**\*\*Press Release–Marissa Jaret Winokur serves as national spokesperson for Prevent Cancer Foundation\*\***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Marissa Jaret Winokur serves as national spokesperson for Prevent Cancer Foundation**®

*Broadway star and Tony Award winner wants you to Think About the Link*® *between viruses and cancer*

ALEXANDRIA, VA — Actress, Broadway star and Tony Award-winner Marissa Jaret Winokur is serving as national spokesperson for *Think About the Link®*, an educational campaign developed by the Prevent Cancer Foundation® about the link between certain viruses and cancer.

Winokur was just 27 years old and about to land her big break when she was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Weeks later, she was cast in the lead role of Tracy Turnblad in Broadway’s “Hairspray,” for which she would later win a Tony Award.

More than 12,000 women are diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer each year, and more than 90 percent of those cancers are caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that can also cause at least five other types of cancer. Winokur’s cancer was detected in a routine Pap test. Part of her cervix was removed just days after diagnosis, and later, she had a hysterectomy to remove the remaining cancer.

There is now a vaccine available to protect you from HPV. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend the vaccine for all girls and boys ages 11-12, the time when the vaccine is most effective. In addition to the vaccine, the Prevent Cancer Foundation® recommends women begin regular cervical cancer screening at age 21 with a Pap test every three years. Women ages 35-65 should have a Pap test combined with an HPV test every five years, or a Pap test every three years.

Winokur is now cancer-free and wants to spread the word about the importance of getting the HPV vaccine to prevent cancer.

“When I was young, the HPV vaccine wasn’t available, and neither was the HPV test,” she said. “Girls and young women today can protect themselves from cancer, but they have to know their options. That’s why I tell everyone about the link between HPV and cancer, and to speak with your doctor about getting vaccinated and screened so you don’t have to go through what I did.”

**About *Think About the Link®***

*Think About the Link®* focuses on three viruses that can lead to cancer: HPV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. The campaign travels the country to increase awareness of the link between viruses and cancer, increase immunization rates for HPV and hepatitis B, and increase awareness of and access to treatment for hepatitis C. The ultimate goal of *Think About the Link®* is to prevent virally-induced cancers.

**About The Prevent Cancer Foundation®**

The Prevent Cancer Foundation® is one of the nation’s leading voluntary health organizations and the *only* U.S. nonprofit focused solely on cancer prevention and early detection. Founded in 1985, the Foundation has catapulted cancer prevention to prominence and fulfills its mission through research, education, outreach and advocacy nationwide..

For more information, please visit [www.thinkaboutthelink.org](http://www.thinkaboutthelink.org) or [www.preventcancer.org](http://www.preventcancer.org).

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