FYI: Philanthropist Jon M. Huntsman is receiving a Distinguished Public Service Award from the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR). Mr. Huntsman is being honored for his commitment to the fight against cancer. He joins the ranks of Lance Armstrong, Senators Orrin Hatch and Edward Kennedy, and ABC News reporter Sam Donaldson who are past recipients of this prestigious award. Please see the following AACR press release for more details.

Sincerely,
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For Immediate Release:
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April 13, 2010
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The AACR Honors Three Visionary Leaders with Distinguished Public Service Awards

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The American Association for Cancer Research will honor three visionary leaders for their distinguished public service. John E. Niederhuber, M.D., director of the National Cancer Institute (NCI); Julie M. Fleshman, J.D., M.B.A., president and chief executive officer of the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network; and Jon M. Huntsman, founder of the Huntsman Corporation, were chosen by the AACR’s Board of Directors in recognition of their commitment and dedication to the fight against cancer.

“We are so grateful for the contributions of these three extraordinary individuals,” said Margaret Foti, Ph.D., M.D., (h.c.), chief executive officer of the AACR. “They have all given selflessly of their time and efforts to public service and cancer research.”

The AACR Distinguished Public Service Award will be presented at the AACR 101st Annual Meeting 2010 during the opening ceremony on Sunday, April 18, from 8:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. ET in the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.
John E. Niederhuber, M.D., director of the National Cancer Institute (NCI), oversees the National Cancer Program, fostering innovation in all areas of cancer research including the investigation of new ways to integrate our understanding of the genome with clinical care. A nationally renowned surgeon and researcher, Niederhuber has dedicated his career to the treatment and study of cancer. In addition to his leadership at the helm of the NCI, he has supported the advancement of cancer research as a professor, cancer center director, National Cancer Advisory Board chair, external advisor to the NCI, grant reviewer and laboratory investigator. His laboratory at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is investigating tissue stem cells as the cell-of-origin for cancer as well as the complex relationship between tumor cells and their microenvironment. In addition, Niederhuber holds a clinical appointment on the NIH Clinical Center medical staff. As a surgeon, his emphasis is on gastrointestinal cancer, hepatobiliary (liver, bile duct, and gallbladder) cancer, and breast cancer. He is recognized for his pioneering work in hepatic artery infusion chemotherapy and was the first to demonstrate the feasibility of totally implantable vascular access devices.

When Julie M. Fleshman, J.D., M.B.A., president and chief executive officer of the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, lost her father in 1999 to pancreatic cancer, she made a commitment to changing the course of the disease. Fleshman has since led the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network from a startup nonprofit in 1999 to a national organization fighting pancreatic cancer in a comprehensive way through research, patient support, community outreach and advocacy for a cure. The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network’s advocacy and grassroots efforts have led, in large part, to a 400 percent increase in federal funding for pancreatic research. With an emphasis on expediting scientific and medical breakthroughs that benefit patients, Fleshman has built a cadre of researchers dedicated to the field of pancreatic cancer research and encourages collaboration, information-sharing and innovation. The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network collaborates with the AACR to promote and support outstanding pancreatic cancer research. This year, its funding level is nearly $2.3 million, representing a nearly 90 percent increase from last year.

Jon M. Huntsman, founder and executive chairman of Huntsman Corporation, a global manufacturer and marketer of specialty chemicals, is a philanthropist of the highest order. In 2003, Huntsman received the Humanitarian of the Year Award from CNN’s Larry King, and the Chronicle of Philanthropy placed him second on its 2007 list of largest donors. The AACR is honoring Mr. Huntsman for his generous philanthropic accomplishments in advancing the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. In 1995, Huntsman and his wife, Karen, founded the Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah with an initial pledge of $100 million. Since then, he has donated more than $250 million to the institute and donated or raised an additional $800 million. Researchers at this National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center are working to understand cancer from its beginnings and use that knowledge in the creation and improvement of cancer treatments to relieve patient suffering and provide education about cancer risk, prevention and care. To support the work of the cancer center, Huntsman created the Huntsman Cancer Foundation, which is dedicated to funding cancer center initiatives.

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Download interviews with cancer researchers and recordings of the teleconferences by subscribing to the AACR Scientific Podcasts via iTunes (http://www.aacr.org/itunes) or an RSS Reader (http://www.aacr.org/rss).

The mission of the American Association for Cancer Research is to prevent and cure cancer. Founded in 1907, the AACR is the world’s oldest and largest professional organization dedicated to advancing cancer research. The membership includes 31,000 basic, translational and clinical researchers; health care professionals; and cancer survivors and advocates in the United States and more than 90 other countries. The AACR marshals the full spectrum of expertise from the cancer community to accelerate progress in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer through high-quality scientific and educational programs. It funds innovative, meritorious research grants, research fellowship and career development awards. The AACR Annual Meeting attracts more than 17,000 participants who share the latest discoveries and developments in the field. Special conferences throughout the year present novel data across a wide variety of topics in cancer research, treatment and patient care. The AACR publishes six major peer-reviewed journals: Cancer Research; Clinical Cancer Research; Molecular Cancer Therapeutics; Molecular Cancer Research; Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention; and Cancer Prevention Research. The AACR also publishes CR, a magazine for cancer survivors and their families, patient advocates, physicians and scientists. CR provides a forum for sharing essential, evidence-based information and perspectives on progress in cancer research, survivorship and advocacy.