February 4, 2000

Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs

Dear Advocacy Organization Leader:

We are sending this letter to request nominations for consumer representatives for the U.S. Army Breast Cancer Research Program (BCRP) scientific peer review committees. Please review the enclosed materials or forward them to the appropriate consumer organization/support group leader as soon as possible. In addition, please provide the nominated individuals with the information included in this mailing. Since nominations are being requested from a large number of breast cancer-related organizations, please nominate no more than two people who have not previously served on a BCRP review committee. The BCRP will provide reimbursement for the expenses of selected individuals.

NOTE: If potential candidates have previously served on Department of Defense BCRP scientific peer review committees, they do not need to be re-nominated; the BCRP staff will be selecting experienced consumer reviewers to serve as mentor reviewers.

Nominees must be endorsed by your organization and satisfy the following primary selection criteria:

• A breast cancer survivor
• An active participant in a cancer advocacy organization or support group
• At least a high school education
• Ability to read and write English
• Demonstrated interest in extending their personal scientific knowledge

Please complete one application form (Enclosure 1) for each consumer you are nominating. Complete nomination packets must be received by April 24, 2000. Submit your application forms and accompanying materials to:

Breast Cancer Research Program
ATTN: Dr. Isabelle T. Bisceglio
1077 Patchel Street
Fort Detrick, MD 21702-5024
In order to facilitate the solicitation of nominations from within your organization, the following documents have been included: a one-page description of the nomination process and checklist (Enclosure 2) and several one-page flyers to distribute to members of your organization or post in the location of your support group meetings (Enclosure 3).

Key highlights of BCRP history and processes, as well as the significant commitment and responsibilities required for successful participation of consumers are bulleted below:

- The BCRP has responded to issues voiced by breast cancer advocates, both by emphasizing outcomes in the research vision and by involving consumers (breast cancer survivors and advocates) in programmatic decision making.

- The BCRP has provided more than $850M for basic and clinical breast cancer research from fiscal year (FY) 1992 through FY99.

- A two-tiered process is utilized in the BCRP to identify the best research proposals. In the first tier, research proposals are reviewed for scientific merit through a process known as peer review. In the second tier, proposals identified as having the greatest scientific merit during peer review are further evaluated for programmatic merit during a process called programmatic review. Consumers have been involved at both review levels, bringing the voice of the breast cancer community to the decision-making process.

- For FY00, Congress has appropriated $175M to continue the BCRP. Scientifically sound, programmatically relevant proposals will be recommended for funding by November 2000.

- Currently, nominations are being sought for consumers to serve in scientific peer review. There will be about 45 panels, each consisting of approximately 20 scientists and 2 consumer members.

- Approximately 4 weeks prior to the peer review meeting, every scientist and consumer member will be given scientific proposals to review. Consumers will serve on both basic and clinical science committees and review scientifically detailed research proposals.

- Both prior to and during the review sessions, each new consumer reviewer will be paired with an experienced consumer reviewer.

- Significant efforts are made to orient both consumers and scientists to consumer participation in the peer review meetings.

- Scientist reviewers are required to develop detailed written comments on each assigned proposal’s feasibility, innovation, impact, etc. Consumer reviewers are directed to focus their written reviews on the relevance and significance of the proposed work as it relates to improved medical care, enhanced quality of life, and increased survival. Preparation time is estimated to be at least 5 days.
Panels are subsequently assembled for formal discussions of the proposals under consideration, at which time scientists and consumers will be expected to present their comments orally. The panels deliberate on the proposals and ultimately score each proposal's scientific merit. Written and verbal consumer comments are incorporated into the final summary critiques sent to each proposal submitter.

For the FY00 BCRP, it is anticipated that each peer review committee will meet for 2 days during July or August 2000 in the metropolitan Washington, DC area. Travel, accommodations, meals, and honoraria will be provided by the BCRP.

The staff of the BCRP is dedicated to continuing to involve consumers in the FY00 Program. Your willingness to support the BCRP ensures that consumers will continue to be an integral part of important funding decision making. The rapid return of your nomination materials is appreciated. For questions about the BCRP or the recruitment of consumer reviewers, please contact Dr. Isabelle Bisceglio at 301-619-7794.

Sincerely,

Yvonne M. Andejeski, M.D.
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army Medical Corps
Project Officer, Consumer Inclusion in Peer Review

Kenneth A. Bertram, M.D., Ph.D., F.A.C.P.
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army Medical Corps
Director, Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs
Nomination Process and Checklist

STEP 1: Review the nomination application form, associated materials, and peer review requirements.

STEP 2: Select up to two new consumers whom you would like to nominate and provide them with the above information.

STEP 3: Prepare a letter of recommendation for each nominated consumer.

STEP 4: Review the final nomination package to ensure it is complete. The package for each nominee must contain:

- a completed application form
- a letter of endorsement from the nominating organization
- the consumer’s resumé or curriculum vitae
- the consumer’s essay (description of their activities in breast cancer advocacy)

STEP 5: Submit the final nomination package by April 24, 2000 to:

Breast Cancer Research Program
ATTN: Dr. Isabelle T. Bisceglio
1077 Patchel Street
Fort Detrick, MD 21702-5024
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
U.S. ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH AND MATERIEL COMMAND
CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Breast Cancer Research Program Consumer Nomination
Application Form for Scientific Merit Review

A complete application package will consist of the following three documents:
- Completed Application Form
- Sponsoring Organization Letter of Nomination
- Current Resume or Curriculum Vitae

SECTION 1. SPONSOR INFORMATION
(To be completed by sponsoring organization.)

Organization Name: ____________________________
E-mail Address: ________________________________
Street Address: _________________________________
City: __________________ State: ______ Zip Code (+4): ______
Phone: ( ) __________________ Fax: ( ) ____________
Sponsor's Name: ________________________ Title: __________
*Sponsor must include a letter of nomination for each nominee application.

SECTION 2. NOMINEE INFORMATION
(To be completed by nominee.)

Nominee’s Name: ________________________________
E-mail Address: ________________________________
Mailing Address (No PO Boxes):
City: __________________ State: ______ Zip Code (+4): ______
Home Phone: ( ) __________________ Home Fax: ( ) __________
Work Phone: ( ) __________________ Work Fax: ( ) __________
Occupation: __________________________

*A current résumé (volunteer, community, or employment experience) or curriculum vitae must be included for each nominee application.
SECTION 3. DEMOGRAPHICS
(Responses are optional—To be completed by nominee.)

1. Sex: □ Male □ Female  2. Are you a breast cancer survivor? □ Yes □ No

3. Ethnicity:
   □ American Indian or Alaskan Native  □ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   □ Asian  □ White
   □ Black or African American  □ Other____________________________________
   □ Hispanic or Latino

4. Date of Birth: Month: _________ Day: _________ Year: _________

5. Highest Degree Attained:
   □ High School/equivalent  □ B.A./B.S.  □ Ph.D./equivalent
   □ A.A.  □ M.A./M.S.  □ J.D.
   □ R.N.  □ M.D./D.D.S./D.V.M./equivalent  □ Other______

SECTION 4. BREAST CANCER EDUCATION
(To be completed by nominee.)

1. Have you served on a peer review panel before? □ Yes □ No
   If yes, indicate dates of service and organization: ____________________________

2. How have you educated yourself about breast cancer? (Mark all that apply.)
   □ Seminars  □ Classes  □ On-Line (Internet)
   □ Journals  □ Support Groups  □ Library References
   □ Other

SECTION 5. BREAST CANCER ADVOCACY
(To be completed by nominee.)

Please describe your activities in breast cancer and other community groups in no more than 2 pages.

For example: How have you educated yourself? What community groups are you actively involved in and what are your roles in these groups? How do you keep informed about breast cancer issues or developments? What can you contribute to the BCRP scientific merit review? If you have served in peer review before, please describe your experiences and how you feel they have benefited others.

Attach this information to the back of this form.
EXCITING OPPORTUNITY
For Consumer Involvement in Finding the Cure for Breast Cancer

Participate in scientific review of breast cancer research proposals submitted to the Department of Defense (DOD) Breast Cancer Research Program (BCRP) of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command.

JOIN OUR PARTNERSHIP
As a breast cancer survivor you:
✓ bring your community’s perspective and firsthand treatment experiences
✓ bring a sense of urgency to the process of identifying research to eradicate breast cancer
✓ underscore the need for:
   - good basic and clinical science
   - improved medical care
   - enhanced quality of life and increased survival
✓ will experience the dedication, urgency, and commitment of scientists and health care providers to finding a cure for your disease

WHEN AND WHERE
✓ July or August 2000
✓ Metropolitan Washington, DC area
✓ Travel, accommodations, meals, and honoraria provided by the DOD BCRP

WHO MAY APPLY?
Any breast cancer survivor who is active in advocacy and who is nominated by their advocacy organization or support group

HOW CAN YOU BECOME INVOLVED?
Contact the leader of your advocacy or support group for nomination details and other exciting information

Nomination applications are due by April 24, 2000
Your interest is appreciated.