

Press Release



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IAFF Local 2665 Hosts the Stop, Drop and Control High Blood Pressure Kick-Off Event

- *St. Louis Area Labor and Departmental Leaders are alerted to the risks of High Blood Pressure to Firefighters*
- *Attendees are Encouraged to join the Campaign to Stop, Drop & Control High Blood Pressure*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. Louis, Missouri- June 11, 2009 – IAFF Local 2665 is ringing the alarm on high blood pressure, a disease that is easily detected and effectively controlled with the right treatment program. As a part of the *Stop, Drop and Control High Blood Pressure™* program, a national campaign in coordination with the International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 2665 is urging St. Louis area fire leaders to help put out the flames on high blood pressure among firefighters and members of our communities.

High blood pressure is a national health crisis. An estimated 73 million Americans – nearly one in three adults – suffer from high blood pressure, or hypertension. High blood pressure is a serious chronic disease that can cause damage to the body with every beat of the heart. If high blood pressure is left uncontrolled, the risk of heart attack and stroke can also increase. IAFF Local 2665 is raising awareness of high blood pressure in the firehouse and the community by providing this kick-off event on **Thursday, June 11, 2009 from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.** at IAFF Local 2665, 115 McMenemy, St Peters, MO 63376.

About the Kick-Off Event

An assembly of local leaders will learn about the *Stop, Drop and Control High Blood Pressure™* program and the risks associated with uncontrolled hypertension. The program will be publicly endorsed by Chief Rob Wiley, President of the St. Louis County Fire Chief's Association and Andre Straubhaar, Chairman of the Wellness Committee of Local 2665. Dr. Richard F. Wright, MD, FACC, Research Director and Director of the Heart Failure Center, Pacific Heart Institute, Santa Monica, California, will discuss the affects of high blood pressure on fire fighters and Jack Slingerland, Jr. RPh, MBA, Senior Associate Director, Corporate Accounts of Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, will roll-out the *Stop, Drop and Control High Blood Pressure™* program. A heart-healthy lunch will be served and Registered Dietician of St. John's Hospital, Cat Lietzow, who developed our heart-healthy menu, will be on hand to discuss how nutrition can play a roll in controlling high blood pressure. Blood pressure screenings will be conducted throughout the event. **Lots of interview opportunities, so send a reporter and/or a photo/videographer!**

About Stop, Drop and Control

The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) has collaborated with Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation – a leader in treatment options and educational support materials to help control high

blood pressure – to increase hypertension awareness. *Stop, Drop and Control* is designed to increase the awareness of high blood pressure risks among fire fighters and encourage IAFF affiliates to educate their communities on the importance of treating high blood pressure.

About the IAFF

The International Association of Fire Fighters, headquartered in Washington, D.C., represents more than 290,000 full-time professional fire fighters and paramedics who protect 85 percent of the nation's population. More than 3,100 affiliates and their members protect communities in every state in the United States and in Canada.

About Novartis

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation researches, develops, manufactures and markets leading innovative prescription drugs used to treat a number of diseases and conditions, including those in the cardiovascular, metabolic, cancer, organ transplantation, central nervous system, dermatological, GI and respiratory areas. The company's mission is to improve people's lives by pioneering novel healthcare solutions. Located in East Hanover, New Jersey, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation is an affiliate of Novartis AG (NYSE: NVS), which provides healthcare solutions that address the evolving needs of patients and societies. Focused solely on growth areas in healthcare, Novartis offers a diversified portfolio to best meet these needs: innovative medicines, cost-saving generic pharmaceuticals, preventive vaccines and diagnostic tools, and consumer health products. Novartis is the only company with leading positions in these areas. In 2007, the Group's continuing operations (excluding divestments in 2007) achieved net sales of USD 38.1 billion and net income of USD 6.5 billion. Approximately USD 6.4 billion was invested in R&D activities throughout the Group. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis Group companies employ approximately 98,000 full-time associates and operate in over 140 countries around the world. For more information, please visit <http://www.novartis.com>.

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