

WHITE HOUSE TO AWARD NATION'S HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOR

TO SUSAN G. KOMEN FOR THE CURE® FOUNDER NANCY G. BRINKER

WASHINGTON, DC – July 30, 2009 – Ambassador Nancy Goodman Brinker, whose promise to her dying sister launched Susan G. Komen for the Cure® and the worldwide breast cancer movement, was nominated for the highest civilian honor in the United States – the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the White House announced today.

Brinker, founder of the world's leading breast cancer organization and a Goodwill Ambassador for Cancer Control of the World Health Organization, will receive the Medal from President Barack Obama at a White House ceremony Aug. 12.

She is being honored for her leadership in building Susan G. Komen for the Cure into a global force for change for people with breast cancer, leading the way in breast cancer research, advocacy, education and outreach. With her vision, Dallas-based Komen for the Cure has grown from a group of friends in a living room to an organization with more than 120 domestic and global Affiliates, more than 1.5 million advocates and a presence in more than 50 countries.

"To say that I am honored, humbled and exhilarated is a vast understatement," Brinker said. "I will be pleased to accept this honor in my sister's memory, and on behalf of the millions of women and men who have walked side-by-side with us over many years to end the suffering and misery from this disease."

Alexine Clement Jackson, chair of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure board of directors, said, "Nancy Brinker embodies an American story – a story of the tremendous good that can be achieved when people put their minds to it. Today, millions of women and men owe their recoveries, their treatments, their positive prognosis, their social and psychological support to the work that Nancy has achieved in her sister's memory. We are very proud of her – this is well-deserved."

Nancy Brinker's story began in Peoria, Ill., with a promise to her sister, Susan G. Komen, that she would do everything she could to end breast cancer forever. Susan Komen died of breast cancer in 1980, at the age of 36, after a three-year battle with the disease. Brinker was diagnosed with breast cancer just two years later.

"At that time, there was a stigma and shame around breast cancer. You didn't talk about it. There were no 800-numbers, no Internet. Our government didn't spend much on breast cancer research. There were few major cancer centers with expertise about breast cancer. That's the world we faced when Suzy was diagnosed. It's a world I watched her suffer in, and it's a world she wanted us to change," Brinker said.

Determined to keep her promise, Brinker launched what was then called the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation in 1982 from her living room in Dallas. The name was changed to Susan G. Komen for the Cure in 2007.

At first, Brinker encountered embarrassed resistance to her plans to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer research and education. "We found that potential sponsors didn't want to be associated with cancer, especially a cancer of the breast. Papers didn't want to print the words 'breast cancer.' It was very much an uphill battle," Brinker said.

Nevertheless, she persevered, and in 1983 the first Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure® was run around a Dallas shopping mall with about 800 people. Today, more than 1.5 million people run

annually in Komen Race for the Cure events in more than 120 U.S. and 14 international cities. This October, Komen will hold its first Race for the Cure around the Giza Pyramids in Cairo.

Along the way, Brinker pioneered the concept of "cause-related marketing" and established the color pink as the iconic representation for breast cancer. Today, almost 300 global and national companies are Komen sponsors, providing funding to help fulfill the organization's promise to save lives and end breast cancer forever.

All told, Komen has raised and invested more than \$1.3 billion into cutting-edge research and community outreach, education and support programs.

In 2001, Brinker was named U.S. Ambassador to Hungary, where she enlisted the aid of the U.S. State Department, local women, health professionals and non-governmental organizations in what she terms "global health diplomacy" to raise awareness for breast cancer in that country.

From there, Brinker and Komen launched an international breast cancer initiative, focused on low- to middle-income countries and building a presence in 50 countries in high-need areas, including Africa, Central and South America, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Later, Brinker served as U.S. Chief of Protocol from 2007-2009, where she continued to engage world leaders in the need for global cancer control.

"We are, clearly, facing a global cancer crisis," Brinker said. "Cancer is already killing more people than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. It is the second leading cause of death in the world; cases are expected to triple in 30 years, and too little attention is being paid to the human suffering and the social and economic impacts of this disease."

About Susan G. Komen for the Cure®

Nancy G. Brinker promised her dying sister, Susan G. Komen, she would do everything in her power to end breast cancer forever. In 1982, that promise became Susan G. Komen for the Cure, which is now the world's largest breast cancer organization and the largest source of nonprofit funds dedicated to the fight against breast cancer with more than \$1.3 billion invested to date. For more information about Susan G. Komen for the Cure, breast health or breast cancer, visit www.komen.org or call 1-877 GO KOMEN.

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