

DRIVE4COPD Sheds Light on the Nation's 4th Leading Killer Through Unprecedented Public Health Initiative

-- Hollywood, Sports and Music Stars Drive 6,000 Miles Cross Country to Identify the Millions of People with COPD Who May Not Know They Have It --

Ridgefield, CT, February 3, 2010 – A powerful group of entertainment, sports and healthcare organizations and celebrities have joined forces to screen millions of people who may be at risk for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), the nation's fourth leading cause of death. The American Lung Association, Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc., COPD Foundation and NASCAR® today kicked off DRIVE4COPD, a multi-year public health initiative aiming to reach millions of Americans about the need for early detection of COPD.

An estimated half of the 24 million people in the United States who may have COPD remain undiagnosed. The serious, progressive disease – which includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both – robs people of their ability to breathe and kills more Americans each year than breast cancer and diabetes combined.

“Most people believe their symptoms, such as shortness of breath, are just normal signs of aging so they are not diagnosed until they have already lost half of their lung function,” said Charles D. Connor, American Lung Association president and CEO. “It is important to recognize symptoms and see a doctor early before the lungs become severely damaged. We believe DRIVE4COPD will encourage people to take action when it comes to this progressive disease.”

That's why NASCAR Nationwide Series™ driver, **Danica Patrick**, is joining with Emmy-nominated actor **Jim Belushi**, Olympic Gold Medalist **Bruce Jenner**, Grammy Award-winning country music star **Patty Loveless** and former Pro Football great **Michael Strahan** in the DRIVE4COPD campaign, a nationwide search for the millions of people who don't realize they may be at risk for COPD.

“I remember how my grandma struggled to breathe and how it limited her life,” said Patrick, whose grandmother suffered from emphysema, one of the two forms of COPD. “That's why our goal is to get at least 1 million people to take a five-question screener to find out if they may be at risk for COPD and talk to their doctor. Because the sooner you act, the sooner you can get on the road to breathing better.”

Race for the Missing Millions with COPD

Patrick is readying the members of the DRIVE4COPD Race Team -- who all have close family members touched by COPD -- to drive 6,000 miles across the country in four days in the “Race for the Missing Millions.” They will be calling on people to complete a five-question screener to see if they are at risk for this common disease. The screener can be found at DRIVE4COPD.COM.

Partnering Organizations



Founding Sponsor



The race starts on February 13, 2010 after Loveless debuts the song she composed for the campaign in front of packed stands at the historic Daytona International Speedway, a day prior to the famed DAYTONA 500®. The song, in memory of Loveless' sister who died at a young age from emphysema, hopes to inspire others with COPD to take action to continue to live their life.

Following her performance, Loveless joins her fellow DRIVE4COPD Race Team members on the starting line of the prestigious NASCAR Nationwide Series™ season opener to drive around the track prior to Patrick taking to the track herself to race for the DRIVE4COPD 300 checkered flag. The celebrity drivers take off from this commemorative start on four routes across the country making "Pit Stops" in 14 cities to screen as many Americans as possible to see if they may be at risk for COPD. A map of the "Race for the Missing Millions" routes and event locations is at DRIVE4COPD.COM.

"This is an important cause for NASCAR and we're committed to helping our fans and millions of Americans who have COPD by increasing public understanding of the disease," said Steve Phelps, senior vice president and chief marketing officer, NASCAR. "We are thrilled that this campaign has become the official health initiative of NASCAR, making its first 'Pit Stop' during the popular Daytona weekend and coming to many other races this season."

Following the celebrity four-day kick off, the race continues with local COPD screening events at NASCAR races, major sporting events and country music concerts. The DRIVE4COPD celebrity ambassadors will continue spreading their message through public service announcements and briefings on Capitol Hill throughout the year.

"Everyone in America knows someone with COPD and unfortunately half of them are symptomatic and don't know they have it," said John Walsh, president of the COPD Foundation and an individual living with COPD. "COPD affects more women than men. Although smoking's a major risk factor, it's not the only one. Environmental exposures and genetics are also involved. That's why it's important to spread awareness about COPD so individuals affected feel empowered and take charge."

The campaign encourages the public to learn about COPD, recognize its early symptoms and complete a five-question screener at DRIVE4COPD.COM to find out if they may be at risk. Those at risk include people 35 years of age or older or those who have smoked more than 100 cigarettes in a lifetime. The DRIVE4COPD Web site provides information on the disease and on the importance of taking active steps to manage it with a doctor. Those completing the five-question screener also have a chance to win an Ultimate NASCAR® Weekend.*

"As a leader in respiratory health, and a company committed to improving the lives of patients and their families, we are proud to be the founding sponsor for this important awareness initiative, and to be collaborating with ambassadors and organizations who share our goal of shining a much-needed spotlight on COPD," said J. Martin Carroll, president and CEO, Boehringer Ingelheim USA. "Someone dies from COPD every four minutes, yet most Americans still don't know what COPD is. We are committed to helping people learn about their risk and recognize early symptoms, and encouraging them to take action today so they can breathe better tomorrow."

About COPD

Both types of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) – chronic bronchitis and emphysema – make it harder to breathe because less air is able to flow in and out of the lungs.

As many as 24 million Americans have COPD – even those who haven't smoked in years – and half of them remain undiagnosed. COPD is the fourth leading cause of death in the United States. It kills one person every 4 minutes and more people each year than breast cancer and diabetes combined.

Common symptoms of COPD include coughing, with or without mucus, or shortness of breath. These symptoms are often confused with normal signs of aging. As COPD progresses, symptoms tend to get worse and more damage occurs in the lungs. Breathing gradually becomes more difficult until people with COPD feel like they are inhaling and exhaling through a small straw.

Because of its gradual onset, many patients are not diagnosed until they are hospitalized or require emergency care to treat the disease. By that time, their lungs may have already been critically damaged and they avoid activities that they used to enjoy because they become short of breath more easily. As such, COPD changes not only the life of the diagnosed person, but also of surrounding family and friends.

COPD can be managed to help people live and breathe easier. Early diagnosis of COPD is critical, as lung damage is not reversible but is treatable. Proper management of COPD is important to help patients breathe better, remain independent, prevent complications and exacerbations, and improve quality of life. Lifestyle changes like staying active and quitting smoking can help improve symptoms. Yet even when people are diagnosed with COPD, only half of them are prescribed treatment to help them breathe better.

DRIVE4COPD Partnering Organizations

Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc., the founding sponsor of the campaign, has joined forces with a cross-section of organizations on DRIVE4COPD to bring COPD to the forefront including:

American Lung Association

Now in its second century, the American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. With your generous support, the American Lung Association is "Fighting for Air" through research, education and advocacy. For more information about the American Lung Association or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872) or visit www.lungusa.org.

COPD Foundation

The COPD Foundation is a not-for-profit organization created in 2004, and has become the COPD community's forefront organization, driven by the individuals affected by COPD, that has addressed educational, research and advocacy issues that concern the community in order to improve the quality of life for the 24 million Americans affected by COPD. For more information about the COPD Foundation and its programs, call the C.O.P.D. Information Line at 1-866-316-COPD (2673) or visit the website at www.copdfoundation.org.

NASCAR

The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing, Inc. (NASCAR) is the sanctioning body for one of North America's premier sports. NASCAR races are broadcast in more than 150 countries and 20 languages. NASCAR fans are the most brand-loyal in all of sports, and as a result more Fortune 500 companies participate in NASCAR than any other sport.

About Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc., based in Ridgefield, CT, is the largest U.S. subsidiary of Boehringer Ingelheim Corporation (Ridgefield, CT) and a member of the Boehringer Ingelheim group of companies.

The Boehringer Ingelheim group is one of the world's 20 leading pharmaceutical companies. Headquartered in Ingelheim, Germany, it operates globally with 138 affiliates in 47 countries and approximately 41,300 employees. Since it was founded in 1885, the family-owned company has been committed to researching, developing, manufacturing and marketing novel products of high therapeutic value for human and veterinary medicine.

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