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Lance Armstrong and 17th U.S. Surgeon General Carmona Announce National Call to Action in the War Against Cancer

AUSTIN, TX – Joined by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Lance Armstrong and immediate past Surgeon General Dr. Richard Carmona today discussed Lance’s request to the Surgeons General Collective to create a national strategy to combat cancer.

“This year alone, 1.4 million Americans are expected to be diagnosed with cancer and 560,000 will likely lose their lives to the disease,” said Lance Armstrong, founder and chairman of the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF). “Cancer has become an epidemic that touches every single American life and costs our economy over \$300 billion every year. The time has come to move aggressively against this foe and that is why I have asked Dr. Carmona to lead the Surgeons General Collective in forming a national strategy to fight cancer. This strategy will serve as a roadmap for the American people and our leaders, including the next President, to save millions of lives by improving access to care and focusing on cancer prevention and survivorship.”

Richard Carmona, M.D., M.P.H., FACS, 17th Surgeon General of the United States (2002-2006) and President of Canyon Ranch Institute, formed the Surgeons General Collective, an independent body composed of the previous Surgeons General of the United States, in October 2007 to address national and global public health issues. At Lance’s request, the first major public health issue this independent scientific body will take up is to develop a national call to action focused on cancer prevention and survivorship.

“Despite earnest efforts in the medical and research community, government and advocacy groups, and many concerned citizens, we have yet to achieve the level of momentum and national coordination necessary to win the war against cancer,” said Dr. Carmona. “The need and the urgency to make cancer prevention and survivorship a national priority should be clear to all of us, but the level of action and progress is not nearly what it should be. The Surgeons General Collective will therefore develop a National Call to Action on Cancer Prevention and Survivorship, outlining a battle plan for the new war on cancer. I look forward to working with the LAF and other leaders to gather their insights and evaluate the best available science in cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, and access to services.”

Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York joined Lance and Dr. Carmona in discussing the need for a national strategy.

"Putting aside partisanship and politics and taking the best ideas from both sides is key to solving many of our nation's most serious challenges - and it's particularly critical when it comes to addressing matters of public health. Lance continues to set the pace in all he does, and I am pleased to count myself a supporter," Mayor Bloomberg said.

To highlight an Austin-area success story, Seton CEO Charles Barnett led Lance, Mayor Bloomberg and Dr. Carmona on a tour of Shivers Cancer Center at Brackenridge Hospital, part of the Seton Family of Hospitals. Shivers Cancer Center serves the uninsured and members of the community who might not otherwise be able to obtain treatment. The LAF has supported Seton's Cancer Care programs with more than \$50,000 in grants. Mr. Barnett also demonstrated Brackenridge Hospital's CyberKnife, one of four robotic devices in the state that provides radiation therapy and allows physicians to destroy tumors without invasive surgery.

About the Lance Armstrong Foundation: The Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF) unites people to fight cancer, believing that unity is strength, knowledge is power and attitude is everything. We provide the practical information and tools people battling cancer need to live life on their own terms. We take aim at the gap between what is known and what is done to prevent death and suffering due to cancer. We engage the public at large to pursue an agenda focused on preventing cancer, ensuring access to screening and care, improving the quality of life for people affected by cancer, and investing in needed research. Founded in 1997 by cancer survivor and champion cyclist Lance Armstrong, the LAF is located in Austin, Texas. UNITE at LIVESTRONG.org.

About Canyon Ranch Institute: Canyon Ranch Institute (CRI) is a non-profit organization that catalyzes the possibility of optimal health for all people by translating the best practices of Canyon Ranch and our partners to help educate, inspire, and empower every person to prevent disease and embrace a life of wellness. Canyon Ranch Institute and our partners believe in the power and possibility of a healthy world. More information about CRI is available at www.canyonranchinstitute.org.

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