

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

Recently, former President George Bush and former First Lady Barbara Bush graciously opened their home in Kennebunkport, Maine, to national leaders, all of whom share a common dedication to the elimination of cancer as a major public health hazard and all of whom are members or supporters of *C-Change*, a nonprofit initiative founded by the 41st President and former First Lady.

At its adjournment, the board chair of *C-Change*, Dr. LaSalle Leffall (Fig. 1), with power and passion, shared his credo . . . one that should be espoused by every healthcare giver entrusted with cancer patient care.

We are grateful to Dr. Leffall for allowing *The Oncologist* to share it with you, our global readership; we hope that it will move you as it did

Your editor,  
Martin J. Murphy, Jr.  
Executive Editor

## *C-Change: Our Credo*

LASALLE D. LEFFALL, JR.

Chair, Board of Directors, *C-Change*; Chair, *President's Cancer Panel*; Charles R. Drew Professor of Surgery, Howard University Hospital, Washington, DC, USA

Our mission is to eradicate cancer as a major public health problem at the earliest possible time. As we learn more about the latest cancer research and cancer control advances, we must never forget that the object of our affection is the *cancer patient*. Life is special and patients want to live, but they want to live with a decent quality of life. That means that all of us must do everything that we can to ensure that they have that quality of life. We know that it is not just that you live but *how you live*. The quality of life remains important.

There must be a constant reaffirmation of fealty to the principles we hold dear—principles emphasizing the best in patient care. It is said that *hope springs eternal in patients' thoughts*, and so it does. When you hear us in *C-Change* speak about *hope*, we are not speaking about some unrealistic hope but a hope that is realistic because



**Figure 1.** LaSalle D. Leffall, Jr., M.D., F.A.C.S.

almost always there is something that can be done to make patients better. And when we give patients hope, we grant them one of the greatest of all human joys—the joy of anticipation—that perhaps something can be done to help them.

Genuine concern for the patient is the hallmark of the healthcare professional. When we detect injustice in any area, whether it is lack of access to care or lack of quality cancer care, it is appropriate to ask questions. Do we listen to the entreaties of our conscience? Do the embers of probity and moral rectitude still burn? We will make mistakes in some of our actions—sometimes egregious mistakes.

However, we must never err in our purpose and our resolve.

We know that respect and trust are not given in perpetuity, but must be earned each day of our lives. We pledge to earn that respect and trust.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This credo represents a distillation of views expressed by members of *C-Change*.

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**About *C-Change*:** *C-Change* is comprised of many of America's key cancer leaders from government, business, and nonprofit sectors. These cancer leaders share the vision of a future where cancer is prevented, detected early, and cured or is managed successfully as a chronic illness.

One of the underlying principles of *C-Change* is to leverage the leadership and expertise of all sectors of society to eliminate cancer as a major public health problem at the earliest possible time. *C-Change* is both a forum and a catalyst for identifying issues and major

challenges facing the cancer community and for initiating collaborative actions to complement the efforts of individual *C-Change* members.

Former President George Bush and former First Lady Barbara Bush are co-chairs of *C-Change*; Senator Dianne Feinstein serves as vice chair. There are about 130 *C-Change* members, all of whom are central figures from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Further *C-Change* information may be found at: [www.c-changetogether.org](http://www.c-changetogether.org).