

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROSTATE CANCER 2005

Exploring New Pathways: Sharing the Journey

JUNE 16-19, 2005 • WASHINGTON, DC • OMNI SHOREHAM HOTEL

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For Immediate Release:

Putting A “Face” On Prostate Cancer Local Prostate Cancer Patient And Activist Joins National Effort

Charlottesville, VA: The Foundation For Cancer Research & Education (FCRE), Prostate Cancer Research Institute (PCRI), and Us Too International are proud to announce that local DC activist group, The FACES PROJECT has been appointed Local Conference Correspondent to the National Conference on Prostate Cancer 2005: Exploring New Pathways - Sharing the Journey, June 16-19 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. The National Conference is the most comprehensive educational conference on prostate cancer for patients, their loved ones, and health professionals.

“We needed a local energy to reach out to all the Washingtonians who don’t have access to our resources and the FACES project is perfect,” says FCRE Executive Director, Rose Myers. “The FACES project also has a great connection with African American men, who are about twice as likely to get and die of prostate cancer than white men.”

The FACES PROJECT was created when Executive Director O.D. Dickson was diagnosed with advanced metastatic prostate cancer. (In fact, Mr. Dickson buried his father from prostate cancer in 1993, and was not advised by the doctors then to seek periodic screening.) Angry that he didn’t have access to information about PSA screening in time to prevent his own diagnosis, he set out to inform more men about preventing and treating this disease, especially men in the African American community.

“When I found out I had prostate cancer I sat my sons down and told them it’s time to learn how to prevent this. What happened to me was not going to happen to them,” says Mr. Dickson. “In the community where I grew up, prostate cancer just wasn’t something people talked about. You just heard your uncle groaning in the bathroom and wondered what was wrong. The purpose of the FACES project was to put a face on prostate cancer, an otherwise anonymous disease. We wanted prostate cancer out of the bathroom and into the hallway or kitchen. This conference can do just that by connecting thousands of patients with health experts and non-profit organizations.”

And the FACES PROJECT is succeeding, with grassroots effort responsible for numerous health screenings and educational seminars in the Metro DC area, as part of their EHESS community outreach program. By targeting community leaders, such as the local clergy, the FACES PROJECT has made a real difference in spreading awareness about this disease. For more information on the FACES PROJECT call 202-986-2324 or email faces2@verizon.net

“O.D.’s an inspiration,” says FCRE PR Director Rod Schecter. “And his story is a perfect example of how many men remain ill-informed about prostate cancer,” But unlike most men, he chose to do something about it. What’s great about O.D. is that he’s just a regular guy who chose to educate himself. He walks into meetings with a baseball cap and windbreaker and in five minutes he owns the room.”

With a local synergy attached to this event, the National Conference on Prostate Cancer 2005 has the potential to bridge the gap between national scholarship and local participation.

“It’s regular guys like O.D. that this conference stands to benefit,” says conference moderator and world-renowned oncologist Dr. Charles “Snuffy” Myers. “Besides, O.D. and I have a lot in common,” Myers adds, as he is also a prostate cancer survivor. “As a physician I had been telling patients how important education was for years, but when I was diagnosed, it had such a larger resonance. I refused to accept that premise, and once I found out what it was like to be a patient, I made it my business to create treatment plans in my own clinic that considered each individual’s needs as people, not subjects. Education is just a part of that and nowhere else but the National Conference can you get so much information from so many reliable sources.”

The National Conferences on Prostate Cancer were created to give a voice to men with this disease, but, more importantly, to provide men with the vital educational tools to help them live longer and improve the quality of their lives. With an endorsed personal narrative from former Secretary of State and prostate cancer survivor Colin Powell to be read during the meeting, the National Conference on Prostate Cancer 2005 also hopes to increase prostate cancer awareness by putting an equally powerful face on this disease.

“In any military or other vital campaign, power comes from knowledge or vigilance,” says Powell. “This is especially true in the protracted war against prostate cancer.”

To support early detection and advocacy, the National Conference on Prostate Cancer 2005 will also make free PSA tests available to both conference participants and community residents who do not attend. Despite the controversy over this test, there is a large consensus that believes early prostate cancer detection means more treatment options and higher success rates.

Prostate cancer is now the most commonly diagnosed cancer in American men. Recent statistics from the American Cancer Society estimate that there will be approximately 232,090 new cases of prostate cancer in the United States in 2005 and that 30,350 men will die of this disease—that’s one death every 17.5 minutes. However, prostate cancer is highly treatable and recent advances are consistently proving that a prostate cancer diagnosis is not a death sentence.

Myers says, “It’s a real possibility to go on living a normal life after a prostate cancer diagnosis. I’m living proof of that.”

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Registration for the National Conference on Prostate Cancer 2005 is \$50 per person until April 30 and \$75 thereafter. For conference details or to register, call 310-743-2117 or go to www.pcri.org.

The Foundation for Cancer Research and Education (FCRE) is dedicated to educating cancer patients about prevention and treatment in the context of their overall health. With science based on the most well designed research protocols, FCRE’s goal is to prolong patients’ lives by making them active participants in their own treatment. For more information or for a list of FCRE’s outreach programs call 800-305-2432 or go to www.cancer-foundation.org.

The Prostate Cancer Research Institute’s mission is to improve the quality of men’s lives by supporting research and disseminating information that educates and empowers patients, families and the medical community. For specific questions about prostate cancer, test results, treatments and side effects, call the PCRI Helpline at 800-641-PCRI or go to www.pcri.org.

Us TOO is a not-for-profit organization providing information, counseling and educational meetings to assist men with prostate disease (and their spouses / partners) in making decisions about their treatment with confidence and support. Us TOO chapter meetings are free and open to newly diagnosed patients, patients currently in their treatment regimen, survivors, family members, friends and healthcare professionals interested in prostate disease. For questions go to 800-808-7866 or log on at www.ustoo.org