

# Asia Programs: Snapshot of Activities in Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam

**The cancer burden continues to worsen in South and East Asia. More than 5.3 million cancer cases are diagnosed annually. Because treatment remains largely unavailable or inaccessible, more than 3.7 million cancer deaths occur annually, accounting for almost 70 percent of all cancer cases. Thus, it is important to mobilize support of patient groups, strengthen tobacco control laws, improve access to screening and treatment, and destigmatize the disease.**

With more than 90 years of experience and as the largest and most experienced voluntary health agency in the world, the American Cancer Society is one of the few organizations capable of providing meaningful leadership to developing cancer control organizations worldwide. The American Cancer Society's international program focuses on capacity building and collaboration with other cancer-related non-governmental organizations (NGOs), like those found throughout Asia.

Below are highlights of our work beyond China and India.

## *Japan*

The American Cancer Society is working with leading cancer control and patient organizations in Japan. Our initiative has been focused on training and providing grants to cancer patient support organizations that provide patients with information, services, and advocacy throughout their cancer journey.

In partnership with organizations such as the Japan Cancer Society, the National Cancer Center, and the University of Tokyo, we convened

two American Cancer Society University (ACSU) programs in Tokyo, Japan, in 2006 and 2007. Some alumni from our ACSU programs are now members of the Japan Initiative for Cancer Patients (JIP), a group of advocates committed to improving cancer patient policies and services. In December 2007, we partnered with the Health Policy Institute, Japan, to convene ACSU alumni and partner organizations to discuss implementation of programs related to the National Cancer Act of Japan.

## *Korea*

Top leaders from the Korean Cancer Society, the National Cancer Center, and Seoul National University Hospital have been trained through our ACSU and tobacco control grant programs. Through an ACSU seed grant, a support program for patients with breast cancer has been established, as well as research on the effectiveness of a breast self-examination program for young Korean women.

## *Malaysia*

Representatives from national organizations, such as the National Cancer Society of Malaysia, have received training through ACSU in





ACSU Alumni Meeting held in Tokyo, Japan

program planning, survivor engagement, and collaboration. We support the work of ACSU alumni in their efforts to discourage the use of tobacco products in Malaysia. Our staff are working to build best practices in International Relay For Life® with Malaysian cancer control partners. We are also partnering with the National Council of Women's Organisations, Malaysia, to expand a breast cancer early detection screening and policy project nationwide.

### *Philippines*

We work with the Philippine Cancer Society, an alumnus of ACSU and American Cancer Society fellowship programs, in its efforts to conduct a comprehensive liver cancer education campaign. Our staff are providing guidance on the development of educational materials related to breast cancer and tobacco control. We are providing similar assistance to the I Can Serve Foundation, also an ACSU alumnus, for projects

focusing on access to breast cancer early detection and treatment.

### *Singapore*

We collaborate with cancer control nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Singapore to assess common needs, develop training, and formulate action plans that will address organization priorities, ultimately improving national cancer control programs.

### *Thailand*

We have supported the model tobacco control activities of partners in Thailand through tobacco control grants. We are supporting the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco (SRNT) conference in Bangkok in 2008, a conference to develop research infrastructure and skills to meet Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) obligations. We have also convened university researchers and NGO leaders to learn techniques in planning and collaboration through our ACSU program.

### *Vietnam*

We support several projects in Vietnam focused on fighting tobacco use there. Vietnamese participants in our International Fellows Partner Program are supporting the Vietnam Committee on Smoking and Health (VINACOSH) on advocacy efforts related to the FCTC.

*For more information on our global programs, please visit our Web site at [www.cancer.org/international](http://www.cancer.org/international).*



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