

Contact:
Michelle Kirkwood
703-286-1600
michellek@astro.org

Brittany Ashcroft
703-839-7336
brittanya@astro.org

San Francisco Bay Area cancer survivor and volunteer will be honored with ASTRO's 2014 Survivor Circle Award

Palo Alto resident Jasan Zimmerman will be recognized

Fairfax, Va., August 26, 2014—The American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) has selected San Francisco Bay Area resident and cancer survivor Jasan Zimmerman to receive the 2014 Survivor Circle Award. Mr. Zimmerman will be presented with his award, including \$1,000, during the Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, September 16 at ASTRO's 56th Annual Meeting at San Francisco's Moscone Center. The Survivor Circle Award recognizes a cancer survivor who lives in the ASTRO Annual Meeting host city and who has dedicated his or her time and energy in service and support of their local community.

"Volunteering was always a part of my life, instilled in me by my parents, so when I was finally comfortable enough to share my story, it was easy to find volunteer opportunities in the cancer advocacy world," Zimmerman said. "The benefits of volunteering are two-fold for me: every time I share my story, it helps me come to terms with and accept my experiences a little more, and externally, I can see positive changes in the lives of other people based on the work that I have done, whether directly or indirectly."

Zimmerman was diagnosed in 1976, at six months old, with neuroblastoma of the left neck. The tumor was removed, and he was treated with upper mantle radiation therapy at Loma Linda University Medical Center. In 1991, at age 15, Zimmerman was then diagnosed with thyroid cancer

American Society for Radiation Oncology
8280 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive • Suite 500 • Fairfax • VA • 22031
phone 703-502-1550 • fax 703-502-7852 • Web www.astro.org

and had a thyroidectomy at the University of California Irvine Medical Center and radiation therapy at Eisenhower Medical Center in Rancho Mirage, California. He experienced a recurrence of thyroid cancer in 1997 at age 21 and underwent radiation therapy at the University of California Irvine Medical Center. In 2004, after Zimmerman finished graduate school and moved to the Bay Area, he felt like something was missing in his life. He read about a local support group in the paper and decided to attend. For the first year or two of meetings, Zimmerman did not speak up much beyond sharing his name and cancer history. During those meetings, he met other group members who were involved in advocacy for cancer patients, and Zimmerman realized that he had experiences and knowledge to share as a pediatric and young adult cancer survivor.

“I never had a conscious ‘moment of inspiration,’ but slowly, I became more and more involved in advocating for the psychosocial support of pediatric and young adult cancer survivors,” Zimmerman said. “I don’t want people to have the negative experiences that I had when I was sick, such as depression, anger and being treated as a child instead of as a young adult who could make my own decisions. I really enjoy helping people and connecting them with resources that can make their lives easier.”

Zimmerman has been a member of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation Cancer Patient Advisory Council since 2010; and since 2012, a member of the planning committee for Courageous Kids, an annual American Cancer Society event that is “a day for kids away from cancer;” a member of the Alumni Advisory Board of First Descents, which offers free outdoor adventure camps for young adult cancer patients and survivors; and a co-facilitator of Healthy Young Attitude, the monthly young adult patient and survivor support group in Mountain View, California that he first attended in 2004. Zimmerman has also served as a Super Advocate for the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship from 2008-2011; an Advisory Board member of Yoga Bear, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting more opportunities for wellness and healing to the cancer community through the practice of yoga, from 2008-2012; and a Patient Services Committee member for Cancer CAREpoint in San Jose, California from 2011-2013. He has also reviewed cancer research grants for

the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program and spoken about survivorship to various groups, including the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Relay for Life and Stupid Cancer's 2014 OMG! Cancer Summit for Young Adults.

"For most of my life, I did not want to think or to talk about cancer, and I was really uncomfortable when I had to tell my story. Now, it gets easier every time I tell my story. Doing so has helped me come to terms with what I've been through," Zimmerman said. "Volunteering has also helped me learn about resources that impact my own survivorship, like seeking out a treatment summary and survivorship care plan. I've met lots of great people who have educated and mentored me, and I'm so grateful for their support, care and leadership."

"ASTRO is honored to present Mr. Zimmerman with the 2014 Survivor Circle Award," said Bruce G. Haffty, MD, FASTRO, president of ASTRO's Board of Directors. "His dedication to helping other cancer survivors and his willingness to share his story with so many others, particularly other pediatric and young adult cancer survivors, are an inspiration. He is an excellent example of the importance of caring for and supporting our patients—from diagnosis through survivorship."

For more information about ASTRO's 56th Annual Meeting, visit

www.astro.org/AnnualMeeting.

For press registration and media policies for ASTRO's 56th Annual Meeting, visit

www.astro.org/AMPress.

ABOUT ASTRO

ASTRO is the premier radiation oncology society in the world, with more than 10,000 members who are physicians, nurses, biologists, physicists, radiation therapists, dosimetrists and other health care professionals that specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. As the leading organization in radiation oncology, the Society is dedicated to improving patient care through professional education and training, support for clinical practice and health policy standards, advancement of science and research, and advocacy. ASTRO publishes two medical journals, International Journal of Radiation Oncology • Biology • Physics

American Society for Radiation Oncology
8280 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive • Suite 500 • Fairfax • VA • 22031
phone 703-502-1550 • fax 703-502-7852 • Web www.astro.org

(www.redjournal.org) and Practical Radiation Oncology (www.practicalradonc.org); developed and maintains an extensive patient website, www.rtfanswers.org; and created the Radiation Oncology Institute (www.roinstitute.org), a non-profit foundation to support research and education efforts around the world that enhance and confirm the critical role of radiation therapy in improving cancer treatment. To learn more about ASTRO, visit www.astro.org.

###