

Lobby Day at the State House

Over 125 cancer survivors, family members, friends, and ACS CAN advocates and staff took over the halls of the State House to participate in ACS CAN Lobby Day on March 25, 2015. The focus of Lobby Day this year was two-fold: advocate for priority legislation to help prevent cancer and take some time to celebrate some wins and a successful partnership between the organization and the legislature.

ACS CAN advocates met with their lawmakers to discuss two pieces of legislation. The first bill focuses on preventing skin cancer and if passed, would prohibit the use of indoor tanning devices for anyone under age 18. Filed by State Senator James Timilty of Walpole, the bill is ACS CAN Massachusetts' #1 priority for this legislative session. The second bill we spent Lobby Day advocating for would address electronic cigarettes. If passed, the bill would prohibit sale of e-cigarettes to minors and include e-cigarettes in the state's smoke-free workplace law. This bill was filed in both the House (by State Representative Jeff Sanchez of Jamaica Plain and in the Senate (by State Senator Harriette Chandler of Worcester).

Prior to meetings with their legislators, volunteers attended a speaking program in Nurses Hall at the State House, hearing from a variety of lawmakers and other key allies, including a melanoma survivor and PR & Marketing Manager at the Melanoma Foundation of New England – Meghan Rothschild – who was diagnosed with the disease following years of indoor tanning. Meghan was joined by Dr. Sherry Pagoto, a researcher from UMass Medical School in Worcester, to share their knowledge and to reiterate why the passage of the tanning bill is so important. We would like to thank the Melanoma Foundation for their support and partnership on this issue. One of the biggest highlights of the day was being able to present awards to the legislature to thank them for their steadfast support and successful history in passing legislation to help prevent, treat, and cure cancer in the Commonwealth.

Each year, ACS CAN publishes a report – How Do You Measure Up? – which scores each state on a variety of cancer prevention measures including work on addressing tobacco, quality of life, and access to care. Massachusetts received the highest scores in the nation and Lobby Day was the perfect opportunity to not only celebrate this accomplishment but also thank the House and Senate for all they have done on behalf of cancer patients and their families. Legislative Champion Awards were presented and graciously accepted by members of the legislature, including Senate President Stan Rosenberg, Senate Majority Leader Harriette Chandler, Public Health Committee Chairs Senator Jason Lewis and Representative Kate Hogan.



American Cancer Society Global Scholars learn about advocacy first hand at Lobby Day

At this year's Lobby Day at the State House, ACS CAN was joined by a group of special guests from the American Cancer Society's Global Scholars program. This program selects high achieving professionals from low and middle income countries through a very competitive application process, and helps them develop their advocacy skills with expert mentorship from ACS CAN trainers. The pilot Global Scholars class comes from Rwanda, Kenya, Nigeria, and India. They observed how Lobby Day takes place and developed advocacy campaigns in their home countries with support from the American Cancer Society and ACS CAN staff.



Massachusetts new legislative session in full swing

The 2015/2016 legislative session officially kicked off on January 7, 2015 following an eventful and successful 2013/2014 session (see below). ACS CAN is supporting several pieces of legislation that, if passed, would help prevent, treat and cure cancer in Massachusetts. Below is a list of some of ACS CAN Massachusetts legislative priorities. For more information on these and other legislative priorities, please contact Patricia Mallios, Grassroots Manager, at patricia.mallios@cancer.org.

- Prohibiting use of indoor tanning devices for minors under age 18.
- Prohibiting the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors and including e-cigarettes in the state's smoke-free workplace law.
- Prohibiting health insurers from charging higher premiums for tobacco users.
- Providing comprehensive smoking cessation benefits through the Commonwealth Health Connector and Group Insurance Commission.
- Creating a secretariat-level Office of Health Equity to address racial and ethnic health disparities.
- Expanding shared use agreements to allow communities to utilize school exercise facilities to provide communities with a safe and clean place to be active.
- Increasing funding for the state's tobacco control program.

2013/2014 Legislative Session recap

We finished 2014 on a high note as we were able to pass the palliative care bill in the waning final hours of session! HB 4520 An Act to Improve Quality of Life by Expanding Access to Palliative Care, filed by State Representative Chris Walsh of Framingham will establish a State Palliative Care and Quality of Life Interdisciplinary Advisory Council within DPH to advise the Department on palliative care initiatives in the state and establishes a Palliative Care Consumer and Professional Information Program to ensure that comprehensive and accurate information about palliative care initiatives are publicly available. These measures will lead to greater access to and awareness of palliative care services in Massachusetts for those dealing with cancer and other chronic diseases. We'd like to thank ACS CAN volunteers for their tireless advocacy on this issue – it's because of your hard work and strong voices that the bill passed!

ACS CAN and Stand Up To Cancer

ACS CAN has partnered with Stand Up To Cancer to make a strong, unified push for increased cancer research funding. We are excited to embark on this partnership! Check out ACS CAN President Chris Hansen's blog "Cancer Candor" explaining more about our new exciting partnership.

There are few things in life that we all share in common, but we are all just one degree from cancer. Whether it's a parent, grandparent, other relative, friend, co-worker or even you, we all know someone who has faced this disease, and thus we all know just how important cancer research is to the quality of life and survival of our loved ones.

That's why we've joined with Stand Up To Cancer in an unprecedented joint effort to save more lives from cancer by boosting the nation's investment in groundbreaking cancer research. We're calling it the One Degree campaign, and it brings together Hollywood celebrities and grassroots advocates nationwide to ask Congress to increase medical research funding at the National Institutes of Health by \$6 billion over two years, including \$1 billion for cancer research at the National Cancer Institute(NCI).

We're launching the One Degree campaign at a critical point for the future of patient care. Federal funding for medical research has declined more than 24 percent in inflation-adjusted dollars since 2003, forcing cancer centers to halt promising clinical trials and drying up the grant pool relied upon by researchers. Sequestration and budget caps have forced NCI to scale back or even halt promising cancer research. Yet, we understand more about cancer occurrence, reoccurrence and personalized treatments than ever before. Not to mention that NCI is near completion of the Cancer Genome Atlas, a collaborative database that will accelerate our understanding of how genetics play a role in the cancer journey. Federal investments in cancer research are crucial to ensuring groundbreaking approaches to preventing, detecting and treating cancer are brought from the bench to the bedside.

Just a couple of days into the launch, the One Degree campaign is already in full force on social media. People across the country are tweeting and posting on Facebook using the #OneDegree hashtag.

Want to learn more? Visit OneDegreeProject.org



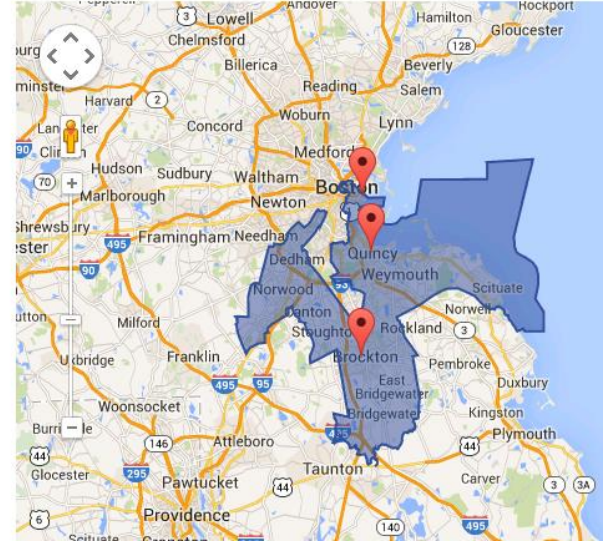
Left: Massachusetts State Lead Ambassador Carol Clark and Grassroots Manager Patricia Mallios at last the State Lead Ambassador Summit and One Degree Lobby Day in Washington, D.C. in March 2015.

Volunteer leadership opportunity: ACT Lead

ACS CAN Massachusetts is looking to fill an exciting volunteer leadership position! Ambassador Constituent Team (ACT) Lead volunteers implement local, state, and federal advocacy activities within their congressional district, working in partnership with ACS CAN staff and volunteers. ACT Leads play a critical role in helping ACS CAN and the American Cancer Society reach their goals of saving lives and defeating cancer by impacting public policy. Key responsibilities include:

- Serve as the key volunteer contact with their congressional member and/or state legislator.
- Participate in state-level legislative activities as needed.
- Participate in required trainings, including quarterly nationwide conference calls.
- Establish a schedule for maintaining regular contact with ACS CAN grassroots and government relations staff.
- Serve as a spokesperson to local media on current legislative issues with staff guidance.
- Lead the ACT to set and achieve goals around volunteer recruitment and training, Relay For Life advocacy, media advocacy, and ACS CAN fundraising.

8th District of Massachusetts



We are currently recruiting an ACT Lead for Congressional District 8, which covers parts of Boston, Quincy, Braintree, Dedham, West Bridgewater, and more. Check out the map to see if you live in the district. This is a great opportunity for a volunteer looking to take more of a leadership role with ACS CAN. Training and support are available. Contact Patricia Mallios, Grassroots Manager, (patricia.mallios@cancer.org) for more information.

Save the Date!

Prostate Cancer Awareness Day
Thursday April 16, 2015 (10 AM – 2 PM)
Great Hall, Massachusetts State House

Register today at:

<http://www.admetech.org/prostate-cancer-awareness-day-2015/>

AdMeTech Foundation's 7th Annual Prostate Cancer Awareness Day at the Massachusetts State House will recognize prostate cancer as a public health priority. AdMeTech will bring together the key health care stakeholders to develop and implement a state-wide program for education and awareness, with the focus on high-risk individuals, including men with African roots, family history and increasing age. Prostate Cancer Awareness Day expands public-private partnerships to support research, education and implementation of the cutting-edge methods of screening, diagnosis and treatment. ACS CAN is excited to partner again with ADMeTech on their annual event and look forward to joining them at the State House April 16th. If you have any questions or would like information, please email contact@admetech.org

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Interested in becoming an ACS CAN Ambassador?

Legislative Ambassadors work closely with ACS CAN staff in support of local, state and federal grassroots advocacy activities within state and federal legislative districts. Ambassadors play an integral role in helping to achieve ACS CAN's goal to make cancer a top national priority with elected officials throughout the country.

Responsibilities include:

- responding to and sharing ACS CAN action alerts
- recruiting additional Ambassadors and ACS CAN members
- attending ACS CAN and ACS events, including Relay For Life, to promote advocacy and engage volunteers
- participate in meetings with your lawmakers
- submitting letters to the editor and assisting with other media activities
- and more!

No prior legislative experience needed!

Contact patricia.mallios@cancer.org to learn more!

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