



## Four Californians Selected as Breakaway from Cancer® Champions to be Honored During Amgen Tour of California

May 1, 2013

### Amgen's Breakaway from Cancer to Celebrate Cancer Survivors at Every Stage of the Eighth Annual Professional Cycling Race

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif., May 1, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Amgen today announced that four individuals who are an inspiration and have made a difference for others affected by cancer have been selected as *Breakaway from Cancer*® Champions. They will be honored as part of Amgen's *Breakaway from Cancer* initiative at the eighth consecutive edition of the Amgen Tour of California, America's largest and most prestigious road cycling stage race, which will travel approximately 750 miles from southern to northern California from May 12 - 19, 2013.

The four *Breakaway from Cancer* Champions were selected following a public call for nominations in four of this year's host cities, followed by an online voting campaign that concluded earlier in April. The 2013 *Breakaway from Cancer* Champions are:

- **Escondido – Sue Martin** was diagnosed with stage III breast cancer in 2008. Sue believes that her positive attitude was one of the keys to surviving and thriving. Encouraged by those she has inspired, Sue is writing a book about her successful journey to cancer freedom entitled *I Shed Two Tears, Then Kicked It with Attitude*.
- **Santa Clarita – Nancy Eckels** was diagnosed with breast cancer seven months ago and has kept her friends and family apprised of her journey with seriousness, grace, humor and humility. At the same time, she is advocating with insistence that early detection is key.
- **Santa Barbara – Peggy Rantanen** was diagnosed with aggressive stage IV ovarian cancer about two years ago. Throughout this journey, Peggy has proven to be a "Champion" as a person and a patient, and also because she represents the unsung "Champions" of women who have been diagnosed with the silent and devastating disease of ovarian cancer. Peggy has inspired family, friends and those she has met with the same diagnosis by being open with her struggles as she's dealing with her ongoing treatment, yet finding ways to manage and cope and remain positive through the process.
- **Livermore – Virginia "Dee" Williams** is a 12-year breast cancer survivor who, in recent times, has also been battling a neurological disorder, along with fibromyalgia and arthritis; however, she does not let it stop her from acting as a volunteer for the American Cancer Society. Dee is a Call Back volunteer who talks to cancer patients to determine if their needs have been met while undergoing chemotherapy or radiation. She also spends time talking with recently diagnosed breast cancer patients to help relieve their concerns as they're starting their journey.

"Amgen is proud to honor individuals who make a positive difference in the fight against cancer," said Bob Azelby, vice president and general manager, Amgen Oncology. "After all, our mission is to serve patients. *Breakaway from Cancer* was founded on the knowledge that it takes a team to overcome this disease and the Champions program exemplifies this commitment to helping others."

The *Breakaway from Cancer* Champions will lead the "Breakaway Mile," an approximately one-mile walk that celebrates cancer survivors and crosses the Amgen Tour of California finish or start line prior to the professional riders. The Breakaway Mile will take place in four 2013 race host cities on race day: Escondido (May 12), Santa Clarita (May 14), Santa Barbara (May 15) and Livermore (May 18).

At the conclusion of each stage of the Amgen Tour of California, the *Breakaway from Cancer* Champion or a local cancer survivor will present Amgen's *Breakaway from Cancer* Most Courageous Rider jersey to the professional rider who best exemplifies the character of those engaged in the fight against cancer—courage, sacrifice, inspiration, determination and perseverance.

Also during the 2013 Amgen Tour of California, a local cancer survivor will officially start each day's stage by firing the official start gun. He or she will also have the opportunity to meet the prior day's recipient of Amgen's *Breakaway from Cancer* Most Courageous Rider jersey.

Representatives of the four organizations with whom Amgen collaborates on its *Breakaway from Cancer* programs - Prevent Cancer Foundation, Cancer Support Community, Patient Advocate Foundation and National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship - will travel with the Amgen Tour of California, providing information at the *Breakaway from Cancer* information booth at the Lifestyle Festival held at each stage.

More information about the *Breakaway from Cancer* initiative, including helpful resources is available at [www.breakawayfromcancer.com](http://www.breakawayfromcancer.com).

#### **About Breakaway from Cancer®**

Founded in 2005 by Amgen, *Breakaway from Cancer*® is a national initiative to increase awareness of important resources available to people affected by cancer – from prevention through survivorship. *Breakaway from Cancer* is a collaboration between Amgen and four nonprofit partner organizations: Prevent Cancer Foundation, Cancer Support Community, Patient Advocate Foundation, and National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship. These organizations offer a broad range of support services complementing those provided by a patient's team of healthcare professionals. For more information, please visit [www.breakawayfromcancer.com](http://www.breakawayfromcancer.com) or follow us on [www.twitter.com/breakawaycancer](http://www.twitter.com/breakawaycancer).

#### **About the Amgen Tour of California**

The largest cycling event in America, the 2013 Amgen Tour of California is a Tour de France-style cycling road race, created and presented by AEG, that challenges the world's top professional cycling teams to compete along a demanding course from May 12-19, 2013.

#### **About Amgen**

Amgen discovers, develops, manufactures, and delivers innovative human therapeutics. A biotechnology pioneer since 1980, Amgen was one of the first companies to realize the new science's promise by bringing safe, effective medicines from lab to manufacturing plant to patient. Amgen therapeutics have changed the practice of medicine, helping millions of people around the world in the fight against cancer, kidney disease, rheumatoid arthritis, bone disease and other serious illnesses. With a deep and broad pipeline of potential new medicines, Amgen remains committed to advancing science to dramatically improve people's lives. For more information, visit [www.amgen.com](http://www.amgen.com) and follow us on [www.twitter.com/amgen](https://www.twitter.com/amgen).

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