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## **Mayor Thomas Menino and Dana Farber/Harvard Cancer Center Ovarian Cancer SPORE Honored at “Teal Ribbon” Awards Ceremony**

### **Recipients’ Lauded for their Dedication to Ovarian Cancer Awareness and Research at Third Annual Event**

**BOSTON** – Saying he was both “honored and inspired,” Boston Mayor Thomas Menino accepted a Teal Ribbon award tonight for his work to raise awareness of ovarian cancer – a disease that strikes over 20,000 American women a year and kills over 15,000.

The awards ceremony, commemorating National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, was sponsored by **OvarianCancerAwareness.org**, a Coalition of health care organizations and advocates committed to using the power of information to support the early detection and cure of ovarian cancer. Also receiving an award were the researchers at the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center Ovarian Cancer SPORE (Specialized Programs for Research Excellence).

“I am honored to receive this award and inspired to do even more to spread awareness of this disease,” said Menino. “If our work to inform people about the symptoms of ovarian cancer has led to early detection of the disease in one person – in one family – then we have been successful,” he said, referring to the city’s public information campaign which included a banner reading “Get the facts. Recognize the signs” which has hung from City Hall throughout the month of September. “I only hope that we reach even more people in more neighborhoods in Boston and throughout the Commonwealth.”

The Coalition’s honorary chairwoman, Senate President Therese Murray, presented the award to the Mayor, stating, “this year’s recipients have made enormous contributions in the two most important areas in the fight against ovarian cancer – awareness of the symptoms and research for a cure.”

"Ovarian cancer is treatable, but the symptoms are so subtle that women often don't think there is a problem until the cancer has already spread," continued Murray. "Through our ongoing efforts to raise awareness of this disease, we can help to save lives."

Barbara O’Brien, an ovarian cancer survivor and President of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, presented the Teal Ribbon Award to the researchers of the Ovarian Cancer SPORE. “In 1998 it was our dream to have an Ovarian Cancer SPORE here in Boston,” said O’Brien. “In 2004 that dream came true when Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center received the SPORE grant. The researchers at the Ovarian Cancer SPORE are making progress everyday in the fight against ovarian cancer.”

For the third year in a row, the Coalition has honored individuals or groups with the Teal Ribbon awards – the symbol of hope for a cure for Ovarian Cancer.

“The significance of the Teal Ribbon awards is that they represent hope and progress in an area that is so often dominated by grim statistics and very sad stories,” said Bill Shea of the Ovarian Cancer Education Awareness Network (OCEAN). “It is true that ovarian cancer is a formidable disease, but it is also one that can be cured with early detection and continued research - which is why the contributions of both Mayor Menino and SPORE at Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center are to be so enthusiastically applauded.”

“Each year, we see far too many women succumb to ovarian cancer, but we also see enormous progress being made in the significant but achievable task of eradicating this disease,” said Dr. Daniel Cramer, Principal Investigator for the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center SPORE. “On behalf of the Ovarian Cancer SPORE researchers, I am delighted to be accepting an award that acknowledges the strides that have been made while emphasizing the work that still lies ahead.”

The Dana-Farber/Harvard SPORE in ovarian cancer (Ovarian SPORE) is focused on finding new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat ovarian cancer. Among Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center projects are studies to identify modifiable environmental risk factors associated with ovarian cancer and their interaction with the genotype, research to identify the molecular basis of carcinogenesis in ovarian cancer, and the design of novel immunotherapies to treat women with ovarian cancer. The Ovarian SPORE represents a significant collaboration that includes research investigators from all of the major DF/HCC sites.

Ovarian cancer is the second most common gynecological cancer in women, but ranks first (above endometrial cancer) in cancer deaths. Approximately 22,430 new ovarian cancers will be diagnosed in the United States in 2007 and about 15,280 women will die from this disease. The high mortality rate stems from an overall lack of early symptoms or screening methods for the disease. As a result, most ovarian cancer patients are diagnosed in advanced stages.

Because the chances of surviving ovarian cancer are greatly improved through early detection (a 93% survival rate after 5 years), OvarianCancerAwareness.org and other advocacy organizations throughout the country have been focused on information that informs women of symptoms that can lead to early detection. In addition to their web site, OvarianCancerAwareness.org launched a public awareness campaign on September 6<sup>th</sup> that includes television, radio and billboard advertising – in both English and Spanish – that will continue running throughout the state during the month of September.

OvarianCancerAwareness.org is made up of the following organizations: The National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, Inc. Massachusetts Division (NOCC); The Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center; The Ovarian Cancer Education Awareness Network (OCEAN); The M. Patricia Cronin Foundation to Fight Ovarian Cancer; Ovations for the Cure; and The Dana-Farber/Brigham & Women’s Cancer Center.

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