



Black Women's Health Imperative, Friends of Cancer Research, and Stand Up To Cancer Approved for a PCORI Engagement Award for Project TEACH

Atlanta, GA – January 28, 2020 – A team of leaders in patient advocacy and education at the Black Women's Health Imperative (BWHI), Friends of Cancer Research (*Friends*), and Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) have been approved for a funding award through the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards (Engagement Awards) program, an initiative of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). The funds will support Project TEACH: Trained Empowered Advocates for Community Health (Healing), empowering Black women through education and outreach to participate in and effectively engage with researchers and clinicians to increase participation of Black women in cancer-focused clinical trials.

Black women are vastly underrepresented in clinical research and trials. An analysis of data from the FDA indicates that in trials for 24 of the 31 cancer drugs approved since 2015, fewer than 5 percent of study patients were Black. Without more diverse participation, research cannot be confident that new precision treatments will be effective for all patients.

Linda Blount, MPH, President & CEO of BWHI, will lead the engagement project among the three organizations, bringing together experts in patient advocacy, education and training, and community engagement to achieve Project TEACH's goals. The project will focus on the vast underrepresentation of Black women in clinical trials, working to correct this through impactful capacity building among Black women across the country.

In response to this need, BWHI, *Friends*, and SU2C will conduct a phased program to empower Black women to participate in and effectively engage with researchers and clinicians in cancer-focused clinical research. Project TEACH will engage, train, and educate Black women cancer patients, advocates, and family members to understand clinical research and partner effectively with researchers and clinicians throughout the drug development process. By educating and training this group of Empowered Patient Partners in the principles of clinical research, Project TEACH will empower Black women with the tools necessary to impact their own and future treatment options. BWHI, as the project lead, will be involving their organization's vast constituency of Black women across the country in the program, while *Friends* and SU2C will be collaborating through their expertise and use of their education tools and institutional knowledge of the clinical trial, drug development, and regulatory processes.

"We are excited and honored to be receiving a PCORI Engagement Award for such an important project," said Linda Blount. "Not only will this award be a first crucial step to solving issues that stem from the underrepresentation of Black women in research, but we will be developing a program that will continue to increase the capacity of our advocates to engage with researchers, clinicians, and others within the drug development process."

“*Friends* is proud to partner with BWHI and SU2C on this important award to educate, empower, and train so many powerful advocates across the country,” noted *Friends* Vice President – Public Affairs, Ryan Hohman. “Project TEACH will look to truly put Black women at the center of the drug development process.”

“SU2C has always considered patient involvement in the research and clinical trial process to be paramount to driving the development of impactful and life-saving therapies,” said SU2C Chief Executive Officer Sung Poblete, PhD, RN. “Not only will Project TEACH be a game-changer for so many advocates across the country as we partner with these Black women to build their capacity and knowledge-base to advocate on behalf of themselves and so many others, but through increased participation of Black women in cancer clinical trials, we can ensure that Black women will benefit from new precision treatments.”

Project TEACH is part of a portfolio of projects that PCORI has funded to help develop a community of patients and other stakeholders equipped to participate as partners in comparative clinical effectiveness research (CER) and disseminate PCORI-funded study results. Through the Engagement Award Program, PCORI is creating an expansive network of individuals, communities, and organizations interested in and able to participate in, share, and use patient-centered CER.

According to Jean Slutsky, PCORI’s Chief Engagement and Dissemination Officer, “This project was selected for Engagement Award funding because it will build a community equipped to participate as partners in CER and develop partnerships and infrastructure to disseminate PCORI-funded research results. We look forward to working with BWHI, *Friends*, and SU2C throughout the course of their two-year project.”

The BWHI, *Friends*, and SU2C project and the other projects approved for funding by the PCORI Engagement Award Program were selected through a highly competitive review process in which applications were assessed for their ability to meet PCORI’s engagement goals and objectives, as well as program criteria. For more information about PCORI’s funding to support engagement efforts, visit <http://www.pcori.org/content/eugene-washington-pcori-engagement-awards/>.

PCORI is an independent, nonprofit organization authorized by Congress in 2010 to fund comparative effectiveness research that will provide patients, their caregivers, and clinicians with the evidence needed to make better-informed health and healthcare decisions. PCORI is committed to seeking input from a broad range of stakeholders to guide its work.

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About the Black Women’s Health Imperative

The Black Women’s Health Imperative is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing health equity and social justice for Black women, across the lifespan, through policy, advocacy, education, research and leadership development. The organization identifies the most pressing health issues that affect the nation’s 22 million Black women and girls and invests in the best of the best strategies and organizations that accomplish its goals. For more information, please visit www.bwhi.org.

About Friends of Cancer Research

Friends of Cancer Research (*Friends*) drives collaboration among partners from every healthcare sector

to power advances in science, policy and regulation that speed lifesaving treatments to patients. For more information, please visit www.focr.org.

About Stand Up To Cancer

STAND UP TO CANCER® (SU2C) raises funds to accelerate the pace of research to get new therapies to patients quickly and save lives now. SU2C is a division of the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF), a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. SU2C was established in 2008 by media and entertainment leaders who utilize these communities' resources to engage the public in supporting a new, collaborative model of cancer research, to increase awareness about cancer prevention, and to highlight progress being made in the fight against the disease. As of April 2019, more than 1,600 scientists representing more than 180 institutions are involved in SU2C-funded research projects.

Under the direction of our Scientific Advisory Committee, led by Nobel laureate Phillip A. Sharp, Ph.D., SU2C operates rigorous competitive review processes to identify the best research proposals to recommend for funding, oversee grants administration, and ensure collaboration across research programs.

Current members of the SU2C Council of Founders and Advisors (CFA) include Katie Couric, Sherry Lansing, Kathleen Lobb, Lisa Paulsen, Rusty Robertson, Sue Schwartz, Pamela Oas Williams, and Ellen Ziffren. The late Laura Ziskin and the late Noreen Fraser are also co-founders. Sung Poblete, Ph.D., R.N., serves as SU2C's Chief Executive Officer. For more information on Stand Up To Cancer, visit StandUpToCancer.org.