

## 2008 GW Cancer Gala Honorees



### **Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu Cancer Compassion Award**

Desmond Mpilo Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus, was ordained to the priesthood in 1961. Over the years, he served in a number of increasingly prominent positions. In 1978, in the wake of the 1976 Soweto uprising, Bishop Tutu was persuaded to take up the post of General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, a position that established him as a national and international figure.

He became a prominent leader in the crusade for justice and racial conciliation in South Africa; his extraordinary contributions to this cause earned him a Nobel Peace Prize in 1984. Elevated to Archbishop of

Cape Town in 1986, he became the principal mediator and conciliator in the transition to democracy in South Africa.

Archbishop Tutu has held several distinguished academic and world leadership posts, has received many prizes and awards, and holds honorary degrees from more than 130 universities, including Harvard, Oxford, Cambridge and Columbia.

In recent years, he has turned his attention to the campaign against HIV/AIDS, making appearances around the globe to help raise awareness of this disease and its tragic consequences.

Today Archbishop Tutu is regarded as an elder world statesman with a major role to play in reconciliation and as a leading moral voice. He has become an icon of hope far beyond the Church and Southern Africa.



### **Margaret Foti, PhD Distinguished Public Service Award**

Margaret Foti, PhD, is the chief executive officer of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR). Dr. Foti, a native of Philadelphia, has dedicated her professional career to cancer research and the AACR. During her tenure, AACR membership has grown to more than 26,000 scientists in more than 70 countries.

She joined AACR as an editorial assistant for the journal, *Cancer Research*, and was quickly promoted to managing editor. In 1982, she was appointed executive director and chief executive officer of AACR.

Dr. Foti has spearheaded the launch of five AACR journals: *Clinical Cancer Research*; *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*; *Molecular Cancer Therapeutics*; *Molecular Cancer Research*; *Cancer Prevention Research* and *CR*, a magazine for survivors, patient advocates, their families, and professionals in the cancer field.

Dr. Foti has served as a board member, and later as president, of the National Coalition for Cancer Research (NCCR); member of the Executive Committee of the Friends of Cancer Research (FOCR); former board member of the Translational Genomics Institute (TGen); and board member of the European Association for Cancer Research (EACR). She has also served

as President of the Council of Science Editors and of the Society for Scholarly Publishing and has served in various capacities for the International Federation of Science Editors, General Motors Cancer Research Foundation, the European Life Science Editors Association, the American Cancer Society, and the American Heart Association, among others.



**Sean Swarner  
Spirit of Life Award**

Sean Swarner isn't just a cancer survivor, he is truly a medical marvel. The only person in the world ever to have been diagnosed with both Hodgkin's disease and Askin's sarcoma, and not expected to live into his teens, Swarner defied all odds. A decade after completing treatment, and with only partial use of his lungs, he became famous for being the first cancer survivor to

summit Mount Everest.

After the Everest expedition, Swarner had desire and dream to continue moving forward and reaching people and the world. Proving to others that anything is possible, Swarner also accomplished the astounding feat of summiting the highest mountain on each continent—the 7-Summits.

By showing those affected by cancer how he has conquered some of the most difficult obstacles life could offer, Swarner inspires others with the will to live and the courage to continue progressing forward.

He is the founder of the CancerClimber Association, a unique, not-for-profit organization dedicated to motivating those living with cancer by encouraging patients to inspire each other. CancerClimber challenges and facilitates cancer survivors to climb their own Everests, thus overcoming their own limitations and mental boundaries.



**Robert Siegel, MD  
Paula Siegel, RN  
GW Commitment to Overcoming Cancer Award**

Bob and Paula Siegel have been critical to the development and growth of GW's oncology program. An alumnus of the School of Medicine, Dr. Siegel returned to GW in 1982 as a faculty member and spearheaded the effort to create an oncology unit. He established a Cancer Conference and Tumor Board and, in 1985, a certified hospital tumor registry. Dr. Siegel began as director of the Oncology Unit in 1983, chairman of the Cancer Committee in 1987, director of the Clinical Cancer Center in 1993, and director of Division of Hematology and Oncology. An ardent researcher, he was among the first to document that young African American women were more likely to develop more aggressive cancer when compared to their Caucasian or Hispanic counterparts.

A graduate of the North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Nursing, Paula left her work at Duke University Medical Center to join GW's internal medicine nursing staff. There she became an integral part of the team which transitioned the unit to an oncology focus. Following the birth of their three children and completion of her master's degree in Oncology Nursing, Paula joined the nursing staff at the Outpatient Infusion Center and she has the longest tenure of any nurse there. She also has helped develop protocols and standards of practice for treating gastrointestinal cancer.

Together the two have dedicated decades to providing their patients with compassionate and quality clinical care – Dr. Siegel repeatedly is recognized as one of *Washingtonian* magazine's top docs and, in 2005, received the Humanitarian of the Year award. They continue to focus on providing service to their patients while strengthening GW's clinical cancer program.