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**CONGRESSMAN JESSE JACKSON JR. AND ASGE HOST ISSUE FORUM ON
AFRICAN-AMERICANS AND COLORECTAL CANCER**

Physician experts will discuss successful programs addressing disparities in colorectal cancer screening among African-Americans at the Congressional Black Caucus 2009 Annual Legislative Conference

OAK BROOK, Ill. – September 24, 2009 – Although overall incidence and death rates from colorectal cancer are decreasing, the gap in death rates between African-Americans and Caucasians has widened. Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer among both African-American men and women, however, it is preventable and some screening programs within the African-American community are working to reduce the incidence of this disease. An issue forum on African-Americans and colorectal cancer hosted by Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr., U.S. House of Representatives, Illinois, 2nd Congressional District, and the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE), today at the Congressional Black Caucus 2009 Annual Legislative Conference, is examining programs in the United States that are successfully addressing disparities in colorectal cancer screening and treatment.

“African-Americans can take charge of their health and prevent colorectal cancer. The physicians at this session will discuss the important factors that help to prevent colorectal cancer and reduce death rates. The forum will also address effective community colorectal cancer screening programs already in place around the U.S. that are making a real difference,” said Rep. Jackson. “I am delighted to be hosting this session with the ASGE and applaud their ongoing patient education efforts to reduce deaths from colorectal cancer. I hope that attendees will take back valuable information to use in their communities to spread the word that colorectal cancer screening saves lives.”

Researchers continue to debate the factors that have contributed to the disparities in colorectal cancer death rates between African-Americans and Caucasians, but some of the factors identified may include genetics, socioeconomic factors, differences in access to healthcare, diet and lifestyle, later diagnosis and different treatment for African-Americans.

“Colorectal cancer is a preventable disease. Guidelines suggest that those at average risk begin screening at age 50, however, some studies have shown that African-Americans are more frequently diagnosed with colorectal cancer at a younger age, leading some experts to suggest that African-Americans should begin

screening at age 45,” said Robynne K. Chutkan, MD, FASGE, forum presenter and spokesperson for the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy. “We are grateful to Rep. Jackson for recognizing the importance of colorectal cancer screening and hosting this session with the ASGE. African-Americans can do something about this disease by becoming educated about colorectal cancer, their family’s medical history, and by speaking with their doctor about risk factors to determine an appropriate screening schedule.”

About the Issue Forum

WHAT: Congressional Black Caucus 2009 Annual Legislative Conference: African-Americans and Colorectal Cancer

DATE: Thursday, September 24, 2009

TIME: 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Session Presentation
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. “Ask the Doctor”

WHERE: Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Room 145B

Highlighted Programs

- Baltimore City Colorectal Cancer CDC Screening Demonstration Program
- Maryland Colorectal Cancer Statewide Initiative
- Massachusetts Free Colonoscopy Day
- New York City Colorectal Cancer Screening Programs

Welcome

- **The Honorable Jesse Jackson Jr.**, U.S. House of Representatives, Illinois 2nd Congressional District

Invited Program Presenters

- **Tonya L. Adams, MD**, Gastroenterologist and colorectal cancer survivor
- **Robynne K. Chutkan, MD, FASGE**, Founder, Digestive Center for Women and Assistant Professor, Georgetown University Hospital
- **Diane M. Dwyer, MD**, Medical Director, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH)
- **Carla H. Ginsburg, MD, MPH, AGAF**, Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts Free Colonoscopy Day
- **Marian Krauskopf, MS**, Director, Cancer Prevention and Control, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)
- **Patrick I. Okolo, MD, MPH, Chief of Endoscopy**, The Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD
- **Robert Villanueva, MPA**, Executive Director, Maryland State Council on Cancer Control, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH)

About Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer, also called colon cancer, is cancer of the colon or rectum. Screening is important because it allows the doctor to find polyps (growths in the colon or rectum that may become cancer) and remove them before they turn into cancer. Colonoscopy screening is considered the best test for colorectal cancer for its ability to remove these polyps at the same time the patient is being screened.

Colorectal cancer kills nearly 50,000 people each year. Many of those deaths could be prevented with earlier detection. To learn about colorectal cancer prevention, log on to the ASGE’s colorectal cancer

awareness Web site www.screen4coloncancer.org. The site offers visitors a wealth of vital information including facts about colorectal cancer, screening options, what to expect during a colonoscopy, frequently asked questions, the latest news about colorectal cancer, such as studies and statistics, links to patient support and advocacy groups, educational videos, and how to find a qualified doctor in your area.

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About the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

Since its founding in 1941, the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE) has been dedicated to advancing patient care and digestive health by promoting excellence in gastrointestinal endoscopy. ASGE, with nearly 11,000 members worldwide, promotes the highest standards for endoscopic training and practice, fosters endoscopic research, recognizes distinguished contributions to endoscopy, and is the foremost resource for endoscopic education. Visit www.asge.org and www.screen4coloncancer.org for more information and to find a qualified doctor in your area.

About Endoscopy

Endoscopy is performed by specially-trained physicians called endoscopists using the most current technology to diagnose and treat diseases of the gastrointestinal tract. Using flexible, thin tubes called endoscopes, endoscopists are able to access the human digestive tract without incisions via natural orifices. Endoscopes are designed with high-intensity lighting and fitted with precision devices that allow viewing and treatment of the gastrointestinal system.