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Contact:

Ifdy Perez, COPD Foundation

Email: [jperez@copdfoundation.org](mailto:jperez@copdfoundation.org)

Tel: 1-866-731-2673, ext. 398

## **COPD Foundation Launches Year of the Lung Campaign, Joins Global Partners to Spread Awareness of Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease**

**Washington, DC (January 29, 2010)**—This year has been proclaimed the *Year of the Lung* by health care professional societies worldwide including the American Thoracic Society and the Forum of International Respiratory Societies. The goal is to spread awareness about lung health around the globe. Throughout the year there will be events coordinated by both patient organizations and professional societies aimed at encouraging and inspiring all members of the community to learn more about COPD and help spread that awareness.

"The *Year of the Lung* will give the COPD community a tremendous opportunity to increase the level of awareness and understanding about the impact of COPD in the U.S. as well as the world," John W. Walsh, president of the COPD Foundation, says.

The campaign is giving organizations worldwide the opportunity to engage in awareness and advocacy activities under the same umbrella, creating a unified effort in the battle against COPD.

"The COPD Foundation is pleased to participate as a partner in the *Year of the Lung* campaign and present our *Faces of COPD* program highlighting the impact COPD risk factors has on women's health due to environmental exposures, such as biomass fuels found widespread in developing countries, occupational dust and chemicals, as well as smoking," Walsh says.

Dr. Dean E. Schraufnagel, chair of *Year of the Lung* as well as president-elect of the American Thoracic Society, says the year long activities include 300 to 400 organizations and span the globe.

"Most of them are based on awareness, but it's more than just awareness, it's [the idea of] accomplishing something," he says.

Schraufnagel, who is also a professor of medicine and pathology and program director in the Section of Pulmonary, Critical Care, Sleep and Allergy at the University of Illinois at Chicago, says the campaign is a time for self-reflection, and for people to re-evaluate their lifestyles if in fact they are smokers.

“I think people can use it as a personal lung health [campaign],” he says. “They should say, ‘I think this year is time for me to stop smoking.’”

Schraufnagel also says *Year of the Lung* is designed to be a grassroots campaign.

“It was set up as a forum to allow people to acquire ideas from other people. We hope that people do things that they thought in their community was appropriate,” he says.

He also says that one big part of this campaign is spirometry testing, to identify people who might have COPD and not know it.

The COPD Foundation will be highlighting a topic every month of this year through its e-newsletter, website, and Facebook/Twitter pages. These themes will help educate about the issues concerning COPD, including public policy and advocacy efforts.

For more information about the COPD Foundation’s *Year of the Lung* campaign, visit our website at [www.copdfoundation.org](http://www.copdfoundation.org). For more information about the international *Year of the Lung* campaign, visit [www.yearofthelung.com](http://www.yearofthelung.com).

### **About the COPD Foundation**

The COPD Foundation is dedicated to developing and supporting programs which improve the quality of life through research, education, early diagnosis, and enhanced therapy for persons whose lives are impacted by Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). The COPD Foundation has several programs dedicated to informing, empowering, educating, and engaging individuals affected by COPD, including both diagnosed and undiagnosed individuals, their families and friends, and their medical professionals. For more information, please visit: <http://www.copdfoundation.org>.

### **About COPD**

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S. and the only chronic disease growing in mortality. It affects approximately 24 million Americans but only 12 million are diagnosed. COPD includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and adult onset (refractory) asthma. Symptoms include breathlessness, wheezing, and chronic coughing. For more information about COPD, visit <http://www.copdfoundation.org> or call 1-866-316-COPD (2673).

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