



**Media Contacts:** Gloria Quinn  
Kaplow  
646-747-3582 (office)  
917-526-1477 (cell)  
[gquinn@kaplowpr.com](mailto:gquinn@kaplowpr.com)

Karyn Margolis  
Avon Foundation for Women  
212-282-5666 (office)  
347-244-5198 (cell)  
[Karyn.margolis@avonfoundation.org](mailto:Karyn.margolis@avonfoundation.org)

Event information: [www.avonwalk.org](http://www.avonwalk.org) or call 888-541-WALK

**EMBARGOED UNTIL SUNDAY, MAY 15, 2011, 3:30 pm ET**

## **Ninth Annual Avon Walk for Breast Cancer Boston Raises More Than \$5.2 Million**

### ***More Than 2,300 Women and Men Participate in the 39.3 Mile Walk; Grants Awarded to Nine Local Breast Cancer Organizations***

**Boston, MA – May 15, 2011** – The ninth annual [Avon Walk for Breast Cancer](#) season continued with the Avon Walk in Boston this weekend, which raised more than \$5.2 million to advance access to care and finding a cure for breast cancer. The Avon Walk Boston attracted more than 2,300 participants from 37 states and Washington, D.C., as well as Canada and Bermuda, including 214 breast cancer survivors, who joined together to raise life-saving funds and awareness for breast cancer.

During the Closing Ceremony at the University of Massachusetts (UMASS) Boston Campus Center's Circle Lawn, Peg Murphy, a two-month breast cancer survivor from Melrose, MA, brought hope to others battling the disease and spoke movingly about how the Avon Walk Boston inspired her.

"This weekend was an inspiration for me in so many ways. I've never been surrounded by so much love and support, especially from my fellow survivors. As a two-month breast cancer survivor, I'm lucky. But so many others aren't. Screening, insurance, surgeries and more are not possible for so many people battling this disease. This weekend, we walked and crewed to help give others strength. We walked and crewed to save lives, here in New England and across the country."

Marc Hurlbert, executive director of the [Avon Breast Cancer Crusade](#), announced during the Closing Ceremony more than \$3 million in grants to nine local organizations, ensuring the funds raised immediately benefit the community. More grants are slated to be awarded throughout the year to breast cancer programs nationwide. "The Avon Walk for Breast Cancer Boston beneficiaries represent organizations that offer life-saving services to patients regardless of their ability to pay. And they're doing cutting-edge research to find better treatments, prevention strategies, and ultimately a cure. These new grants will literally help them save lives."

Following are the nine Boston grants the [Avon Foundation for Women](#) awarded at the Avon Walk closing ceremony:

- **Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Cancer Center** of Boston, home of the [Avon Foundation Comprehensive Breast Evaluation Center](#), an **Avon Foundation Breast Care Center of Excellence**, received \$1.5 million. The grant will support HER2 positive breast cancer research, as well as programs that help low income women receive care at the Avon Center at Mass General and community clinics in Chelsea, Geiger Gibson and Mattapan. The funds also will support the **Massachusetts General Hospital -Avon International Breast Cancer Program**, which focuses on increasing survivorship rates and extending access to quality breast health care to women across the globe.
- **Brigham & Women's Hospital** of Boston received \$300,000 to support research to understand how normal changes to the breast during pregnancy can be used to predict future breast cancer risk in healthy women.
- **University of Massachusetts Amherst** received \$300,000 to develop a test to identify premalignant breast lesions that have a high risk of progressing to breast cancer and differentiate them from those unlikely to advance.
- **Silent Spring Institute** of Newton, MA, received \$175,000 to support a research fellowship looking at the potential role of the environment in breast cancer development.

- **Community Servings** of Jamaica Plain, MA, received \$100,000 to support the Avon Door-to-Door Delivery Program, which brings thousands of meals to breast cancer patients and their families.

The Avon Foundation also awarded four grants during the Closing Ceremony to further strengthen the Avon Safety Net program, which consists of more than 100 hospitals across the country that ensure women and men who might otherwise fall through the cracks of the healthcare system have access to high quality breast cancer services. The Safety Net grants include:

- **LifeSpan Foundation** of Providence, RI received a grant of \$250,000;
- **Boston Medical Center** received a grant of \$250,000;
- **Cambridge Health Alliance** of Boston received a grant of \$125,000; and
- **Central Maine Medical Center** of Lewiston, ME, received a grant of \$62,000.

### **About the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer Boston**

During the Avon Walk Boston, women and men had a choice of walking a marathon (26.2 miles) or a marathon and a half (39.3 miles) over the weekend. The event kicked off Saturday, May 14, with an early morning Opening Ceremony at the UMASS Boston Center Lawn. Following the Ceremony, walkers began their journey, traveling through the Boston and surrounding areas and concluding at the Avon Walk “Wellness Village” at the Reebok World Headquarters in Canton, MA. The “Wellness Village” featured two-person sleeping tents, hot showers, prepared meals, entertainment, volunteer medical services and comprehensive support services, along with leisure activities such as relaxing yoga to stretch out the muscles and a spa zone with mini-back-and-foot-massages. On Sunday, May 15, walkers completed another 13.1 miles together, ending back at the UMASS Boston Center Lawn where they were greeted by thousands of family and friends, who shared in a celebratory and moving Closing Ceremony, including the awarding of new grants.

To participate in the Avon Walk Boston, each walker raised a minimum of \$1,800 in donations. The Avon Foundation for Women [a 501(c)(3) public charity] manages the funds raised, which it awards to local, regional and national breast cancer organizations to support five areas of the breast cancer cause, including awareness and education, screening and diagnosis, access to treatment, support services, and scientific research.

Since its launch in 2003, the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer series has raised more than \$385 million through the dedication of more than 145,000 participating women and men from across the country, including thousands of Avon Associates and Representatives. The Avon Walk Boston is the third event of the 2011 season, and registration is still open for women and men to take part in the remaining 2011 Avon Walks: [Chicago](#) (June 4-5), [Rocky Mountains, CO](#) (June 25 – 26), [San Francisco](#) (July 9 – 10), [Santa Barbara](#) (September 17-18), [New York City](#) (October 15-16), and [Charlotte, NC](#) (October 22-23).

Donations are still being accepted for the Avon Walk Boston. To register, donate or for additional information, please visit [www.avonwalk.org](http://www.avonwalk.org) or call **800-541-WALK**.

###

*The Avon Walk for Breast Cancer thanks National Sponsor: Reebok; Official Sponsors: Genentech BioOncology, Lend Us Your Ear powered by TheVoiceLibrary.net, OtterBox and Orion Trading; Local Sponsors: Groupon, The Boston Park Plaza Hotel & Towers, Marathon Sports, Smart Choice and Fallon Ambulance Service; and Medical Sponsor: Massachusetts General Emergency and Massachusetts General Cancer Care.*

*Remember: early detection can help save lives. Schedule your mammogram or clinical breast exam today. For more breast cancer information and resources, visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) (keyword breast cancer) or [www.avonfoundation.org](http://www.avonfoundation.org), where you can access free printable breast cancer informational literature.*

Follow the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer on Facebook ([facebook.com/avonwalks](http://facebook.com/avonwalks)) and Twitter ([twitter.com/avonwalks](http://twitter.com/avonwalks))!