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Atlanta cancer survivor and volunteer will be honored with ASTRO's 2013 Survivor Circle Award

Sherri Graves Smith will be recognized for her dedication to cancer patients and their families

Fairfax, Va., September 18, 2013 – The American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) has selected Atlanta resident and cancer survivor Sherri Graves Smith to receive the 2013 Survivor Circle Award. On behalf of ASTRO, Otis W. Brawley, MD, chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society (ACS), will present Ms. Smith with her award, including \$1,000, during the Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, September 24 at ASTRO's 55th Annual Meeting in Atlanta. The Survivor Circle Award recognizes a cancer survivor who lives in the ASTRO Annual Meeting host city and who has dedicated his or her time and energy in service and support of their local community.

"Volunteering is one of the most fulfilling parts of my life because it helps me focus on being productive and helping others," Smith said. "It gives me a great sense of personal fulfillment and gratification to be able to assist and support others, and it keeps my life in perspective. The more I help, the more I want to help."

Smith was diagnosed in November 2007 at age 36 with stage IV colorectal cancer, which has since been diagnosed as a chronic condition. She received radiation therapy at Saint Joseph's Hospital in Atlanta and continues to receive chemotherapy treatment at Atlanta Cancer Care. While receiving treatment at Atlanta Cancer Care, Smith noticed that some patients were experiencing dire financial challenges, ranging from bankruptcy and foreclosure to skipping treatments because of the inability to pay for a babysitter or transportation. Smith expressed an interest in helping these patients, and a nurse informed her about the Atlanta Cancer Care Foundation (ACCF), which provides monetary

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assistance to those financially challenged by cancer, in addition to funding professional and public education on cancer-related issues and funding for cancer research. After learning about ACCF, Smith's lifelong commitment to volunteer work inspired her to get involved with ACCF.

"I am incredibly grateful that I have been able to keep my home and that I have transportation and access to physicians and medicine. People should not have to worry about daily living essentials due to financial distress, which can impact their quality of life and recovery while undergoing cancer treatment," continued Smith. "I love that ACCF is an all-volunteer organization and that it fills the gaps by helping people with food, medicine, shelter and transportation. It truly gives people the freedom to concentrate on getting better."

At the time of her diagnosis, Smith was a corporate attorney for The Coca-Cola Company, a position from which she had to resign in order to focus on her cancer treatments. After learning about ACCF, she asked her previous manager in the legal department of The Coca-Cola Company if they would host a benefit for ACCF. That discussion led to a biennial benefit for ACCF—the inaugural event was held in 2011, raising nearly \$150,000 for ACCF, and the 2013 benefit raised almost \$240,000. Smith served on the steering committee for the 2011 event and as co-chairman of the 2013 event.

"It gives me great joy to serve the Atlanta community, and I am proud to receive this honor from ASTRO," said Smith, who plans to donate her \$1,000 award to ACCF. "ACCF has been able to increase the level of grants it provides, and it has also been able to be proactive to find other private cancer care practices in the community and let them know about ACCF's services."

"ASTRO is privileged to present Ms. Smith with the 2013 Survivor Circle Award," said Colleen A.F. Lawton, MD, FASTRO, president of ASTRO's Board of Directors. "It is truly inspiring that she has transformed her cancer diagnosis into such extraordinary service and support of cancer patients in the Atlanta area, especially while still undergoing treatment herself."

Dr. Brawley will present a keynote address, "Cancer Survivorship and Quality of Life," on Tuesday, September 24 at 9:15 a.m. at ASTRO's 55th Annual Meeting, just prior to the Awards Ceremony. As the ACS's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Brawley is responsible for promoting the goals of cancer prevention, early detection and quality treatment through cancer research and education. He

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champions efforts to decrease smoking, improve diet, detect cancer at the earliest stage and provide the critical support cancer patients need. He also guides efforts to enhance and focus the research program, upgrade the society's advocacy capacity and concentrate community cancer control efforts in areas where they will be most effective. As an acknowledged global leader in the field of health disparities research, Dr. Brawley is a key leader in the ACS's work to eliminate disparities in access to quality cancer care.

ASTRO's 55th Annual Meeting, held in Atlanta, September 22-25, 2013, is the premier scientific meeting in radiation oncology and brings together more than 11,000 attendees including oncologists from all disciplines, medical physicists, dosimetrists, radiation therapists, radiation oncology nurses and nurse practitioners, biologists, physician assistants, practice administrators, industry representatives and other health care professionals from around the world. The theme of the 2013 meeting is "Patients: Hope • Guide • Heal" and will focus on patient-centered care and the importance of the physician's role in improving patient-reported outcomes and the quality and safety of patient care. The four-day scientific meeting includes presentation of four plenary papers, 363 oral presentations, 1,460 posters and 144 digital posters in 70 educational sessions and scientific panels for 19 disease sites/tracks. Keynote and featured speakers include: William B. Munier, director of the Center for Quality Improvement and Patient Safety at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; Darrell G. Kirch, MD, president and CEO of the Association of American Medical Colleges; James Cosgrove, PhD, director of the U.S. Government Accountability Office; Otis W. Brawley, MD, chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society; and Peter Friedl, MD, PhD, of St. Radboud University Nijmegen Medical Centre at the University of Nijmegen and MD Anderson Cancer Center.

For more information about ASTRO's 55th Annual Meeting, visit

www.astro.org/AnnualMeeting.

For press registration and media policies for ASTRO's 55th Annual Meeting, visit

www.astro.org/AMPress.

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ABOUT ASTRO

ASTRO is the premier radiation oncology society in the world, with more than 10,000 members who are physicians, nurses, biologists, physicists, radiation therapists, dosimetrists and other health care professionals that specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. As the leading organization in radiation oncology, the Society is dedicated to improving patient care through professional education and training, support for clinical practice and health policy standards, advancement of science and research, and advocacy. ASTRO publishes two medical journals, International Journal of Radiation Oncology • Biology • Physics (www.redjournal.org) and Practical Radiation Oncology (www.practicalradonc.org); developed and maintains an extensive patient website, www.rtanswers.org; and created the Radiation Oncology Institute (www.roinstitute.org), a non-profit foundation to support research and education efforts around the world that enhance and confirm the critical role of radiation therapy in improving cancer treatment. To learn more about ASTRO, visit www.astro.org.

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