

# ACTIONS

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CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES  
CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM  
OF THE PREVENT CANCER FOUNDATION

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## Healthy Base Initiative Creates Healthier Environments for Military Personnel and Their Families

*More than twenty congressional and administration spouses were briefed on March 12 by the Department of Defense (DoD) on the Healthy Base Initiative (HBI), launched in 2013 to help our troops develop healthier habits.*



*Left to right: Chuck Milam, COL Brian Foley and Brian Borda*



*Left to right: Janine Bera, Marcia Carlucci, Patricia McKeon, Lisa McGovern, Bo Aldigé, Deborah Malumed, Lilibet Hagel, Sarah Pallone and Patti Garamendi*

The initiative, currently underway on 14 pilot bases, reaches across the branches of the military. The primary focus, much like our own, is on prevention – especially in the areas of obesity and tobacco use.

The briefing, held in the Veterans Affairs committee room, was presented by **Chuck Milam**, Principal Director of Military Community and Family Policy, **Brian Borda**, Strategy and Innovation Directorate of Military Community and Family Policy and HBI Program Manager and **Colonel Brian Foley**, Garrison Commander, Fort Meade, Md. The panel began with an overview by Mr. Milam of research showing the impact of obesity and tobacco use on our troops, expected cost and health benefits of successfully addressing these problems and the resulting Healthy Base Initiative. Obesity has become a threat to troop readiness and therefore national security, limiting our ability to recruit and retain fit soldiers. As we know, this problem is not limited to the military but is a nationwide concern that has been linked to increases in a myriad of health problems including cancer, diabetes and heart attacks. Curbing tobacco use is

another major challenge: 40% of enlisted personnel smoke and 40% of those smokers began smoking when on active duty. Smoking is the biggest risk factor for lung cancer, which kills more people in the U.S. each year than any other cancer. Each year obesity and tobacco use add over \$3 billion to the DoD budget due to lost duty days and health care costs. HBI was launched to help make changes in military culture and prioritize the health of our troops.

*Continued on page 4*



## Dear Congressional Family Members & Friends,

Thank you! It has been way too long since we updated our Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Advisory Committee list so we recently sent an email inviting you to join our effort or renew your interest.

The response was wonderful! It is heartening to know of the wide breadth of support for the Congressional Families program and our mission. As you know, the Congressional Families program is part of the Prevent Cancer Foundation, the only non-profit organization in the nation solely devoted to cancer prevention and early detection.

I am so proud of the work that we do. The Prevent Cancer Foundation has invested more than \$134 million in research, education, advocacy and community outreach nationwide. We have funded nearly 450 scientists at over 150 leading medical institutions across the country. Our innovative print and digital awareness campaigns spark conversation and inspire people to protect themselves and their loved ones from cancer. Our community grants support local cancer awareness education and screening programs across the country. We believe that everyone has the power to be an advocate for their own health.

Only five percent of cancers are hereditary. We can reduce the cancer incidence in the United States by up to 60 percent and cancer mortality by 50 percent through simple lifestyle changes and healthy choices. Getting screened, making smart choices and consulting with health professionals can save your life.

The Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program offers a unique opportunity for spouses (and Members!) to become more educated about cancer prevention, share their thoughts and ideas with leaders in the field and raise awareness in their home states and respective constituencies. As a recent example, read our cover story about our recent briefing by the Department of Defense (March 12) and ongoing work with its Healthy Base Initiative (HBI).

And check us out at [www.congressionalfamilies.org](http://www.congressionalfamilies.org). The calendar portion of the website – which lists items of interest to spouses and provides important scheduling information beyond cancer prevention related events – is password protected. Enter password: **families** to log in!

Again, thank you for being part of this effort. If you have not yet joined in, feel free to contact me directly to share your story or your interest.

Warmly,

Lisa McGovern, Executive Director

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



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## CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES WEBSITE LAUNCH!

The Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program has been working hard to bring the program into the digital world. Check out the new Congressional Families website at [congressionalfamilies.org](http://congressionalfamilies.org). The website will serve as a special resource – especially for our bipartisan bicameral community. Our goal is to keep you up to date on the latest news, events and seminars.

**EVENTS CALENDAR:** Special events (like the Easter Egg Roll, State of the Union, etc.) of interest to our Capitol Hill community will be kept in one place. Additional events (like the March of Dimes Gala, etc.) will be posted if submitted to Lisa McGovern by a member of the Congressional Families Advisory Committee. Details (such as venue, time and ticket availability) will be password protected to allow privacy. Use password: **families**

## Twenty-First Annual Action for Cancer Awareness Awards Luncheon: Landra Reid, Andrea Mitchell, Shannon Miller and the Department of Defense Honored

On November 19, 2013 at noon, Members and spouses of the House, Senate, Cabinet and Diplomatic community along with leading cancer prevention supporters were greeted by silken charcoal gray table cloths, gray pashmina covered chairs and green berried floral arrangements – a nod to the Prevent Cancer Foundation's green and gray signature colors. So began the beloved tradition of Congressional Families coming together annually to recognize the contributions of exceptional advocates and their efforts to help prevent cancer.

**Landra Reid** (wife of **Sen. Maj. Leader Harry Reid** of Nevada), was presented with the Congressional Families Leadership Award by **Sen. Mark Pryor** of Arkansas, who opened the awards portion of the program. The Senator was of great personal support to Landra throughout her treatment for breast cancer. Their experience highlights the bonds that are often formed within the congressional community when a health diagnosis or other challenge is faced. In accepting her award, Landra thanked her friend and also emphasized the need for continued strong support for federally funded cancer research.

The program next recognized well known host of NBC News **Andrea Mitchell** with the Distinguished Service in Journalism Award. Longtime friend **Debbie Dingell** of Michigan, who nominated Andrea for the award, was given the honor of making the presentation. Andrea recounted the busy day on which she first learned of her diagnosis, how she postponed reconstruction surgery until after the Republican primaries, and why she made the news public. Using her platform as host of MSNBC's "Andrea Mitchell Reports", she helped raise awareness and emphasize that "Screening matters. Just do it."

America's most decorated gymnast **Shannon Miller** was recognized next for Excellence in Cancer Awareness. For years, Shannon has inspired people – especially young girls and women – having won seven Olympic medals and nine at world championships. When diagnosed and treated for a rare ovarian cancer, Shannon used her champion's mindset to compete against cancer. As President of Shannon Miller Lifestyle, she advocates for early detection, awareness and helping women make their health a priority. Congressional spouse **Kitty Crenshaw** of Florida presented the award. The audience included a few young girls and twenty-something former gymnasts – now congressional staffers – who were thrilled to meet one of their heroes.



Top (left to right): Rep. Ander and Kitty Crenshaw (Fla.), Shannon Miller, Jennifer Griffin, Rep. Jim Moran (Va.), Andrea Mitchell, Debbie Dingell, Bo Aldigé, Rosemary Williams, Julie Reichert, Landra Reid, Sen. Mark Pryor (Ark.), Lisa McGovern  
Bottom (left to right): Andrea Mitchell & Rosemary Williams; Landra Reid & Sen. Mark Pryor

In closing the program, a Special Recognition Award was given this year to the **Department of Defense's Healthy Base Initiative**. (Read more about the program in the feature article.)

**Jennifer Griffin**, who reports on the Pentagon for Fox News Channel, served as Master of Ceremonies. Recognized with the Distinguished Journalism Award in 2012, Jennifer shared her emotional story of battling Triple-Negative Breast Cancer while raising three young children and covering two wars.

About twenty-five members from the House and Senate came to recognize the outstanding award recipients, including **Sens. Harry Reid** and **Patrick Leahy** and **Reps. Nancy Pelosi, John Dingell, Jim McGovern** and **Ander Crenshaw**. More than forty spouses attended. From the diplomatic community, **Italian Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero** attended with his wife **Laura Denise** and **Lady Susie Westmacott** of England, **Rosa Djalal** of Indonesia and **Laura Medina-Mora** of Mexico were among the foreign dignitaries in attendance.

## Healthy Base Initiative

Continued from page 1

Following Mr. Milam's remarks, Colonel Foley discussed how HBI is currently implemented on base at Fort Meade, Md., noting that each installation will translate the directive differently, factoring in the needs and resources of its community. At Fort Meade, the program has created changes in menu offerings, a 24-hour fitness center, tobacco-free areas and a bike lane that offers an easily available exercise opportunity for military and civilian personnel. Family members are also a priority at Fort Meade. Base leaders are working with local schools to offer nutrition programs and physical activity opportunities for children. A farmers market to offer a wider range of fresh fruits and vegetables is planned for later this year.

Congressional spouses enthusiastically engaged in a robust Q&A session following the presentation. The conversation delved into the culture of smoking that often exists across the branches and how to break it. One concern raised was about incentives – financial and social – that encourage and support smokers and those who chew tobacco. Tough questions were asked. Among the spouses participating were a primary care physician and mental health professional. **Lilibet Hagel** (wife of **Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel**) and **Marcia Carlucci** (wife of former **Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci**) were also in attendance.

Secretary Hagel has already shown leadership in addressing these important problems (see article in side box). The Congressional Families program and spouses look forward to continuing our support for the Healthy Base Initiative and learning more as findings from the pilot program are compiled and analyzed.



**"10 years after quitting: The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder are cut in half. The risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking."**  
– American Cancer Society

## Efforts to Curb Tobacco Use Expand

In the past few months, there have been increased efforts on a number of fronts to ban or reduce tobacco use. In February, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration launched a campaign to reach youth on the cusp of smoking to stop before they start, targeting children between the ages of 12 and 17. In the corporate world, CVS/pharmacy announced it will stop selling cigarettes and all tobacco products at its more than 7,600 stores nationwide by October 1, 2014. Measures like these have helped energize the national dialogue on stopping tobacco use to prevent diseases such as lung cancer.

Now we are seeing support and actions within the military community to curb tobacco use to improve the health of our troops. The Navy is currently reviewing a proposal to potentially ban tobacco sales on all Navy ships and bases. **Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel** suggested he would be in favor of banning tobacco sales at all military installations, according to an article by Jon Harper published in the March 31 edition of Stars and Stripes, the military's daily newspaper.

The fitness of our troops has been a growing priority in the military – especially health problems related to tobacco use and obesity. Over 50% of military personnel who smoke answered in a questionnaire that they smoke to relieve boredom and 70% answered that another reason they smoke is to stay calm. However, studies show that tobacco use actually increases anxiety and tension. Nicotine is addictive and those using it are experiencing temporary relief from the addiction, mistaking it for stress relief. When they quit, the dependency will eventually disappear.

The Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program supports efforts on all fronts to better educate the public, raise awareness about the health problems associated with tobacco use, and help people stop smoking or never start. To keep updated on the latest developments on tobacco sale bans and prevention news, check out our News section of the Congressional Families website at [congressionalfamilies.org](http://congressionalfamilies.org).

## 2014 Prevent Cancer Annual Spring Gala Raises 1.7 Million Dollars for Cancer Prevention

*Named one of Washington's best events, the annual Spring Gala showcased "Graceful, Gracious Japan."*

March 7 marked the 20th annual Prevent Cancer Foundation Spring Gala, one of Washington's most anticipated charity events. Carrying on the tradition of spotlighting a different country each year, this year's décor was inspired by Japanese gardens, with Ambassador **Kenichiro Sasae** and his wife **Nobuko** graciously serving as honorary patrons for the evening's festivities.

Honored guests included numerous members of the congressional community such as **Senator Patrick** and **Marcelle Leahy**, **Representative Doris Matsui**, **Representative Frank** and **Sarah Pallone**, **Representative Ed** and **Marie Royce**, **Representative Mark** and **Debbie Meadows**, **Representative Billy** and **Barbara Long** and **Representative Jim** and **Lisa McGovern**. Many friends from the diplomatic community attended to help pay tribute to the 2014 Cancer Champion award recipient **Ellen Noghès**, wife of **Gilles Noghès**, who retired this year from service as Ambassador of Monaco. A three-time cancer survivor and longtime supporter of Prevent Cancer's mission, Ellen formed a support group for diplomatic spouses who were in various stages of cancer treatment. Her openness and generosity earned her great respect and friendship throughout the couple's many years of service.

As the guests enjoyed the dinner menu featuring the tastes of Japan, another powerful voice for cancer prevention was heard as **Jennifer Griffin**, Fox News Channel Correspondent, took the stage and shared her story of overcoming stage three Triple-Negative Breast Cancer. She is not only an inspiration to those battling cancer, but also a life time advocate for healthy living. **Andrea Roane**, local WUSA 9 news anchor and cancer prevention advocate, led the "Lighting the Way to Prevention" portion of the evening, helping the gala reach its record-breaking number, \$1.7 million. Supporters of the gala play a major role in funding critical work of the Prevent Cancer Foundation, including research grants, fellowships and two programs for medically underserved women in Washington – ¡Celebremos la Vida!, an educational and early detection program for Latinas, and the GW Mammovan, which offers free mammograms.

*Save the Date for March 6, 2015 for next year's gala.*



*Left to right: Ambassador of Italy Claudio and Laura Denise Bisogniero, Ambassador of Japan Kenichiro and Nobuko Sasae, Rep. Mark and Debbie Meadows N.C. (Photo by Tony Powell)*

**STYLE WITH A MISSION**  
 ALLORO COLLECTION CO-FOUNDED BY  
 BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR LAUREL KAMEN  
 TO MAKE WOMEN UNDERGOING TREATMENT  
 FEEL MORE BEAUTIFUL



*Cancer drains the color out of people's lives, we want to put the color back in women's lives," said Laurel Kamen, co-founder of Alloro Collection, a clothing line designed specifically for the needs of women who have undergone treatment for breast cancer. The comfortable, fashionable clothing – made with the highest quality materials – has found a market in women who have never had cancer as well.*

Diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001, Laurel Kamen (wife of Al Kamen, author of the Washington Post column "In the Loop") developed the business plan for Alloro the night before she underwent a double mastectomy. The former American Express executive began a partnership with her longtime friend **Christine Irvin**, an artist and Wall Street veteran. Together they developed a list of 20 design elements, paying attention to the unique needs of women who have had breast cancer, creating what would become Alloro, a high-end clothing line that would also incorporate very affordable pieces. Working closely with their fashion designer, Laurel's cousin **Roedean Landeaux**, Laurel and Christine created a unique line with the guiding theme of "Recapturing the Joy."

Alloro named the Prevent Cancer Foundation its first beneficiary partner, committing to donate 25% of profits to breast cancer prevention and treatment for underserved women.

The collection can be bought online or at numerous trunk shows around the country. Visit [allorocollection.com](http://allorocollection.com) for more information.

## CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES MISSION AND HISTORY

The Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program is a nonpartisan outreach effort of congressional families who have joined forces to spread the message of early detection of preventable cancers. Specifically, we focus on raising awareness to prevent breast, cervical, colon, lung, oral, prostate, skin and testicular cancers.

The program was founded in 1991 by the Congressional Club in partnership with the Prevent Cancer Foundation, a nonprofit saving lives through cancer prevention and early detection.

Our advisory board consists of more than 150 spouses of Members of Congress, the Administration and the Supreme Court. Advisory board members receive copies of our newsletters, are invited to luncheon seminars, and are kept abreast of news and initiatives related to healthy living and cancer prevention. We encourage our advisory board members to engage in activities in their home states, nationwide, and internationally and we support them in those efforts.

To join the Congressional Families' advisory board, fax, mail or email the following information to the address below: your name, congressional district, preferred phone number, fax number and email address.

**Early detection saves lives.  
Please join us.**



Editor Lisa McGovern

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Are you receiving Lisa's e-mails with invitations to special events? Please contact her at [lisa.mcgovern@preventcancer.org](mailto:lisa.mcgovern@preventcancer.org) or call her at 703-519-2113.



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a Team Today!

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