

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVARTIS AND MBCC LAUNCH AWARD PROGRAMME TO SPUR BREAST CANCER ADVOCACY

Four Individuals Acknowledged For Outstanding Contributions in the Fight Against Breast Cancer

Kuala Lumpur, December 5, 2005 - Malaysian women spearheading the breast cancer cause were honored today as part of a collaborative effort between Novartis Corporation (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd and the Malaysian Breast Cancer Council (MBCC) to undertake a nationwide search to find and honor an outstanding breast cancer advocate who has championed the breast cancer cause in Malaysia throughout 2004.

The presentation ceremony for the 2005 Novartis-MBCC Breast Cancer Leadership Award was held today and was officiated by Ybhg Puan Azrene Abdullah, President of Pink Ribbon Deeds (PRIDE). Present at the event was Ms. Ranjit Kaur, President of the Malaysian Breast Cancer Council (MBCC).

The Novartis-MBCC award is a unique community programme designed to recognize an individual's excellence or a group's major contribution to the advancement of breast cancer advocacy in Malaysia. It is a celebration of extraordinary Malaysian winning spirit and is aimed at showcasing courage, resolve and dedication as a way to help encourage advocacy in breast cancer work in the country.

"This is the first ever such award programme being initiated here and we feel it has been long overdue. Now it is time that Malaysia starts to applaud such advocacy efforts. Our aim is to strengthen community spirit, stimulate breast cancer advocacy and identify as well as promote role models," said Ms. Moira Kok of Novartis Corporation (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd.

"At Novartis, we believe in embracing the spirit of caring and helping in the communities in which we live, work and serve, as such, it has always been our commitment to make

women's health a top priority and this community award programme is a fulfillment of that commitment," she added.

The Malaysian Breast Cancer Council (MBCC) which comprises organizations of women with breast cancer and national associations of healthcare providers for women, has collaborated as the evaluation committee in this nationwide search to acknowledge that individual or group who has been relentlessly championing the breast cancer.

This year's sole award was bestowed to a leading individual as an acknowledgement of her extraordinary efforts and valuable contributions, initiatives, vision, drive and creativity to spearhead the breast cancer cause in Malaysia.

"This award represents our winning spirit against breast cancer. It fulfills our desire to recognize remarkable men and women who have made invaluable contributions to the fight against breast cancer in Malaysia," said Ms. Ranjit Kaur, President of MBCC.

"Today we are proud to acknowledge the four nominees who have demonstrated courage, creativity and dedication to help in the fight against breast cancer and they certainly deserve to be commended for their achievements and accomplishments," she added.

"MBCC has been a driving force in support of the breast cancer cause nationwide since our inception 2002. Now as a coalition group with one national voice, we aim to touch the lives of women and men around the nation. We will continue to champion this cause until we have reached our ultimate goal - to make the fight obsolete because we have eradicated breast cancer," she concluded.

An extensive nationwide search was conducted by MBCC this year and a total of four nominees were finally short listed for their outstanding commitment to the highest goals and standards of excellence in reaching out and serving those women and their families battling with breast cancer. These four remarkable individuals have demonstrated

outstanding grassroots leadership in their respective fields in breast cancer education and prevention.

The four nominees of the prestigious 2005 Novartis MBCC Breast Cancer Leadership Award were:

1. Mrs. Margaret Gooi - Breast Cancer Welfare Association

A breast cancer survivor of 26 years, Margaret is a pioneer member of Breast Cancer Welfare Association since its inception in 1986.

For almost three decades, Margaret has been relentlessly providing weekly psychosocial support to women diagnosed with breast cancer. She trains volunteers of Reach Recovery International, conducts breast self examinations, facilitates group therapy and shares her personal battle at public talks and offers advice on the needs and rights of women with breast cancer.

2. Ms Adeline Joseph - National Cancer Society of Malaysia

Adeline serves as a peer counselor to cancer survivors and their caregivers. She has established numerous support groups for women with breast cancer and has organized innovative community initiatives and workshops to educate youths and adults on breast cancer awareness.

Her dedication and commitment at NCSM's Resource and Wellness Centre has provided many with cancer to undergo their journey with better support and resources. Under her leadership, the centre today offers the most widespread cancer support services in Malaysia.

3. Prof. Yip Cheng Har – University of Malaya Medical Centre

Prof Yip, head of the Department of Surgery at UMMC, pioneered UMMC's Breast Clinic in 1993 and today it oversees more than 300 new cases of breast cancer every year.

A highly acclaimed surgeon, Dr Yip's has contributed tremendously in the research of the epidemiology and psychosocial impact of breast cancer to create a better understanding of the disease in Malaysia. Her generous support of numerous breast cancer support groups and NGOs' life-saving missions have helped built the momentum for breast cancer advocacy in Malaysia. She has also paved the way for NGOs to collaborate with medical professionals to combat breast cancer as a team effort so as to improve the lives of countless breast cancer patients nationwide.

4. Dr. Evelyn Ho - College of Radiology, Academy of Medicine

Dr Evelyn is nominated for her tremendous accomplishments in the field of breast cancer education, in particular, in areas relating to breast cancer awareness and early detection.

She has spearheaded Malaysia's first annual Subsidized Mammogram Programme, an annual community effort that provides early detection services for thousands of women who are in the high risk and lower income groups. Her passion with the Internet led her to harness IT as a tool to educate Malaysians on breast health. Today the website she initiated has become a national Breast Health Information Centre that offers the latest updates on breast health issues in Malaysia.

Dr Ho is also a tireless advocate of breast cancer prevention dedicating her time to conduct countless workshops on breast self examination and awareness nationwide. She has trained hundreds of trainers went to teach other fellow volunteers, counsellors and breast cancer survivors. Her innovative and creative efforts have made Malaysians take a harder look at the disease.

The final award winner was announced by the Guest-of-Honour, YBhg Puan Azrene Abdullah at today's award presentation ceremony.

About Novartis

Novartis AG (NYSE: NVS) is a world leader in pharmaceutical and consumer health. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis Group companies employ about 91,700 people and operate in over 140 countries around the world. For further information please visit <http://www.novartis.com>

About Malaysian Breast Cancer Council (MBCC)

MBCC, conceptualized in August 2002, consists of organizations of women with breast cancer, national associations of healthcare providers for women at risk and women with breast cancer including professional bodies and agencies with special interest in breast cancer issues. Members of the MBCC include Breast Cancer Welfare Association; College of Radiology, Academy of Medicine of Malaysia; Hospis Malaysia; National Cancer Society of Malaysia; Malaysian Oncological Society and the National Council of Women's Organizations.

MBCC is set up to ensure that their member organizations of the Council will campaign and work together to improve breast cancer services. The aim of MBCC is to bring related government agencies, NGOs, healthcare professionals, corporate sectors and interested individuals together to support and coordinate activities relating to breast cancer on a nationwide basis.

For more information, please contact:

Susan Ng

The Link Communications

Tel: 603-78806758

Fax: 603-78034938

Email: susanng@myjaring.net