



Redes En Acción

(Networks in Action)

The National Hispanic/Latino Cancer Network

www.redesenaccion.org

NEWS RELEASE

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New book describes breast cancer experiences of South Texas Latinas

San Antonio – Among Latina women, breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer and the number one cancer killer. In a new book, 26 South Texas women who have fought this deadly disease describe the Latina breast cancer experience in their own words.

The book, *Nuestras Historias: Mujeres Hispanas Sobreviviendo el Cáncer del Seno* (Our Stories: Hispanic Women Surviving Breast Cancer), was produced by *Redes En Acción: The National Hispanic/Latino Cancer Network*, a Special Populations Networks initiative supported by the National Cancer Institute (NCI). Headquartered in San Antonio, *Redes En Acción* is coordinated by Baylor College of Medicine.

The *Nuestras Historias* project was supported by grants from the San Antonio Cancer Institute (SACI), the San Antonio Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and the Lance Armstrong Foundation. The SACI is an NCI-designated Cancer Center and represents the combined cancer research programs of The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and the Cancer Therapy and Research Center.

Nuestras Historias is a 114-page, full-color publication presented in both English and Spanish. Through the stories of the women, the book relates the influence of the Hispanic/Latino culture on the breast cancer experience and on the coping skills used by many of the Latina women in battling the disease.

“One of the threads that you see running throughout these stories is the amazing resiliency of these Latinas as they cope with a disease that is having a devastating impact not only on their own lives but on the lives of their families and loved ones,” notes Amelie G.

Ramirez, DrPH, *Redes En Acción* Principal Investigator and Professor of Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine. Dr. Ramirez is also the Associate Director of Community Research for the SACI.

The women's stories reflect this resilience and resolve not only in fighting the disease, but also in confronting the numerous accompanying issues – fear, depression, financial worries, and the possibility of leaving loved ones behind. Coping skills employed in this day-to-day battle included prayer and faith, as well as reliance on tools such as humor, music, books, dance – even family pets.

The stories include practical advice, such as the importance of regular screening, the value of perseverance and education, and the assistance available through local organizations that provide support and help guide patients through the health care system.

Nuestras Historias serves a dual purpose – inspirational and educational – and will be provided free to Latina women diagnosed with breast cancer through organizations such as the Komen Foundation, Alamo Breast Cancer Foundation (ABCF), American Cancer Society (ACS), and Women Involved in Nurturing, Giving and Sharing (WINGS). Copies of the book can be obtained by calling the Komen Foundation at (210) 222-9009.

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What Is *Redes En Acción*?

Redes En Acción is a major NCI-supported initiative to combat cancer among Latinos through a nationwide network of community-based organizations, research institutions, government health agencies and the public. Core activities include promoting cancer training and research opportunities for Latino students and researchers, generating research projects on key Latino cancer issues, and supporting cancer awareness activities within the Latino community.

The initiative is coordinated by the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and San Antonio, with regional network centers in San Antonio, New York, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco and San Diego.

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For more information on *Redes En Acción*, visit the web site at www.redesenaccion.org