



National Childhood Cancer Foundation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Volunteer Advocate Lobbies in Washington, DC For Increased Childhood Cancer Research Funding

February 10, 2009 (Chapel Hill, NC) – Dr. Lisa White, of Chapel Hill recently returned from a working trip to Washington, DC to meet with Members of Congress to push for increased Federal funding, to support medical research to cure childhood cancer.

White serves as a volunteer State Team Leader for CureSearch National Childhood Cancer Foundation (www.curesearch.org), which supports the work of the Children’s Oncology Group, the world’s premier pediatric cancer research collaborative.

White has been a North Carolina state leader and advocate in the fight to appropriately fund pediatric cancer research since 2005, because her 14 year old son, Gabriel is a childhood leukemia survivor. Gabriel’s family started Rock Against Cancer a nonprofit to help children being treated for cancer with music (www.rockagaincancer.org).

“Childhood cancer can affect children of all races, ethnicity and socioeconomic group,” says White, “and since the average age of diagnosis is age six, we are talking about adding 65 or more years of life for each child saved. This is truly worth fighting for.”

White adds that last summer, both Houses of Congress unanimously passed the Caroline Pryce Walker Conquer Childhood Cancer Act, which authorizes \$150 million over the next five years to further this research that will save more children’s lives.

“But an ‘authorization’ is only a promise of funding, not funding money itself,” notes White. “I, and other volunteers like me, went to Washington to make sure that this Congress and this Administration keep the promise that they made to our children.”

More than 12,500 American children are diagnosed with cancer each year. That means that every school day, another 46 kids – about two classrooms full of children – will be diagnosed.

White notes that government funding for cancer research has remained flat since 2003, and that “every day research is under-funding, the road to discovering treatments and cures becomes longer, and more children die. This is totally unacceptable.”

The Children’s Oncology Group includes more than 5,000 experts in childhood cancer research and treatment, who are located at more than 200 of the leading children’s hospitals, university hospitals and cancer centers in the U.S. and Canada, including NC Children’s Hospital and Duke Children’s. Having this world-class expertise in our back yard, allows children to be treated close to home. Together, these hospitals treat more than 90 percent of all children who are diagnosed with cancer.

Improving childhood cancer survival rates is one of modern medicine’s great success stories. Once a nearly always fatal disease, cure rates have risen from less than 10 percent in the 1950’s, to almost 80 percent today.

“But 80 percent is not good enough. Cancer is still the #1 cause of death from disease for our children. Anything less than 100% will never be good enough,” says White. “The loss of even one more precious child is one too many.”

While in Washington, White met with representatives from Congressman David Price, Walter Jones Jr, Sue Myrick, Brad Miller, Howard Coble, Virginia Foxx, Heath Shuler, Bob Etheridge, Larry Kissel and Senator Richard Burr they learned more about the latest research findings and clinical trial successes, and met with other team leaders from across the country.

“It was very empowering to become part of our government in action,” White notes. “It is important that everyone in the childhood cancer community stand face to face with our Nation’s Leadership, and demands action for our children. I felt humbled and grateful to be able to speak up for those who otherwise would have no voice, children diagnosed with cancer.”

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About CureSearch

CureSearch seeks to conquer childhood cancer, conquer it sooner, fully and for all time. Through public education, advocacy and fundraising, the National Childhood Cancer Foundation, a non-profit 501 (c) (3), exclusively supports the work of the Children’s Oncology Group (COG), the world’s premier pediatric cancer research collaborative. This network of more than 5,000 healthcare professionals dedicates their lives to finding answers and sharing results. More than 12,000 children are diagnosed with cancer each year, and more than 40,000 children and adolescents are currently in treatment.

Only research cures cancer. For more information, visit www.CureSearch.org.