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Media Contact: Fiona Brosnan, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
Phone: 907-729-1967, fbrosnan@anthc.org

Alaska Doctor Earns National Recognition for Cancer Work

Dr. Anne P. Lanier, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's Senior Epidemiology and Health Research Consultant, was recently named a Carol Friedman Comprehensive Cancer Control Award winner. The award recognizes "a true champion of comprehensive cancer control" in Lanier, who is also a champion for the Alaska Native Tumor Registry.

"I am honored to accept this award, however, many people work together to help reduce the cancer burden of the Alaska Native people," explained Dr. Lanier. "The Alaska Native Tumor Registry allowed us to show funders, legislators and others that it is important to separate the Alaska Native people from other Native Americans when reporting cancer statistics. The incidence of cancer in the Alaska Native people is much greater than in most American Indians."

Dr. Lanier received the award at the National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (NCCCP) meeting in Atlanta on May 4. The award is named for Dr. Carol Friedman, who was CDC's first Comprehensive Cancer Control Branch Chief. Dr. Friedman was a tireless advocate for the underserved. Dr. Friedman died unexpectedly in the summer of 2010.

This year's Carol Friedman award focused on the use of cancer data to inform cancer control, by recognizing an individual who has effectively used data to drive comprehensive cancer control initiatives in states/tribal/territorial or local populations.

Dr. Lanier has built a lengthy history of data driven research, successful cancer interventions, cancer education programs, policy development, and a dedication to Alaska Native people during her 45-year career. She began work as a physician at the Alaska Native Medical Center in July 1967 and became involved with investigating nasopharyngeal and other cancers, which seemed unusually prevalent in Alaska Native people.

"Anne has been a good friend since I came to ANMC. Without her hard work, there is little chance we would be as far as we are today in addressing cancer in the Alaska Native people," said Dr. Greg Marino, ANMC oncologist. "The Alaska Tumor Registry is the best tool we have to show how cancer seriously impacts the Alaska Native people. It allows us to track cancer patterns and trends as well as making comparisons with other populations. The registry is an important part of the cancer program. Most importantly, it helps us provide better cancer care."

In 1974, Dr. Lanier initiated the Alaska Native Tumor Registry, a population-based registry in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). She has also published more than 100 cancer-related articles, many of them addressing disparities in the Alaska



Alaska Native
Tribal Health Consortium

Administration · 4000 Ambassador Drive · Anchorage, Alaska 99508 · Phone: (907) 729-1900 · Fax: (907) 729-1901 · www.anthc.org

Native people's cancer burden. Her visionary work developing and overseeing the Alaska Native Tumor Registry (includes cancer data from 1969), provides data that resulted in interventions, such as for cervical cancer, that have reduced the Alaska Native cancer burden. She is also recognized as a mentor for young researchers.

About the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium is a not-for-profit tribal health organization managed by Alaska Native tribal governments and their regional health organizations. We provide statewide services in specialty medical care; construction of water, sanitation and health facilities; community health and research; information technology and professional recruiting. For more information, please visit www.anthc.org.