



***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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## **Former 49er Brings National Lung Cancer Awareness Campaign Back To Northern California**

**San Francisco (June 11, 2012)** – This week, former San Francisco 49ers linebacker and Stanford Football alumni, Chris Draft, will return to the Bay Area, where he spent his college and part of his NFL career, as part of his Team Draft’s *National Campaign to Change the Face of Lung Cancer*, the disease that claimed the life of Draft’s late wife, Keasha, last December.

Team Draft, an initiative of the Chris Draft Family Foundation, is dedicated to raising lung cancer awareness and increasing badly needed research funding by shattering the misconception that lung cancer is a “smoker’s disease.” *The fact is anybody can get lung cancer.* Yet, despite the fact that between 20,000 and 30,000 people who have never smoked—including Keasha—are diagnosed with lung cancer in the United States each year, the smoking stigma negatively impacts lung cancer research funding, which pales in comparison to funding for other major cancers and diseases. Team Draft is out to change all that. “If we can take away the stigma that says you have to be a smoker to get lung cancer, we have a real chance to educate people about the true nature of the disease,” explains Draft.

Since Chris and Keasha launched Team Draft at their wedding in November of last year, Team Draft has been on a mission to tackle cancer. Team Draft’s national campaign to raise public awareness and share the hope that now exists for people diagnosed with the disease has taken it to more than a dozen states and over 30 of the top cancer research and treatment facilities in the country, including UC San Francisco’s Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center and UC Irvine’s Choa Family Comprehensive Cancer Center.

“Our hope is not only to positively impact research funding, but to improve the quality of life for those affected by lung cancer,” says Draft. “We aren’t fighting against lung cancer, we’re fighting for people. That’s why we are leading this national campaign to change the face of lung cancer.” And this week, Team Draft is bringing the campaign back to Northern California.

On Monday, June 11, Team Draft will participate in the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Lung Cancer: Drive It Off The Earth Golf Tournament in support of the Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation (“BJALCF”) at the Green Hills Country Club in Millbrae. At a dinner following the tournament, Team Draft will be recognized by BJALCF for its work to raise lung cancer awareness, including leading the national campaign to change the face of lung cancer.

The next day, Tuesday, June 12, Team Draft will return to UC San Francisco’s Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center to sit down with Dr. David Jablons, Ada Distinguished Professor in Thoracic Oncology, to discuss some of the exciting advances being made in lung cancer treatment at the Cancer Center.

On Wednesday, Team Draft will visit the Palo Alto Medical Center Foundation where we will meet with Dr. Ganesh Krishna, a specialist in the treatment of lung cancer and other pulmonary diseases. This will be something of a homecoming for Chris who played both football and baseball at Stanford before going on to a 13-year career in the NFL. Chris graduated from Stanford in 1998 with a degree in economics.

Team Draft will round out this leg of the national campaign with a trip to the UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center on Thursday, June 14.

After leaving California, Team Draft will take the campaign back to the East Coast where we will visit cancer treatment research and treatment facilities in Washington, D.C., Buffalo, New York, and Cleveland, Ohio before traveling to Canton, Ohio for the NFL's Rookie Symposium where Chris will speak to the rookies about the importance of being a leader not only on the field, but in the community as well.

### **The Facts About Lung Cancer**

For decades, the facts regarding lung cancer have been sobering:

- Anyone can get lung cancer.
- Over 60% of lung cancers are diagnosed in people who never smoked or in former smokers.<sup>1</sup>
- Lung cancer surpassed breast cancer as the #1 cancer killer for women in 1987.<sup>2</sup>
- Lung cancer kills more people than any other cancer<sup>3</sup>, and takes more lives than breast, cervical, and prostate cancers . . . *combined*.<sup>4</sup>
- The five year survival rate for lung cancer is just 16%—a rate that has changed very little since the 1970's.<sup>5</sup>

But now there is *HOPE!* The use of state-of-the-art lung cancer screening techniques is reducing mortality rates by 20% in some patient groups<sup>6</sup> while cutting-edge team-based, multidisciplinary treatment procedures are improving the quality of life for lung cancer patients across the country. And thanks to advances in molecular tumor mutation testing, researchers and treating physicians are developing effective personal lung cancer treatments designed to extent and, ultimately, save lives.<sup>7</sup> The key to making even greater strides is funding, but funding for lung cancer research is impacted by the “smoker’s disease” stigma.<sup>8</sup> That’s why Team Draft is campaigning to change the face of lung cancer.

### **About The Chris Draft Family Foundation and Team Draft**

The Chris Draft Family Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation dedicated to strengthening communities by empowering families to live healthy lifestyles. The Foundation focuses on several initiatives with overarching themes that stress the importance of education, healthy lifestyles, character

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<sup>1</sup> Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Women’s Health Policy & Advocacy Program, *Out of the Shadows: Women and Lung Cancer* (2010), at 4.

<sup>2</sup> American Cancer Society, *Cancer Facts & Figures 2011*, at 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *Out of the Shadows*, at 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Cancer Facts & Figures*, at 16; *Out of the Shadows*, at 9; American Cancer Society, *Cancer Statistics 2009: A Presentation From the American Cancer Society*, at 22.

<sup>6</sup> *Cancer Facts & Figures*, at 15.

<sup>7</sup> *Out of the Shadows*, at 14.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*, at 17-18, 20.

development, personal responsibility, self-discipline, and physical fitness. To learn more about the Foundation, please visit [www.chrisdraftfamilyfoundation.org](http://www.chrisdraftfamilyfoundation.org).

Through its Team Draft initiative, the Foundation is carrying on Keasha's fight to tackle cancer by promoting awareness, research, and scholarship and to save lives by changing the face of lung cancer. Team Draft is dedicated to raising awareness, accelerating research for a cure, and giving hope, comfort, and inspiration to the patients, caregivers, and healthcare providers who are battling the disease every day. To learn more about Team Draft, share your story, and respond and donate, please visit [www.teamdraft.org](http://www.teamdraft.org). You can follow the national campaign to change the face of lung cancer on our blog at [www.thedraftreport.net](http://www.thedraftreport.net), and don't forget to "Like" us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TeamDraft](http://www.facebook.com/TeamDraft).

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