



BRAIN ANEURYSM FOUNDATION

Raising Awareness. Ending Fear.™

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Brain Aneurysm Foundation launches Communities of Color Campaign National effort focuses on raising awareness of risks to African Americans, others

(Hanover, MA—November 18, 2016) The Brain Aneurysm Foundation, the national voice of those living with or impacted by brain aneurysms, has announced it is launching an awareness effort called, the Communities of Color Campaign.

Brain aneurysms, which affect 1 in 50 people leading to an estimated 30,000 ruptures annually, are a silent killer, providing little or no warning. This disease strikes in disproportionately greater numbers in communities of color often causing death or cognitive disability for women, African Americans, and Hispanics at higher rates than their male and white peers.

“By focusing on communities of color, we are hoping to reach even more people to make them aware of the signs and symptoms of brain aneurysms and who is most likely to be at risk” said Christine Buckley, executive director of the Foundation, which was started in 1994 at Massachusetts General Hospital and is now based in Hanover, MA. “This disease can have a devastating effect on anyone, but it often catches communities of color, by surprise. It’s important that we raise awareness now to save lives and educate those that are at a higher risk for rupture such as African American and Hispanics.”

The issue of brain aneurysms affecting communities of color at higher rates was covered by the award-winning television issues show “CityLine,” which is produced by WCVB-TV, the Boston ABC affiliate. A link to the show, which featured Dr. Ajith J. Thomas, co-director of the Brain Aneurysm Institute at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and a member of the Foundation’s Medical Advisory Board, and Launa Johnston, who has had three brain aneurysms and now is an advocate for the Foundation’s efforts to raise awareness in the African American community can be viewed here:

<http://www.wcvb.com/article/cityline-matters-of-the-mind-1/8274725>

“People need to know this can happen to them,” said Johnston. “I was healthy. ...My family has always been healthy, living a long time. I had to learn about brain aneurysms while I was dealing with them. We need to make people aware, particularly people of color.”

Brain aneurysms are weakened arterial walls that can rupture; causing bleeding that damages the brain. Each year, brain aneurysms cause nearly 500,000 deaths worldwide. Researchers estimate six million Americans have an unruptured brain aneurysm. The condition strikes:

- Women at three times the rate of men (a 3:2 ratio)
- African-Americans at twice the rate of whites (a ratio of 2.1:1)
- Hispanics at nearly twice the rate of whites (a ratio of 1.67:1)

“The only way we will ever reduce the health disparities those statistics reveal and one day eradicate the devastation of brain aneurysm disease is to make real, long term investment in research,” said Buckley,

which is why the Brain Aneurysm Foundation is also supporting an important legislative initiative, “Ellie’s Law” (HR 6185).

Named in honor of Ellie Helton, a 14-year-old Cary, NC, girl, who died on July 16, 2014 as a result of a brain aneurysm. HR 6185, which was introduced in US House of Representatives by Congresswomen Yvette Clarke (NY) and Renee Ellmers (NC), would authorize \$25 million in federal funding for brain aneurysm research. Increased funding for brain aneurysm research is the key to finding effective treatments, interventions, and ways to prevent aneurysms from developing.

The Foundation is unique in that it has a Medical Advisory Board of Directors, which is made up of more than three-dozen doctors—neurologists, neurosurgeons, and interventional neuroradiologists—representing the best research hospitals, facilities, and universities throughout the country. The Medical Advisory Board members provide expertise and support to the Foundation in a variety of ways.

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ABOUT THE BRAIN ANEURYSM FOUNDATION

The Brain Aneurysm Foundation is the globally recognized leader in brain aneurysm awareness, education, support, advocacy and research funding. Now celebrating more than 20 years’ of service and led by Executive Director Christine Buckley, the Brain Aneurysm Foundation was established in 1994 at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, with a mission to promote early detection of brain aneurysms by providing knowledge and raising awareness of the signs, symptoms and risk factors; work with the medical communities to provide support networks for patients and families; as well as to further research that will improve patient outcomes and save lives. **For more information about the Brain Aneurysm Foundation, visit www.bafound.org**