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October 27, 2011

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Inaugural Trekker Award Bestowed at 7th Annual Breast Health Summit

HOUSTON – Longtime breast health advocate and locally-as well as nationally-recognized leader Dorothy Gibbons received the inaugural Trekker Award at the recent 7th Annual Breast Health Summit held at the United Way. The event, which drew nearly 300 professionals from the medical field, community health workers, survivors and breast health supporters, is a two-day educational event presented by the Breast Health Collaborative of Texas.

Gibbons, CEO and Co-Founder of The Rose, was recognized for demonstrating “extraordinary vision, resolve and resourcefulness in increasing access to breast health care,” noted Lyn Widlaski, Executive Director of the Breast Health Collaborative of Texas.



Left to Right: Dorothy Weston Gibbons, CEO and Co-Founder of The Rose and Susan Rafte, Chair of the Breast Health Collaborative of Texas and Co-Founder of Pink Ribbons Project

“In 2005, the 1st Annual Breast Health Summit was a collaborative initiative by The Rose and 41 other breast health-focused organizations in the Greater Houston area. Since that time, Dorothy has been the conduit and inspiration to take the Summit to the next level by organizing a network of over 300 individuals dedicated to making sure no one goes without breast health care in the state of Texas. She is always striving to improve access to care for all women. We owe the Breast Health Summit and the Collaborative to her vision,” Widlaski said.

Among the many achievements Widlaski identified in her presentation of the award was the compassion and drive which led Gibbons, along with surgeon Dr. Dixie Melillo, to create The Rose back in 1986. The nonprofit breast cancer organization, offering diagnostic services to the insured and the uninsured, remains a unique model as it celebrates its 25th anniversary this year.

Gibbons’ active role in the planning of the Summit has decreased since the hiring of Widlaski as the Collaborative’s Executive Director and therefore afforded the Board and staff to surprise her with the award on the first day of the series of workshops.

“What a tremendous day,” Gibbons exclaimed upon accepting the trophy designed by the Collaborative’s board chair Susan Rafte.

“Isn’t it fun to be a part of something so dynamic as we make such a difference in people’s lives?” she queried the crowd who responded to the presentation with a standing ovation.

The Collaborative will present the next Trekker Award at the 8th Annual Breast Health Summit in Temple, Texas on November 1 & 2, 2012.

The Summit’s goal is to educate and to open dialogue between healthcare professionals, caregivers, educators, survivors, community health workers, advocates and other individuals. The theme of this year’s event was “*Educate. Navigate. Advocate.*” highlighting the Summit’s and Collaborative’s aim to provide attendees with the tools to improve access through, around and across the gaps of the healthcare system so that no man or woman with breast cancer goes untreated.

About the Breast Health Collaborative

The Breast Health Collaborative of Texas is made up of over 300 nonprofit, corporate and individual members throughout the State of Texas that are dedicated to making sure no one goes without breast health care. It is the coordinating body influencing education, funding, and policy by serving as a resource for breast health issues and services. The Collaborative advocates on behalf of breast cancer services, education, patient navigation services and research. Visit www.BreastHealthCollaborativeofTexas.org for more information.
