

**PROJECT SWWAC:
SIGMAS WAGING WAR
AGAINST CANCER**

*A partnership between Phi Beta Sigma and
the American Cancer Society*

Project SWWAC Overview

Project SWWAC, “Sigmas Waging War Against Cancer,” was created in 2000 to address the members of Phi Beta Sigma ‘s growing concern with the disproportionate number of African Americans diagnosed with cancer. Phi Beta Sigma has joined with the American Cancer Society nationally to manage and deliver Project SWWAC in communities across the country. The goal of Project SWWAC is to present to communities and the members of Phi Beta Sigma information on early detection and prevention of cancer. The bottom line is to lower the number of new cancer cases a year.

It is important that our communities see that Phi Beta Sigma is taking the lead on fighting cancer. Phi Beta Sigma, as prominent members of the community, can assist the American Cancer Society in reaching individuals with the lifesaving messages of early detection and prevention.

Components of Project SWWAC

Project SWWAC is a multi-disciplinary focus on making a difference in the cancer problem in African American communities. Sigmas, in working with the American Cancer Society, have made a commitment to:

- Raise awareness of prevention and early detection of cancer by providing and distributing the latest information on cancer prevention and early detection to members and communities
- Mobilize membership and the community to become active in issues and help raise funds to support the efforts of the American Cancer Society in reaching African American communities: to further research into finding a cure and improving the quality of life; to support priority programs designed to make a difference in the fight against cancer.
 - ✓ Financial goal of each brother and chapter to support the fight against cancer by donating:
 - Members: minimum of \$10
 - Chapters: minimum of \$150

National Spokesperson for Project SWWAC, Les Brown

Radio personality and motivational speaker Les Brown, has signed on as the National Spokesperson for Project SWWAC and will continue to work to promote this project and the healthy lifestyle message.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN PROJECT SWWAC

Cancer Awareness/Education

First, evaluate your own health and the health of your fellow brothers.

If you are under the age of 45, please take a look at your lifestyle. Are you smoking? Are you *not* exercising? Are you eating a high fat diet? If so, please consider making some adjustments.

If you are older than 45 years, please ask yourself the same questions. And if you have not been screened for colorectal cancer and prostate cancer, please schedule these important lifesaving tests. Each region is encouraged to schedule a cancer awareness seminar at every conference and can work with the American Cancer Society to arrange for doctors to present to the membership.

Second, help educate your community about the early detection and prevention of cancer.

This can be done in a variety of ways and your local American Cancer Society office can help you implement activities that will make the greatest impact on your community, no matter how large or small, to decrease the disparity of cancer in African American men and women.

Some Sigma chapters are hosting chapter cancer awareness seminars, public forums on cancer and town meetings with health care professionals. Collegiate chapters can work with the local American Cancer Society on tobacco control campaigns. Alumni chapters can get involved in the American Cancer Society's "Let's Talk About It" program designed to educate African American men about the early detection and prevention of prostate cancer.

For more information on how you can get involved in educating your membership or your community, please contact Kristen Solt at Kristen.solt@cancer.org or (404) 329-7963.

Advocacy:

Join the *ACS Action Network*, in which thousands of concerned citizens help make cancer a top legislative issue and see that our lawmakers pass effective cancer-fighting measures. When you join, the American Cancer Society will keep you informed on activities in the US Congress and your state legislature. You can get involved by:

1. Contacting your lawmakers when a cancer-related bill is up for vote
2. Keep cancer issues alive in your local newspaper and media outlets by writing “Letters to the Editor,” and participating in radio call-in shows
3. Encourage others to join the legislative fight against cancer.

Join the ACS Action Network by emailing acsaction@cancer.org or by calling toll free, 1-877-234-4484 or Colleen Chapman at colleen.chapman@cancer.org.

Raise Funds to Help the Fight Against Cancer

Relay For Life

A fun-filled overnight event, Relay for Life mobilizes communities throughout the country to celebrate survivors, remember loved ones and raise money for the fight against cancer. This unique event is held in more than 3000 cities and towns across the country. Sigma chapters can form teams of 10 or more members and help recruit more teams from corporations and other community organizations.

Golf Tournaments, Specialty Parties and targeted chapter programs

The American Cancer Society holds a variety of fundraising events where Sigmas can assist with planning the events or attending. Please visit www.cancer.org for a listing of ACS events in your community. **All monies raised by Sigma members that are donated to the American Cancer Society will be credited under Project SWWAC.**

Chapters are also encouraged to create targeted programs for their local communities. Over the past two years our chapters have promoted Bowl-A-Thons, Bike-A-Thons and Holiday dances in an effort to raise awareness and funds for Project SWWAC.

CONTACT INFORMATION TO GET INVOLVED IN PROJECT SWWAC

Brothers or chapters interested in getting involved in Project SWWAC should contact the National Director for Project SWWAC, Jonathan Mason, at projectswwac@pbs1914.org and carbon copy (cc) Kristen Solt, American Cancer Society National Director of Project Development at kristen.solt@cancer.org.

You will then be put in touch with an American Cancer Society representative that can begin to work with you on implementing Project SWWAC in your area. The American Cancer Society staff can help you plan cancer awareness seminars, connect you with your legislators to speak out on issues related to cancer in African Americans and inform you of fundraising events that you and your chapter can participate in to raise money to support the fight against cancer. Each region has been assigned a coordinator for Project SWWAC. Let's work together to bring this important program to fruition.

THE NATIONAL PROJECT SWWAC TEAM

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American Cancer Society

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GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

HOW FUNDS RAISED ARE DISTRIBUTED

The American Cancer Society receives no funding from the national government and relies solely on the generosity of corporations and individual donors across the country. Funds raised in communities across the country stay in that community to fund priority programs of the American Cancer Society that address the greatest cancer needs of that community. The American Cancer Society's management costs are very low – 5% - by involving volunteers and their talents to carry out the mission of the organization. Donations are invested wisely into programs that can make the greatest impact on the

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disease of cancer. For a copy of the Annual Report, please visit the American Cancer Society's website at www.cancer.org.

HOW THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY FIGHTS CANCER

The American Cancer Society is the leading nationwide, community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem. Almost any development in understanding and treating cancer in the last 55 years can be traced to Society funding. In the coming decade, the Society aims to avoid 6 million cancer diagnoses and prevent 5 million unnecessary cancer deaths, fighting all forms of the disease on every front:

- **Research.** During the past decade, the pace of cancer research has accelerated at an incredible rate, and the coming decade holds even more promise. To date, the Society has invested more than \$2.3 billion in cancer research and has provided grant support to 30 Nobel Prize winners early in their careers.

The aim of the Society's research program is to determine the causes of cancer and to support efforts to prevent and cure cancer. The American Cancer Society is the largest source of private, not-for-profit cancer research funds in the United States, second only to the United States government in total dollars spent. The research program focuses primarily on peer-reviewed projects initiated by beginning investigators working in leading medical and scientific institutions across the country.

- **Education.** Two-thirds of cancer deaths could be prevented through healthy living; countless more lives could be saved through early detection of cancer. The Society works to close the gap between state of the science and state of the practice to give every American the chance for a cancer-free life.

Prevention: Primary cancer prevention means taking the necessary precautions to prevent the occurrence of cancer in the first place. Prevention programs are designed to help adults and children make health-enhancing decisions.

The Society's Prevention programs focus primarily on:

- Tobacco control and reducing the risk of skin cancer
- Relationship between diet and physical activity and cancer
- Promoting comprehensive school health education

Detection and Treatment Information and Education: The Society also seeks to provide the public and health care professionals with information, through the dissemination of its early detection guidelines and its detection education and advocacy programs, in order to ensure that all cancers are found at the earliest possible stage, when there is the greatest chance for successful treatment. This is accomplished through national conferences and workshops, audiovisual and print

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publications, the American Cancer Society web site and the National Call Center, as well as clinical awards, professorships, and scholarships.

American Cancer Society, continued

- **Service.** Only those who have been touched by cancer know the uncertainty and despair the disease can bring. The Society offers cancer patients, survivors and their families a place to turn 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for guidance and support through our toll-free information service (800-ACS-2345) and via the American Cancer Society Web site (www.cancer.org).
- **Advocacy and Public Policy.** Cancer is a political, as well as medical, social, psychological, and economic issue. Policy makers at all levels of government make decisions every day which impact the lives of more than 8 million cancer survivors, their families, and all potential cancer patients. The Society's advocacy initiative strives to influence public policies at all levels, with special emphasis on regulations relating to:
 - The use, sale, distribution, marketing, and advertising of tobacco products, particularly to youth.

- Improved access for all Americans, particularly poor and underserved Americans, to a range of health care services for the prevention, early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer and care of cancer patients.
- Increased federal funding and incentives for private sponsorship of cancer research to prevent and cure cancer.
- Advocacy for the rights of cancer survivors.

American Cancer Society advocacy efforts are successful because they rely on the combined voices of a community-based grassroots advocacy network of Society volunteers and other partners who have successfully influenced or supported laws and regulations enforcing the United States Food and Drug Administration's role in regulating tobacco products as "drug delivery devices," enacting health insurance market reforms to ensure portability and continuity of health insurance coverage for individuals with a history of cancer or other serious illness, improving third-party coverage for cancer

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prevention and treatment clinical trials, including payment for patient care costs, and increasing federal funding for our National Cancer Program.

For more information on the American Cancer Society, call toll free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.