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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**“Gift of Life” Receives American Cancer Society’s
Prestigious Harold P. Freeman Award**

Julie Rogers “Gift of Life” Chair **Regina Rogers** was recently presented with the American Cancer Society’s **Harold P. Freeman Award** by North Jefferson Unit President **Gay-Lynne Jones, RN**. Given to individuals, groups, organizations, or companies that demonstrate exemplary achievement in bringing the American Cancer Society’s mission to underserved, at-risk communities, the award was bestowed on a surprised Rogers at the “Gift of Life’s” annual Survivors’ Celebration at Parkdale Mall.

The award is named for **Harold P. Freeman, MD**, a past president of the American Cancer Society and a committed volunteer. Dr. Freeman is the chief architect of the American Cancer Society’s initiative on cancer for the medically underserved and is a leading authority on the interrelationships between race, poverty, and cancer. Currently, he is the Associate Director of the National Cancer Institute.

Jones said, “Regina Rogers and her family have been leaders in efforts to educate, screen, and help treat Southeast Texans who cannot afford medical care. We are delighted to recognized her and the ‘Gift of Life’ with this highly coveted honor. I am personally proud to be a ‘Gift of Life’ Board member and actively involved in outreach efforts that promote early detection in the fight against cancer.”

“Dr. Harold Freeman is one of our nation’s great spokesmen and leaders,” said **Rogers**. “To receive an award that bears his name is certainly an achievement for the ‘Gift of Life.’ During this critical time in history when there are more medically underserved than ever before and the uninsured rate is so high (almost 25%), we are continuing to focus on the plight of those who need our services and raise funds for screening and treatment.”

As **one of the largest cancer screening initiatives of its type in the state**, the “Gift of Life” serves more than **5,000** recipients annually. Several thousand individuals are provided cancer awareness education and information at over **50** Sidney “Chief” Dauphin outreach programs and area health fairs; more than **750** medically underserved women receive free mammograms at Memorial Hermann Baptist Hospitals in Beaumont and Orange; an additional **750** women are provided free mammograms and clinical breast exams on the UTMB mobile van at strategic locations throughout Southeast Texas twenty times each year; and approximately **450** free prostate cancer screenings are conducted annually. Also, the “Gift of Life” minivan is available for clients who require transportation to and from the program’s cancer screening tests and exams. UTMB-Galveston provides follow-up care for individuals who need additional testing and treatment following their screenings.

A cooperative effort of Memorial Hermann Baptist Hospitals, the Julie & Ben Rogers Cancer Institute, the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) at Galveston and its local clinics, the UTMB Cancer Stop Program, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, and local physicians, the “Gift of Life” has funded over **10,400** free mammograms and more than **3,600** free prostate cancer screenings, and has conducted nearly **350** educational outreach programs since its inception.