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Area Cancer Patients Show Doctors, Nurses and Family They're Surviving and Thriving

CINJ "Celebrates Life" and Survivorship at Annual Event in New Brunswick

New Brunswick, N.J., June 12 2007 – The Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ) hosted its annual "Celebration of Life!" event earlier this week to mark National Cancer Survivors Day, which falls in June. According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), even though there are 550,000 cancer deaths in the United States each year, there are currently more than 10 million cancer survivors living in this country. In New Jersey, according to the state Department of Health and Senior Services, there are more than 300,000 individuals who are surviving this devastating disease thanks to improved treatment and diagnostic techniques.

The annual Survivors Day event, which often provides an educational component, offers CINJ patients and former patients an opportunity to meet with their oncologists and treatment nurses to show them they are thriving, despite having faced their individual illness.

Last year's event featured a cooking demonstration to further educate cancer survivors about healthy eating choices, while this year's event, tapped into personal inspiration. Sherry Waldrip, who authored the book "I Don't Remember Signing Up For Cancer!" served as guest speaker. While she shared her personal story about surviving breast cancer and the aftermath involved with reconstructive surgery, she focused on the importance of friendship, humor and hope: "Those are the pillars in life that can sometimes help you get through a tough situation. Even if you don't have family, there is always a community of people around you who will rally for you in your time of need," Waldrip noted.

Regina Cunningham, Ph.D., RN, AOCN, Chief Nursing Officer at CINJ and Assistant Professor of Family Medicine at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, emceed this year's event, which was held at the Hyatt Regency New Brunswick. Cunningham, whose current research focuses on survivorship issues, says one of the event's long-standing goals is to provide hope: "It's an opportunity to show the greater community that a diagnosis of cancer doesn't necessarily mean a diminished outlook on life. The patients and former patients of CINJ who come to this event year after year are a testament to the life goals that many survivors are able to meet. It truly is inspirational to see."

About The Cancer Institute of New Jersey

The Cancer Institute of New Jersey is the state's first and only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, and is dedicated to improving the prevention, detection, treatment and care of patients with cancer. CINJ's physician-scientists engage in translational research, transforming their laboratory discoveries into clinical practice quite literally bringing research to life. The Cancer Institute of New Jersey is a Center of Excellence of UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

To support CINJ, please call The Cancer Institute of New Jersey Foundation at 1-888-333-CINJ.

The Cancer Institute of New Jersey Network is comprised of hospitals throughout the state and provides a mechanism to rapidly disseminate important discoveries into the community. Partner Hospitals: Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, Atlantic Health (Morristown Memorial Hospital, Overlook Hospital). Affiliate Hospitals: Bayshore Community Hospital, CentraState Healthcare System, Cooper University Hospital,* Jersey Shore University Medical Center, JFK Medical Center, Mountainside Hospital , Raritan Bay Medical Center, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital at Hamilton (CINJ-Hamilton), Saint Peter's University Hospital, Somerset Medical Center, Southern Ocean County Hospital, The University Hospital/UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School*, and University Medical Center at Princeton. *Academic Affiliate

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