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**PANCREATIC CANCER ACTION NETWORK (PanCAN) LAUNCHES NATIONAL
GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY PROGRAM, SELECTS FIRST WAVE OF LEADERS
FROM CANDIDATES REPRESENTING 87 AFFILIATE GROUPS**

**Advocates Will Urge Local Officials, Business and Community Leaders
to Support an Increase in Cancer Research Funding**

Los Angeles, CA – In response to the Bush Administration's proposed FY 2007 budget, which would cut federal funding for cancer research to the National Institutes of Health by over \$40 million, the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN) announced today that it has launched a national grassroots advocacy campaign through its 87 volunteer-driven Team Hope affiliate sites to voice objections to the proposed budget cuts. The grassroots effort will also urge local legislators and civic leaders to step forward and support increased awareness, additional funding and supportive legislation for cancer research.

Through a competitive application process, six regional advocates have been selected to spearhead PanCAN's efforts. "Our first six leaders are from California, New York, Arizona, Minnesota and Ohio," stated Julie Fleshman, PanCAN's President and CEO. "Each leader will work in conjunction with Team Hope members from within their home state as well as affiliates based in adjacent states to grow our advocacy numbers person-by-person, district-by-district, state-by-state."

"More than 15,000 people whose lives have been touched by pancreatic cancer participated in Team Hope events last year," continued Fleshman, "so we're confident that our lead advocates have the outreach support they'll need to insure that every member of the House and Senate will know, when election time nears, how important the issue of pancreatic cancer is to their constituents."

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PanCAN Launches National Grassroots Advocacy Campaign To Address Cancer
Research Funding Issue

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“We simply cannot afford to reduce funding for cancer research, now or at any time in the foreseeable future,” explained Elizabeth Thompson, PanCAN’s Director of Research and Scientific Affairs. “This is the time to urgently push forward, when there are so many promising therapies in development and millions of lives at stake. Without at least sustaining 2005-2006 funding levels, existing research pipelines could collapse and there would be little opportunity or incentive for new development.”

Though scientists have developed relatively effective treatments and drug therapies for many types of common cancers, there is still no early detection method or effective treatment for pancreatic cancer, the fourth most common type of cancer. In 2006, experts project that more than 33,000 new cases of pancreatic cancer will be identified and almost as many casualties will result.

“The inability to detect pancreatic cancer early and having so few treatment options unfortunately feeds the public’s perception of a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer as a virtual death sentence,” continued Fleshman. “With a local advocacy element in place, we will have a far stronger opportunity to spread a more upbeat message of hope for a cure in the halls of Congress.” Within the scientific community, PanCAN is highly regarded as the sole provider of Career Development grants, monies which entice and encourage research scientists to the field of pancreatic cancer research. It was an early PanCAN Career Development grant which led to the discovery of a mouse model for pancreatic cancer research, an exciting breakthrough which makes other groundbreaking discoveries both possible and probable.

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According to Fleshman, PanCAN's entry into grassroots politics can only strengthen its overall effort to focus attention on the dearth of pancreatic cancer knowledge and need for additional funding. In 2005, as part of a highly visible and cohesive educational campaign, PanCAN representatives made more than 150 visits to Congressional offices, and met on a weekly basis with Congressional and Senate members and staff on budget and appropriations issues related to cancer research funding. In a separate endeavor to accelerate research efforts, PanCAN recently partnered with C-Three (the Colorectal Cancer Coalition) to train and develop research advocates in gastrointestinal cancer, who will represent the two agencies at upcoming meetings with the Specialized Programs of Research Excellence (SPORES), Clinical Trials Working Groups, Southwestern Oncology Group (SWOG), Eastern Clinical Oncology Group (ECOG), the Food and Drug Administration and others. Next month, bolstered by representatives of the new grassroots campaign in attendance, Pan CAN will jointly campaign for cancer research funding on Capitol Hill April 25-26, 2006 with One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC, a 57-member cancer coalition), the National Coalition for Cancer Research, the Cancer Leadership Coalition and the AdHoc Group for Medical Research.

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN) is a national 501(c)(3) patient advocacy organization which serves the pancreatic cancer community. PanCAN's Patient and Liaison Services (PALS) are provided free of charge to pancreatic cancer patients, their families, caregivers and survivors, and to healthcare professionals. PanCAN is headquartered at 2141 Rosecrans Avenue, Suite 7000, El Segundo, California 90245, and can be reached toll-free at 877-272-6226 or on the web at www.pancan.org.

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