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CANCER: THE EMPEROR OF ALL MALADIES  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY KEN BURNS AND DIRECTED BY BARAK GOODMAN  
Premieres Monday, March 30, – Wednesday, April 1, 2015 at 9:00 p.m. on WQED-TV

PITTSBURGH – CANCEER: THE EMPEROR OF ALL MALADIES is a three-part, six-hour documentary series directed by award-winning filmmaker Barak Goodman and executive produced by Ken Burns. It will premiere Monday, March 30 through Wednesday, April 1 at 9:00 p.m. on WQED-TV and is made possible locally by Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and Washington & Jefferson College.

WQED is hosting a 40-minute screening of the film with a panel discussion to follow on Monday, March 23 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Panelists will include:

- **Howard D. Edington, MD**  
  Specialties: Plastic Surgery  
  Expertise: Breast Surgery; Melanoma; Surgical Oncology

- **Russell S. Fuhrer, MD**  
  Specialties: Radiation Oncology  
  Expertise: Brachytherapy; Brain and Skull Based Tumors; Prostate Cancer; Radiation Oncology; Radiosurgery; Skin Cancer

- **Gregory S. Long, MD**  
  Specialties: Medical Oncology  
  Expertise: Bone Cancer; Brain Cancer; Colorectal Cancer; Esophageal Cancer; Head and Neck Cancer; Hematology; Lung Cancer; Medical Oncology; Melanoma; Neuro-Oncology; Skin Cancer; Thoracic Oncology

The event will take place at WQED Studios located at 4802 Fifth Avenue in Oakland and the public is welcome to attend. RSVPs should be made to Maria Pisano at mpisano@wqed.org, space is extremely limited.
Prior to the series debut, WQED will broadcast a half-hour discussion program hosted by journalist Katie Couric (and co-founder of “Stand Up To Cancer”) called CANCER: THE EMPEROR OF ALL MALADIES – A Conversation on Thursday, March 26 at 10:30 p.m. on WQED-TV. The program features interviews with Ken Burns, executive producer of the film who lost his mother to cancer when he was 11-years-old; Sharon Percy, President and Chief Executive Officer of WETA and a cancer survivor; and Dr. Siddhartha Mukherjee, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of the book upon which the film is based. An encore of the program is scheduled for Sunday, March 29 at 11:00 p.m.

Thanks to its sponsors and partners at the American Cancer Society, Inc. (ACS), WQED has a local website at wqed.org/cancer. Visitors will see archived programs from WQED’s Men & Cancer and Women & Cancer series as well as eight new vignette-style interviews with local Allegheny Health Network oncologists who discuss topics like high-risk factors, prevention, detection, treatment, and quality of life post-treatment. These along with other resources from ACS are available on the site.

In addition to the series, the project includes nearly two dozen webcast short films by Redglass Pictures and a comprehensive national campaign with engagement partner Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) and an array of other project supporters. Also available to viewers, WETA has launched CancerFilms.org, an expansive website with social and interactive media components created in conjunction with the documentary. The project website features an innovative short film series executive produced by Ken Burns and created by Redglass Pictures, featuring individual cancer patients and caregivers. Additional films will be released in the weeks leading up to the March 30 broadcast premiere.

The interactive website includes a mixture of produced and user-generated content exploring the three intermingled strands of the series: a riveting historical documentary, an engrossing and intimate vérité film that focuses on current patients, and a scientific report. The website is intended for the vast cancer community of patients and survivors, family members, caregivers, scientists, clinicians and other healthcare providers, as well as the public at large. Participants can share their stories now at CancerFilms.org, engage with the project on Twitter via @CancerFilm or #CancerFilm, and visit the project on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CancerFilm.

A collaboration of Florentine Films, Laura Ziskin Pictures and WETA Washington, DC, in association with Ark Media, the series is based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning book The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer (Simon & Schuster 2010) by Siddhartha Mukherjee, M.D. At the urging of SU2C co-founder, the late Laura Ziskin, the Entertainment Industry Foundation obtained the television and film rights for its Stand Up To Cancer initiative shortly after the book was published.

CANCER: THE EMPEROR OF ALL MALADIES tells the comprehensive story of cancer, from its first description in an ancient Egyptian scroll to the gleaming laboratories of modern research institutions. At six hours, the film interweaves a sweeping historical narrative with intimate stories about contemporary patients, and an investigation into the latest scientific breakthroughs that may have brought us, at long last, within sight of lasting cures. The film comprises the following three episodes:

**Episode 1** (Premieres Monday, March 30 at 9:00 p.m.)
**MAGIC BULLETS:** The search for a “cure” for cancer is the greatest epic in the history of science. It spans centuries and continents, and is full of its share of heroes, villains and sudden vertiginous twists. This episode follows that centuries-long search, but centers on the story of Sidney Farber, who, defying conventional wisdom in the late 1940s, introduces the modern era of chemotherapy, eventually galvanizing a full-scale national “war on cancer.” Interwoven with Farber’s narrative is the contemporary story of little Olivia Blair, who at 14-months old is diagnosed with T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia, which spreads to her brain and spinal column. The film follows her as she and her parents struggle with the many hardships and decisions
foisted upon a cancer patient. She remains in full remission a year after her diagnosis, but is still on her journey to finish her three-year treatment plan.

**Episode 2** (Premieres Tuesday, March 31 at 9:00 p.m.)
**THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT:** This episode picks up the story in the wake of the declaration of a “war on cancer” by Richard Nixon in 1971. Flush with optimism and awash with federal dollars, the cancer field plunges forward in search of a cure. In the lab, rapid progress is made in understanding the essential nature of the cancer cell, leading to the revolutionary discovery of the genetic basis of cancer. But at the bedside, where patients are treated, few new therapies become available, and a sense of disillusionment takes hold, leading some patients and doctors to take desperate measures. It is not until the late 1990s that the advances in research begin to translate into more precise targeted therapies with the breakthrough drugs Gleevec and Herceptin. Following the history during these fraught decades, the film intertwines the contemporary story of Dr. Lori Wilson, a surgical oncologist who is diagnosed with invasive breast cancer in both breasts in 2013. Her emotional and physical struggles with the disease provide a bracing counterpoint to the historical narrative.

**Episode 3** (Premieres Wednesday, April 1 at 9:00 p.m.)
**FINDING AN Achilles HEEL:** This episode picks up the story at another moment of buoyant optimism in the cancer world: Scientists believe they have cracked the essential mystery of the malignant cell and the first targeted therapies have been developed, with the promise of many more to follow. But very quickly cancer reveals new layers of complexity and a formidable array of unforeseen defenses. In the disappointment that follows, many call for a new focus on prevention and early detection as the most promising fronts in the war on cancer. But other scientists are undeterred, and by the second decade of the 2000s their work pays off: The bewildering complexity of the cancer cell, so recently considered unassailable, yields to a more ordered picture, revealing new vulnerabilities and avenues of attack. Perhaps most exciting of all is the prospect of harnessing the human immune system to defeat cancer. This episode includes patients Doug Rogers, a 60-year-old NASCAR mechanic with melanoma, and Emily Whitehead, a six-year-old child afflicted with leukemia. Each is a pioneer in new immunotherapy treatments, which the documentary follows as their stories unfold. Both see their advanced cancers recede and are able to resume normal lives.

An extensive engagement program has been created in collaboration with an unprecedented array of supporters. Production supporters include Genentech, Cancer Treatment Centers of America, Siemens, David H. Koch, Bristol-Myers Squibb, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Kovler Fund, The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, the American Association for Cancer Research, the American Cancer Society, The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, the Entertainment Industry Foundation, Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C), the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and PBS. These organizations will enable the project to reach an even larger audience, engaging researchers, patients and the general public in a national conversation.

WETA will also create a curriculum based on the film that will be shared with teachers in schools throughout the country, and the project has plans to develop opportunities for inspiring the next generation of researchers.


**About WQED**
WQED changes lives by creating and sharing outstanding public media that educates, entertains, and inspires. It is the parent company of WQED-TV (PBS); WQED: The Create Channel; WORLD Channel; WQED Showcase; Classical WQED-FM 89.3/Pittsburgh; Classical WQEJ-FM 89.7/Johnstown; the Pittsburgh Concert
About WETA Washington, D.C.
WETA Washington, D.C., is one of the largest producing stations of new content for public television in the United States. WETA productions and co-productions include *PBS NewsHour*, *Washington Week with Gwen Ifill*, *The Kennedy Center Mark Twain Prize*, *In Performance at the White House* and documentaries by filmmaker Ken Burns, including the premiere this past September 14-20 of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*. More information on WETA and its programs and services is available at [www.weta.org](http://www.weta.org).

About Stand Up To Cancer
Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C), a program of the Entertainment Industry Foundation, was established in 2008 by film and media leaders who utilize the industry’s resources to engage the public in supporting a new, collaborative model of cancer research, and to increase awareness about progress being made in the fight against the disease. SU2C raises funds to accelerate the pace of research that will get new therapies to patients quickly and save lives now.

Current members of the SU2C Council of Founders and Advisors (CFA) include journalist and well-known cancer advocate Katie Couric; Sherry Lansing, chairperson of the Entertainment Industry Foundation’s Board of Directors and founder of the Sherry Lansing Foundation; EIF President and CEO Lisa Paulsen; EIF senior vice president Kathleen Lobb; Rusty Robertson and Sue Schwartz of the Robertson Schwartz Agency; Pamela Oas Williams, president of Laura Ziskin Productions and executive producer of Stand Up To Cancer’s in-house production team; and non-profit executive Ellen Ziffren. The late co-founder Laura Ziskin executive produced SU2C’s 2008 and 2010 “roadblock” televised fundraising specials, and all current members of the CFA were co-producers of the 2012 and 2014 shows. Sung Poblete, Ph.D., R.N., has served as SU2C’s president and CEO since 2011. More information is available at [www.standup2cancer.org](http://www.standup2cancer.org).

About New York Public Radio
New York Public Radio is home to three of the country’s leading public radio stations — WNYC FM, WNYC AM and WQXR FM — as well as New Jersey Public Radio and The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space. WNYC is a major producer of original content for public radio nationwide. WQXR is New York City’s only all-classical music station. New Jersey Public Radio covers the issues that matter in the Garden State and extends New York Public Radio’s news, talk and cultural programming deeper into New Jersey. The Greene Space is a street-front broadcast studio and live venue where audiences can experience our programming in person and online. New York Public Radio’s online platforms include wnyc.org, wqxr.org, njpublicradio.org and thegreenespace.org. To learn more about New York Public Radio, visit [www.nypublicradio.org](http://www.nypublicradio.org).

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