

# Laura Bush, Mexico Fight Breast Cancer

By ISTRAC PACHECO – March 15, 2008

MEXICO CITY (AP) — First lady Laura Bush joined her Mexican counterpart on Friday to inaugurate a two-country alliance to promote breast cancer awareness and research.

At the launch of the U.S.-Mexico Partnership for Breast Cancer Awareness and Research, Bush and Margarita Zavala spoke of improving education and doing away with stigmas attached to breast cancer so women will not be afraid to get medical help.

"In Mexico, one out of every 258 women will discover they have breast cancer in the next 10 years," Bush said at the ceremony in the Mexican capital. "The majority of these cases will be detected in their later stages, greatly reducing their chances of survival."

Through the partnership, which will eventually be extended to Brazil and Costa Rica, U.S. and Mexican specialists will collaborate to fight breast cancer.

The Susan G. Komen for the Cure foundation will play a role training Mexican women to become breast cancer advocates, and has already given workshops in the capital and the northern city of Monterrey, Bush said.

About 4,200 women die of breast cancer each year in Mexico, and the number is increasing, said Hala Modellmog, president and CEO of the foundation. Some 95 percent of those cases are detected at an advanced stage, according to the National Cancer Institute.

"The lack of information and awareness is what makes lifesaving early detection most difficult to achieve," Zavala said at the event. "Fighting breast cancer also means fighting the prejudices that accompany it."

Bush arrived in Mexico on Thursday afternoon after a visit to Haiti, where she promoted funding for AIDS patients and support for education.

In Mexico, she also met with female political and business leaders. Friday's inauguration was her last scheduled event on the Latin America trip.

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