through the health care system, promoted by the *National Call to Action*, is also prominent in the ongoing national discussions about health care reform.

Canyon Ranch Institute, the Lance Armstrong Foundation, and the four most recent U.S. Surgeons General launched the *National Call to Action on Cancer Prevention and Survivorship* in Washington, D.C. on July 23, 2008. Numerous other collaborators were involved in developing the *National Call to Action* and many more have since joined the *National Call to Action* community.

Even with the many significant advances made by the *National Call to Action* community over the past 12 months, a great deal of focus, determination, and support in cancer prevention and survivorship efforts are still needed in order to fully reach the four goals of the *National Call to Action*, which are to:

- Empower Healthy Lifestyles to Prevent Cancer
- Apply What We Know About Cancer Screening and Early Detection to All People
- Ensure That All People Can Navigate Through the Health Care System
- Provide Survivorship Care Plans and Systems of Support for All Cancer Survivors.

To read the complete *National Call to Action on Cancer Prevention and Survivorship*, and learn more about the collaborators, visit www.NCTAcancer.org.

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High-resolution photos from the release of the *National Call to Action on Cancer Prevention and Survivorship* (July 23, 2008, National Press Club, Washington, D.C.) are available from the CRI contacts listed above, and the photos can be viewed at www.nctacancer.org/events/ncta/photos/index.html.

About the Lance Armstrong Foundation

At the Lance Armstrong Foundation, we fight for the 28 million people around the world living with cancer today. There can be – and should be – life after cancer for more people. That’s why we kick in at the moment of diagnosis, giving people the resources and support they need to fight cancer head-on. We find innovative ways to raise awareness, fund research and end the stigma about cancer that many survivors face. We connect people and communities to drive social change, and we call for state, national and world leaders to help fight this disease. Anyone anywhere can join our fight against cancer. Join us at www.LIVESTRONG.org.

About Canyon Ranch Institute

Canyon Ranch Institute (CRI) is a non-profit organization that catalyzes the possibility of optimal health for all people by translating the best practices of Canyon Ranch and our partners to help educate, inspire, and empower *every person* to prevent disease and embrace a life of wellness. Canyon Ranch Institute and our partners believe in the power and possibility of a healthy world. More information about CRI is available at www.canyonranchinstitute.org.

Related links:

Emilio Nares Foundation – www.emilionaresfoundation.org

American Cancer Society Patient Navigator Program –

www.cancer.org/docroot/COM/content/div_OH/COM_6_1x_Patient_Navigator.asp

The Obama-Biden Plan to Combat Cancer –

www.barackobama.com/pdf/issues/healthcare/Fact_Sheet_Cancer_FINAL.pdf