**Summary Report of Digestive Disease National Coalition Meeting**

**March 2nd & 3rd, 2014**

The Digestive Disease National Coalition’s 24th annual Public Policy Forum (PPF) was held on March 2nd & 3rd on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Over 60 patients, Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates (SGNA) nurses, doctors, and institutional representatives visited with congressional offices from 35 states and advocated for funding for gastroenterological disease research, in light of the automatic across the board cuts, and discussed legislation aimed at providing cost effective improvement of healthcare delivery to patients with gastrointestinal diseases. New state Society of Gastroenterology members involved this year included North Carolina, South Carolina, and Louisiana.

During the DDNC PPF, federal policy and educational presentations were given by distinguished speakers. DDNC would like to thank these speakers:

**Federal Policy**

* Diane Bild, M.D., MPH, Senior Program Officer, Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute
* Stephen James, M.D., Director, Division of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
* Jack Welch, M.D., Ph.D., Director, Gastrointestinal and Neuroendocrine Cancers Therapeutics, National Cancer Institute

**Academic/Education Presentations**

* Bruce Greenwald, M.D., Professor of Medicine-Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, University of Maryland School of Medicine
* John Marshall, M.D., Center Director, Ruesch Center for the Cure of Gastrointestinal Cancers, Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center
* Alec Megibow, M.D., M.P.H., FACR, President, Society of Abdominal Radiology
* Peter Green, M.D., Professor of Clinical Medicine, Columbia University Medical Center & Director, Celiac Disease Center at Columbia University
* Michael Gershon, M.D., Professor of Anatomy & Cell Biology, Columbia University, Presbyterian Medical Center

**DDNC Constituent Member**

* Laura Wingate, Vice President, Patient and Professional Services, Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation of America

**DDNC Institutional Members**

* Stacey Poole, Associate Director, Federal Government and External Affairs, Takeda Pharmaceuticals, USA, Inc.
* Gillian Mullins, Managing Director-Alliance Development, Biotechnology Organization

**Lifetime Service Achievement Award**

This year’s DDNC Lifetime Service Achievement award was given to:

* **Nancy Norton**, Founder of the International Foundation for Functional and Gastrointestinal Disorders

**Distinguished Public Service Awards**

DDNC gave out additional awards for the great work being done by Congressional Members to improve the healthcare of those with digestive diseases.

This year’s Distinguished Public Service awards were given to:

* **Congressman Andy Harris** from Maryland
* **Congressman Donald Payne Jr.** from New Jersey

DDNC is a major force in advocating for patients with gastrointestinal disease. We thank the Florida Gastroenterologic Society for contributing to the DDNC to support patients’ attendance at this year’s PPF. The success of the organization can be attributed to the combined dedication of DDNC board members, the Health and Medicine Counsel of Washington, SGNA’s continued support in providing nurse advocates, and the expansion of DDNC to include three new non-profit organizations, three new state members, three new institutional members, and additional board members representing the State Gastroenterological Societies, the American College of Gastroenterology, the American Gastroenterological Association, the Colon Cancer Alliance, Hepatitis Foundation International, and Chris4Life.