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ASTRO's patient education program wins national award

Fairfax, Va., March 6, 2009 – The American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) has been selected as one of only 21 organizations nationwide to receive an Award of Excellence in the first round of the 2009 Associations Advance America (AAA) Awards, which is a national competition sponsored by the American Society of Association Executives and the Center for Association Leadership in Washington.

ASTRO's patient outreach program was honored with an AAA Award for its efforts to help cancer patients understand the complexity of radiation therapy treatment and is now in the running to receive a Summit Award, which is ASAE and the Center's top recognition for association programs.

“ASTRO is very committed to helping patients better understand how radiation therapy works and to giving our members the tools to explain this complex, yet very effective treatment to their patients in an easy to understand way,” Laura I. Thevenot, ASTRO CEO, said. “We are extremely proud to be recognized by ASAE with an AAA Award for our hard work in helping cancer patients decipher their treatment options.”

In September 2003, ASTRO conducted a national survey to gauge what the public understood about radiation therapy and determined that the public knew very little about this form of cancer treatment even though it is one of the three main cancer treatments along with chemotherapy and surgery. To combat this, the Society launched a public awareness campaign to educate patients and the public about how radiation therapy works to cure cancer.

ASTRO's patient outreach program consists of 14 patient-friendly, disease site specific brochures that are available in English, Spanish, Arabic and/or Japanese; a patient Web site (www.rtanswers.org) where patients can find radiation therapy treatment information for specific cancers, locate a radiation oncologist in their area, find a list of patient support groups and locate resources for radiation therapy treatment financial aid; and an easy-to-use template of the patient site that our members can personalize to create their own Web site with patient information.

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Now in its 19th year, the prestigious AAA Awards program recognizes associations that propel America forward with innovative projects in education, skills training, standards-setting, business and social innovation, knowledge creation, citizenship and community service.

ASTRO is the largest radiation oncology society in the world, with more than 10,000 members who specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. As the leading organization in radiation oncology, biology and physics, the Society is dedicated to improving patient care through education, clinical practice, advancement of science and advocacy. For more information on radiation therapy, visit www.rtanswers.org. To learn more about ASTRO, visit www.astro.org.

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