

NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Beebe to speak at Arkansas Cancer Summit and Joretta Wilkins Awards

Arkansas Cancer Coalition and BreastCare team up to host annual event

March 4, 2010; Little Rock, Ark. – The Arkansas Cancer Summit and the Joretta Wilkins Awards Ceremony have joined together to honor individuals and organizations in Arkansas who have exhibited extraordinary efforts this year in the fight against cancer on March 16, at noon at the Holiday Inn Airport Conference Center. Due to the growing popularity and success of this event, Gov. Mike Beebe plans to attend and make the opening remarks.

The annual award ceremony, which takes place in conjunction with the Arkansas Cancer Summit XI, is hosted by **BreastCare**, a program of the **Arkansas Department of Health (ADH)**, and the Arkansas Cancer Coalition. BreastCare provides free breast and cervical cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment to Arkansas women who have little or no health insurance.

The Joretta Wilkins Awards are named in honor of former state representative Dr. Joretta Wilkins, whose unyielding perseverance and passion for fighting breast cancer in Arkansas led to the passage of the Breast Cancer Control Act of 1997, which ultimately created the BreastCare program. Honorees this year include:

- Individual – Linda Wilson, Little Rock
- Professional – Kent C. Westbrook, M.D., University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
- Organization – Ashley County Cares, Hamburg

“There could not be three more deserving winners of the Joretta Wilkins Awards than the ones that were chosen this year. All the winners are dedicated and focused on educating Arkansas women about breast cancer awareness and prevention. BreastCare is honored and proud to be a part of the Joretta luncheon,” said BreastCare program director, Barbara Hager.

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MORE ABOUT THE 2010 HONOREES

Linda Wilson of Little Rock, individual winner, has been a key player for educating women about breast cancer awareness in Arkansas for years. As former minority outreach coordinator for the BreastCare program, Wilson has worked tirelessly in her efforts to reach Arkansas women and spread educational information about the importance of mammograms and Pap tests. Wilson also helped promote statewide Pink Carnation events that are held on Sundays. These events include women pledging to make an appointment with their doctors for breast and cervical screenings. At these events, pink carnations are given to women who pledged. Although Wilson is not a breast cancer survivor, she is a lymphoma survivor and this gives her a unique insight into how women should take better care of themselves and their health, particularly breast health.

Kent C. Westbrook, M.D., University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences(UAMS) of Little Rock, professional individual winner, is a dedicated researcher of breast cancer. Westbrook, having instituted a surgical fellowship called Diseases of the Breast at UAMS, spent much of his career training faculty members of the Breast Team and educating surgeons about different issues involving breast health. As a distinguished professor in the Department of Surgery, he specializes in the management of both melanoma and breast disease. Through Dr. Westbrook's hard work and time, he has improved cancer care in Arkansas and has given hope to women fighting breast cancer.

Ashley County Cares of Hamburg, organization winner, has been working since 2005 for the women of Hamburg and the surrounding areas to help fight breast cancer. This organization has raised over \$100,000 and provided 600 mammograms to Arkansas women in approximately five years. Through both rural outreach programs and implemented cancer screenings and treatment, Ashley County Cares is dedicated to improving and preventing cancer. The mission of the organization is to raise funds which will stay within the state for research, awareness and education. Ashley County Cares also hosts an annual dinner and auction where they recognize local breast cancer survivors and gain support to continue helping Arkansas women fight breast cancer.

BREASTCARE

BreastCare provides free breast and cervical cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment to Arkansas women age 40 and older who have little or no health insurance. Since the program began, BreastCare has provided more than 114,000 mammograms and more than 65,000 Pap tests to Arkansas women. For more information about the BreastCare program, visit www.ARBreastCare.com or call 1-877-670 (CARE).