



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Think Pink” Game Raises Breast Cancer Awareness, Honors Survivors

UNM Cancer Center to salute breast cancer patients at February 25 women’s basketball game

Albuquerque, NM—February 20, 2012—The University of New Mexico Cancer Center will raise breast cancer awareness and pay tribute to breast cancer survivors on Saturday, February 25, 2012, at the Lobo women’s “Think Pink” basketball game against Texas Christian University. Audience members are encouraged to wear pink to show their support for breast cancer patients and survivors. Tip-off is at 2 p.m. at the Pit.

Before the game, the UNM Cancer Center will hold a private, invitation-only reception for breast cancer patients and their families and friends. During half-time, patients will be welcomed onto the court to be honored by the UNM Cancer Center, UNM Hospitals and the Lobo women for their courage and survivorship. Audience members are invited to take part from the stands in this brief ceremony acknowledging the patients in attendance and all women in New Mexico whose lives have been affected by breast cancer.

“We are constantly awed and humbled by our breast cancer patients’ courage,” said Cheryl Willman, MD, Director and CEO of the UNM Cancer Center. “It is a privilege to publicly recognize these amazing women, and we appreciate the support and participation of the Lobo Women’s basketball team. We invite everyone who cares about breast cancer survivorship to come out—dressed in pink—for the February 25 game.”

About “Think Pink”

“Think Pink” is a national movement that seeks to increase breast cancer awareness and raise money for breast cancer causes. Each year, various UNM athletic teams take part in special “Think Pink” games, thanks to sponsorship from UNM Hospitals.

Breast cancer in the US

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States (excluding skin cancer). According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), more than 230,000 American women will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer this year. Invasive breast cancer—the majority of

“Think Pink” women’s basketball game, cont.

breast cancers, so called because the cancer has spread from the ducts or lobules of the breast to the surrounding tissue—is the second leading cause of cancer death in women, after lung cancer. The ACS estimates that over 39,000 American women will die of the disease this year. Regular screening mammograms remain the best tool for early detection. Discovering breast cancer early increases treatment options and improves women’s chances of survival.

Breast cancer in New Mexico

Each year, approximately 1,100 New Mexican women are diagnosed with invasive breast cancer, and another 220 die from the disease. As in the United States at large, breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer among women in New Mexico—accounting for nearly one-third of New Mexican women’s cancer cases each year. The disease is the leading cause of cancer death among Hispanic, Native American and African American women in the state. The UNM Cancer Center is working hard to improve cancer diagnosis and treatment for all New Mexican women. Through outreach and community partnerships, it is bringing breast health services to medically underserved and other at-risk women across New Mexico. For example, the UNM Cancer Center’s Mobile Mammography Program has provided over 1,000 New Mexican women in rural areas with potentially life-saving screening mammograms and coordinated follow-up care during the past three years.

About the UNM Cancer Center

The UNM Cancer Center is the Official Cancer Center of New Mexico and the only National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer center in the state. One of just 66 NCI-designated cancer centers nationwide, the UNM Cancer Center is recognized for its scientific excellence, contributions to cancer research and delivery of medical advances to patients and their families. It is home to 85 board-certified oncology physicians representing every cancer specialty and 126 research scientists hailing from prestigious institutions such as MD Anderson, Johns Hopkins and the Mayo Clinic. The UNM Cancer Center treats more than 60 percent of the adults and virtually all of the children in New Mexico affected by cancer, from every county in the state. Last year, it provided care to almost 16,000 cancer patients. The Center’s research programs are supported by \$70 million annually in federal and private funding.

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