

**The Couric Effect and Beyond:
The Collaborative Efforts of Katie Couric, EIF's NCCRA, and the Jay Monahan Center**
Mark B. Pochapin, MD

Colorectal cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer death in the United States, yet this disease is highly treatable and highly preventable with screening and early detection. Because screening remains significantly underutilized, professional and public awareness of its importance is critical. In 2000, Katie Couric's colonoscopy was broadcast on national television to demystify the procedure and promote recommended screening. This effort led to "The Couric Effect," an unprecedented scientifically documented 20% increase in colonoscopies nationwide. Couric co-founded the Entertainment Industry Foundation's National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance (EIF's NCCRA) in 2000 and helped to launch The Jay Monahan Center for Gastrointestinal Health at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center in 2004. Select awareness efforts to promote screening include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) *Screen for Life* public service announcements, in collaboration with Couric and EIF's NCCRA, featuring celebrities such as Morgan Freeman, Diane Keaton, Jimmy Smits and Terrence Howard. In 2007 and 2008, Couric, EIF's NCCRA, Monahan Center, CDC, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission partnered so that video PSAs were viewed by passengers in New York City taxicabs. In 2007 and 2008, Katie, EIF's NCCRA, Monahan Center, CDC, American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, American College of Gastroenterology, and American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists joined forces to provide outreach to ob-gyns on the recommended screening for colorectal cancer, along with breast and cervical cancers, in women. To date, Couric and EIF have raised more than 30 million dollars to support colorectal cancer research and awareness efforts.