



## California July 2023 Quarterly Newsletter



JOIN US IN MAKING  
**CANCER**  
A NATIONAL PRIORITY

ACS CAN CALIFORNIA

We are thrilled to introduce the inaugural edition of ACS CAN California's quarterly volunteer newsletter! As a valued member of our volunteer community, this newsletter will serve as a platform to keep you informed, inspired, and engaged in our mission, as well as highlight the vital role you play as an ambassador. In each edition, we will celebrate the impact we've achieved together, share stories of transformation, and inform you of upcoming opportunities to take action.

Your input will help shape future editions, and we invite you to share your feedback with [Jamie Escoto](#) and [Kira Sano](#). Hope you enjoy delving into our first newsletter, and a HUGE thank you for all you do to help reduce the cancer burden on everyone!

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

#### KEY DATES

July 18th, 5:30 - 6:30  
pm **Summer All  
Ambassador  
Call** ([Zoom Link](#))

July 25th, 4:30 - 5:30  
pm **Lights of Hope  
Fundraising  
Panel** (Register [here](#))

- Check out this year's Federal Priorities [here](#). Our current focus is to ensure Congress prioritizes **cancer research funding**, as cuts to cancer cures would have catastrophic consequences on our nation's ability to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. [Take this quiz to learn more about the lifesaving impact of cancer research funding](#), and please share widely.
- Learn more about the Prostate-Specific Antigen Screening for High-risk Insured Men

July 27th, **Lights of Hope Challenge**: 24 Bags in 24 Hours

August 22nd, 4:30 - 5:30 pm **Lights of Hope Fundraising Panel** (Register [here](#))

August 24th - August 27th, **Lights of Hope Challenge**: \$100 in 100 hours

September 17-20th, **ACS CAN National Leadership Summit and Lobby Day in Washington D.C.** (By Invite Only)

September 28th, **ACS CAN Policy Forum**

October 4th, **Fall Quarterly Ambassador Call**: Get the Scoop on LS&LD!

(PSA for HIM) Act by taking the self-paced training [here](#).

- California Lawmakers need to hear from their constituents about the importance of funding for the **California Cancer Registry**. [Please take action by signing our CCR funding petition.](#)
- We are happy to share that the **Medicare Multi-Cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act** has been reintroduced in the 118th Congress as HR2407! Learn more about the bill [here](#), and please let us know how you'd like to help by [filling out this quick form](#). Our goal is to have volunteers take action in every California Congressional district.
- If you know of anyone between the ages of 18-35 who would be a good candidate for the [California Society of Emerging Leaders](#), please contact [kira.sano13@gmail.com](mailto:kira.sano13@gmail.com).

#### USEFUL LINKS ⇒

[2023 Call Calendar](#)

[ACS CAN California Home Page](#)

[Lights of Hope Resources](#)

[Volunteer Report Back Form](#)



#### LIGHTS OF HOPE

It's one of our favorite times of the year: we're well into promoting ACS CAN's signature fundraising event **Lights of Hope**, where we honor those who have been touched by cancer and remember those we've lost. Our 13th annual Lights of Hope event will be held in Washington, DC on September 19.

Last year, we raised \$877,000, with over \$86,000 raised by California alone! We are hoping to continue our streak this year and raise \$80,000.

A few resources to get you started:

## CALIFORNIA NUMBERS *as of July 10th*

- **\$22,943** raised
  - **29%** toward our goal
  - **19** volunteers have raised at least \$50
  - **52** volunteers have set up Lights of Hope pages
  - **5 Grand Champions of Hope** have raised at least \$1000
  - **1 Hope Hero** has raised at least \$2500
  - **1 Top Advocate** has raised at least \$5000
- Check out your one-stop shop for all things Lights of Hope [here](#).
  - Set up your fundraising page on [Donor Drive](#). This new fundraising platform now includes a mobile app!
  - View our California Lights of Hope Kick-Off recording from May 15 [here](#). [Passcode:=W^z8e?e].

As an incentive for California and Hawaii volunteers, Jim Knox, our Managing Director, will offer “*Jim’s Bucket of Hope*,” the chance to win extra funds towards toward your campaign.

**For the National Challenges** - Everyone who completes one of the three national challenges will get their name entered once in the bucket. Additionally, for every \$100 raised during that challenge, you will get one additional entry. *For example:* complete a challenge and raise \$300 = your name will be entered 4 times in the bucket. **For each challenge he will pick one name and make a \$200 donation to that person’s page.**

**For Sponsorship** – Your name will be added to the bucket for every sponsorship ask made and secured by Sept. 4th. Each ask = one entry in the bucket and each sponsorship secured = three entries in the bucket. **Jim will pick 2 winners and make a \$200 donation to each person’s page.**

## VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS



**Bernice Sanders is pictured on the left with fellow volunteer and long-**

## HONORING BERNICE SANDERS

Longtime volunteer Bernice Sanders passed away on April 23. In her more than 30 years with ACS and ACS CAN she did it all: helping organize the Minnie Ripperton Run, supporting Relay For Life and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer, serving on countless volunteer leadership teams and much more. She participated in the first Celebration on the Hill in 2002 and continued to use her voice with great impact to connect with her lawmakers and build support for our cancer fighting bills.

She was always quick to share her homemade goodies (that banana bread and those cookies!) and

**time friend Barbara  
Lawson.**



**Linda Shaner is pictured  
on the left accompanied  
by her dear friend Kathy  
Flaherty.**

was the type of person who leave a home-cooked dinner on the doorstep for a friend in need. She will be greatly missed.

### **HONORING LINDA SHANER**

Longtime volunteer Linda Shaner passed away on April 30. Linda was a pillar of the Ambassador program – she was a former State Lead Ambassador, recipient of the Capitol Dome Award and had attended more National Leadership Summit and Lobby Days in Washington DC than any other California volunteer except her dear friend Kathy Flaherty.

Despite her metastatic cancer diagnosis, Linda channeled her strength and energy to attend our most recent Leadership Summit and Lobby Day in Washington D.C. and our California Cancer Action Day in April – no easy feat given that she had to travel all the way from Imperial County. Linda will be remembered for her dedication to our mission and her incredibly kind heart.

### **NEW AMBASSADORS**

Let's give a warm welcome to our new volunteers — or rather, new to us since February's Ambassador Summit!

- Arianna Carbonell, District 42
- Kenneth Chang, District 45
- Teja Cherukuri, District 14
- Julia Choi, District 43
- Naina Chopra, District 10
- George Contreras, District 10
- Chelsea Dong, District 29
- Anvi Hamparsumyan, District 11
- Li Han, District 18
- Kiara Harasaki, District 33



**Misha Mehta is pictured fourth from the  
right holding a photo of her son Neev.**

### **QUARTERLY SPOTLIGHT: MISHA MEHTA**

ACS CAN California Ambassador, Misha Mehta, and her sister Prachi Mehta recently visited Capitol Hill to meet with lawmakers and advocate for pediatric cancer research funding

- Ashely Havens, District 36
- Ananya Manoj, District 11
- Haidarey Mitra, District 3
- Manisha Modi, District 14
- Thomas Neuman, District 50
- Linhdan Nguyen, District 19
- Aruja Gupta, District 14
- Maller Ori, District 16
- Anika Rao, District 14
- Mo Salah, District 11
- Nicholas Schiller, District 11
- Timothy So, District 29
- Willis Tang, District 28
- Lucina Tonoyan, District 14
- Amanda Webb, District 11
- Edith Weinrub, District 12

as part of the Alliance for Childhood Cancer Action Days!

Misha, who lost her child Neev to cancer said, “I feel like no one cares about pediatric cancer until it directly affects their child and it’s too late. We need to get ahead and advocate for more funding! Pediatric brain tumors are the leading cause of cancer death in children.”

Click [here](#) to help by urging congress to increase opportunities for childhood cancer research, improve the quality of life for childhood cancer survivors, and expand efforts to track childhood cancer incidences. You could learn more about Misha’s inspiring story [here](#).

## VOLUNTEERS IN THE NEWS

Kudos to our amazing volunteers in the news:

**Punita Khanna** [\*A Los Angeles Cancer Survivor is Advocating for More Californians to Have Access to Biomarker Testing, Precision Medicine\*](#)

Letters to the Editor on Medicare Multi-Cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act:

**Stefania Sesock**, Colvis, [\*The Fresno Bee\*](#)

**Jim Murphy**, San Jose, [\*The Mercury News\*](#)

**Ana Reyes**, San Jose, *Palo Alto Daily Post*

**Ananya Pinnamaneni**: [\*High School Students Take On Concord Committee Meeting\*](#)

## EVENT RECAPS

### Pride Month: June

### AAPI Heritage Month: May

Throughout June, we attended Pride celebrations to raise awareness for and advocate for local, state, and federal public policies that reduce

AAPI Month gives us a unique chance to shed light on the intersection of AAPI communities/identities and the unequal impact of cancer. We would like to raise awareness for the diverse cultures of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders while also speaking up about the underrepresented challenges they face in terms of cancer prevention, treatment, and healthcare access.

In order to truly eradicate cancer as we know it, we must address these cultural barriers, promote culturally aware healthcare services, and advocate for health equity to ensure that the AAPI community receives vital support in the fight against cancer—whether it be in resources, information, or connections. Throughout the month of May, we promoted cancer education, early detection, and prevention strategies unique and personalized for the AAPI community in light of their experiences and culture.

Email [leslie.ferreira@cancer.org](mailto:leslie.ferreira@cancer.org) to learn more about ACS CAN's AAPI Volunteer Caucus!

cancer-related disparities and improve health outcomes for the LGBTQ+ communities.



**Kira Sano and Olivia Hamblin at June 24 San Fernando Valley Pride hosted by State Senator Caroline Menjivar.**

Participated in Pride? Send in your photos [here](#).

Learn more about health equity issues within LGBTQ+ communities:

[Reducing Cancer Disparities for LGBTQ+ People](#)

[Cancer Research Funding Action](#)

[Funding Cancer Research Flyer](#)

[Tobacco Industry Targeting of LGBTQ+ Community](#)

Click [here](#) for info on ACS CAN's LGBTQ+ & Allies Engagement Group.

## ACS CAN Cancer Action Day 2023

Many of our volunteers joined us on April 11<sup>th</sup> at the State Capitol in Sacramento for the **2023 California Cancer Action Day**; we had 107 meetings with legislators, and their staff, to advocate for our priority bills: SB 421- Access to Oral Chemo, SB 344 California Cancer Registry, and SB 496 Biomarkers. We also celebrated our very own **Jose Ramos**, who received the ACS CAN Capitol Dome award for his contributions and commitment to ACS CAN's work.

We also were able to invite many youth and young professionals to the event, here are their stories:

<https://www.acscanemergingleaders.org/blog/cacanceractionday2023>

## ACS CAN Legislative Policy Roundtable 2023

On June 20, State Lead Ambassador Kay Coleman emceed a virtual Legislative Policy Roundtable event, where we heard from several distinguished speakers on the significance of the California Cancer Registry, the Regional Registries and the roles they play in fighting cancer and improving health equity. Panelists included:

- Dr. Mike Teitell – UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center
- State Senator Susan Rubio – California Senate District 22
- Patricia A. Ganz, MD – UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Mike Mizelle – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Robert H. McLaughlin, JD, Ph.D. – Public Health Institute

The event also recognized ACS CAN California's State Legislator of the Year – State Senator Anthony J. Portantino – for passage of The California Cancer Care Equity Act, a bill that ACS CAN worked on last year that improves access to care at National Cancer Institute Comprehensive Cancer Centers for Medi-Cal recipients.

If you missed the event or would like to revisit it, you may view the recording [here](#) in the *Archived Events* folder. We also invite you to join us for the [ACS CAN California 2023 Policy Forum: Health Equity and Access to Care](#) on September 28 which will focus on challenges faced by communities of color and medically underserved cancer patients and survivors.

## Youth and Young Professionals Summit

For the first time, ACS CAN held a “Young Leaders Summit” inviting young leaders from 18-35 years old to engage a demographic long underrepresented and underutilized within the organization. Hosted in Chicago, members from the California Emerging Leaders Council were honored to be invited and participate—presenting at affinity group strategy sessions and hosting a conference-wide listening session with the President and Vice President of ACS CAN!

<https://www.acscanemergingleaders.org/blog/youngleaderssummit2023>



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