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**SAN FRANCISCO FIREFIGHTERS
CANCER PREVENTION
FOUNDATION**

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The San Francisco Firefighters Cancer Prevention Foundation has been in existence for a little over a year. It was formed by retired Captain Tony Stefani, a cancer survivor, who was very concerned about an epidemic number of both active and retired firefighters contracting various forms of the disease.

With a \$100,000 donation from San Francisco Local 798, the process of putting together this nonprofit foundation began. Tony worked closely with Dr. Marshall Stoller (Professor; Vice Chairman, Department of Urology; Director, Laparoscopy and Urinary Stone Disease) and Dr. Kirsten Greene to formulate a plan to gather statistical information as to the types of cancer and the number of both active and retired firefighters that contracted the disease. The information received was startling. Out of 774 retired firefighters who responded to the questionnaire, approximately 1 out of every 3 either currently had cancer or was a cancer survivor. Out of 654 active firefighters who responded to the questionnaire, 34 currently have cancer or are recovering from cancer.

The Foundation formed a Board of Directors that included both active and retired firefighters as well as Drs. Stoller and Greene. Early detection became the first item on the agenda. Last year, using a bioengineered test that looked for a specific protein in the urine (NMP-22), over 1,300 active and retired firefighters were tested. An elevated level of NMP-22 was an indicator of the possibility of cancer of the bladder, kidney or ureter. The lives of 2 retired firefighters were saved, one with kidney cancer and one with bladder cancer. Neither had any idea at the time of testing that they had cancer. Both are currently doing well.

The Foundation is currently putting the groundwork together to conduct a longitudinal study that will follow firefighters for a 10 to 20-year period and possibility into retirement. These types of studies are very expensive so the Foundation is hoping to obtain grants from the National Institute of Health as well as charitable contributions from individuals. Right now the main source of contributions is from the firefighters themselves.

The Foundation has formed a very close partnership with the doctors at UCSF who will be conducting the study and is honored to have such brilliant people giving their time on behalf of both active and retired firefighters.

This year the Foundation will be testing for cancers of the genitourinary system as well as a colorectal screening for cancers of the colon. As the norm, this will include both active and retired firefighters.

In years past many firefighters died in the line of duty. In recent years with the advent of various safety protocols this is no longer happening to the degree that it once did. Firefighters' lives today are being cut short by cancer at an alarming rate. With the help of early detection and education it is the Foundation's goal to give firefighters the quality of life they truly deserve.