

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Andrea Rader
Susan G. Komen®
972-855-4382
press@komen.org

**SUSAN G. KOMEN SETS BOLD GOAL TO REDUCE U.S. BREAST CANCER DEATHS BY
50 PERCENT IN 10 YEARS**

***Plan Targets Health Equity for All, Enhanced Research Focus for Most Lethal Breast
Cancers***

DALLAS – Sept. 13, 2016 – The Susan G. Komen® breast cancer organization announced a bold plan today to **reduce the nation’s 40,000 breast cancer deaths by 50 percent in 10 years**, by improving access to quality and timely cancer care for the underserved and enhancing Komen’s research focus on lethal breast cancers.

“We know that people die of breast cancer for two reasons: a lack of high-quality breast cancer care accessible to everyone, and a lack of treatments for the most aggressive and deadly forms of this disease,” said Dr. Judith A. Salerno, president and CEO of Susan G. Komen. “We are taking direct action designed to solve these problems to reduce breast cancer deaths by half in the U.S. within the next decade.”

\$27 Million Advanced for Health Equity

Salerno said today that a private foundation is donating \$27 million for a program to significantly reduce what she called the “appalling” difference in death rates between African-American and white women in U.S. cities. African-American women are nearly 40 percent more likely to die of breast cancer than white women; in some cities, that gap is as high as 74 percent.

“This constitutes a public health crisis that must be addressed, first in the cities where these death rates are highest, and then in all areas of the country,” Salerno said.

Komen’s African-American Health Equity Initiative targets 10 metropolitan areas where mortality rates and late-stage diagnosis of African-American women are highest. The goal: to reduce the mortality gap by 25 percent within five years of beginning work in each city.

The initial areas include Memphis, Tenn., St. Louis, Mo., Dallas, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Washington, D.C., Virginia Beach, Va., and Philadelphia. Baltimore and Detroit have been identified as high priority areas as the program expands over the next year.

The African-American Health Equity Initiative supplements the work that Komen and its network of 100 U.S. Affiliates already are doing to remove barriers to cancer care. Komen and Komen

- more -

Affiliates support thousands of local programs that provide screenings, treatment assistance, emergency financial aid, medical supplies and living expense for underserved individuals.

The organization has invested more than \$2 billion over 34 years for these programs aimed at uninsured, under-insured, and medically vulnerable populations.

“We will never waver from our commitment to remove barriers of language, geography, economics or culture for *all* people facing this disease. Every woman or man must be able to access and receive high-quality breast health and breast cancer care, be supported through their treatment and into survivorship,” Salerno said.

Research

The second prong of Komen’s plan enhances Komen’s focus on aggressive forms of breast cancer and metastatic disease (stage IV or cancer that has spread to other parts of the body).

As the largest nonprofit funder of breast cancer research (investing more than \$920 million since inception), Komen has funded nearly \$160 million in metastatic disease research since its founding. Komen has funded another \$110 million in research on aggressive forms of breast cancer – such as triple negative, inflammatory breast cancer and hormone-positive forms of breast cancer – that are resistant to standard treatments.

“The majority of breast cancer deaths are from metastatic breast cancer. We also know that aggressive forms of breast cancer are more likely to recur and spread, so we are focusing our efforts in both of these areas,” Salerno said.

The new initiative aims to advance research into new treatments for aggressive and metastatic disease. Komen also will seek to leverage next-generation technology that can detect breast cancer at its very earliest stages to prevent recurrence and metastasis.

Progress to Date

Salerno said Komen’s bold goal builds on the progress of the breast cancer movement since Komen was founded in 1982. “Death rates from breast cancer have declined by 37 percent since 1990. We have more treatments than at any time in our history. We’ve come a very long way from a time when breast cancer couldn’t be discussed publicly. Our new bold goal requires us to take a deeper dive and stretch further to ensure that *every* woman or man can be told, ‘There is help and hope for you.’”

About Susan G. Komen®

Susan G. Komen is the world’s largest breast cancer organization, funding more breast cancer research than any other nonprofit outside of the federal government while providing real-time help to those facing the disease. Since its founding in 1982, Komen has funded more than \$920 million in research and provided more than \$2 billion in funding to screening, education, treatment and psychosocial support programs serving millions of people in more than 30 countries worldwide. Komen was founded by Nancy G. Brinker, who promised her sister, Susan G. Komen, that she would end the disease that claimed Suzy’s life. Visit komen.org or call 1-877 GO KOMEN. Connect with us on social at ww5.komen.org/social.

###