

*Remember, Breast Cancer Awareness Month is right around the corner.*

### **Media Tours**

St. Vincent's new digital mobile mammography coach will be available on Friday, September 18<sup>th</sup> for a sneak preview. All members of the media are invited to come to St. Vincent's Medical Center and walk through the new expansive and luxurious vehicle see first-hand how St. Vincent's is bringing the latest technology right to the women of Connecticut. Please contact St. Vincent's Senior Marketing/Communications Associate Lucinda Ames at 203/576-5550 if interested.

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## **St. Vincent's New Digital Mammography Coach Offers Superior Comfort, Convenience and Technology – *Media Tours on September 18<sup>th</sup>***

*September 9, 2009, Bridgeport, CT* – The SWIM Women's Imaging Center at St. Vincent's Medical Center has just introduced its newest "partner" in its quest to bring the benefits of regular breast-cancer screening to more residents of Connecticut. A sleek, spacious, 37 foot-long vehicle outfitted with state-of-the-art digital technology, St. Vincent's new mobile mammography coach offers an attractive interior that provides privacy and is an example of the latest in mobile mammography.

"Our ongoing mobile mammography program has been very successful," said Rachel Giliotti, BS, RT (R)(T), administrative director of imaging services at St. Vincent's. "But the new coach's advanced equipment has brought us from analog to digital. We can perform screenings more quickly and efficiently, while providing exceptional patient comfort."

At the heart of the new coach is the Senographe Essential Mammography System, which offers swift and optimal image capturing and faster time between exposures. There is no film processing required, allowing almost immediate review by the technologist. According to St. Vincent's SWIM Women's Imaging Center Director Kelly Harkins, MD, patients will notice the difference. "The image quality on dense breasts is also improved with this system," Dr. Harkins said. "And the off-centered paddle ensures greater comfort when imaging small breasts."

The system features a highly reliable detector and the ability to optimally scan any type of breasts at low dose. "It reduces the potential for having to re-do a scan," Dr. Harkins noted. "And in general, the overall exam time is about 40 percent less. Our patients really appreciate that."

"There isn't another unit out there that compares to what we can offer our patients," added Giliotti. "This includes both the insured and uninsured patients, and is the truest form of quality community outreach."

The mobile unit and digital mammography equipment will travel and screen patients throughout the state, typically screening at three different public locations per month in addition to the corporate screenings.

The unit is being supported by the St. Vincent's SWIM Across the Sound Breast Cancer Luncheon, the Morris Foundation and the Connecticut Challenge, a non-competitive bike ride that raises funds for cancer survivors. The CT Challenge and the SWIM have partnered to create the second cancer survivorship program in the state and will use the mobile coach as a resource center for survivor education and information distribution.

Mammograms are free for those who do not have health insurance, have financial limitations and qualify for assistance. For those with insurance, mammograms are low-cost, subject only to deductible and co-pay. Appointments are necessary and a physician order and insurance card must be brought to the appointment. The American Cancer Society recommends that women age 40 and over receive an annual mammogram in addition to performing monthly breast self-exams and obtaining an annual clinical breast exam by a healthcare

professional. To schedule an appointment, to find out when the mobile mammography unit will be in your area or to schedule a screening site for your office, community center, school or church, call St. Vincent's SWIM Women's Imaging Center at 576-5500.

#### **About St. Vincent's SWIM Across the Sound**

St. Vincent's SWIM Across the Sound is a charitable, grass roots organization run by the St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation of Bridgeport, CT. For 22 years, the SWIM has had a unique niche, providing cancer education, screening and prevention programs at low- or no-cost for the elderly and underserved. In addition, the SWIM helps individual cancer patients on a case-by-case basis with specific needs, such as the funding of wigs and prostheses, medication assistance, free transportation to treatments and appointments, day-care scholarships, support groups and more. The charity raises funds through events such as the SWIM Marathon, Breast Cancer Luncheon, Walk/Run for Cancer and Prostate Cancer Celebrity Dinner. Wherever possible, the SWIM covers costs and expenses of events through corporate sponsorships, and staffing overhead is covered by the St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation. The SWIM's main area of reach is eastern Fairfield County, but outreach programs extend to other areas of Connecticut with the SWIM's Hartford Chapter and annual fund raisers for New Haven County, as well as support for Connecticut's first responders and correction officers with cancer. The SWIM's Teen SmokeStoppers program has reached 100,000 children throughout the entire state to date. The SWIM raised \$2.65 million in the 2009 fiscal year and helps more than 20,000 people annually. For more information, contact the St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation at (203) 576-5451 or visit [www.swimacrossthesound.org](http://www.swimacrossthesound.org).

#### **About St. Vincent's Medical Center**

St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport, CT is a 473-bed community teaching and referral hospital with a Level II trauma center and a 76-bed inpatient psychiatric facility in Westport. St. Vincent's provides a full range of inpatient and outpatient services with regional centers of excellence in cardiology, surgery, cancer care, orthopedics, diagnostics, women's and family services, behavioral health, senior health and an array of specialized services.

St. Vincent's Medical Center is a subsidiary of St. Vincent's Health Services, which include St. Vincent's Behavioral Health Services, Westport Campus, St. Vincent's College, St. Vincent's Special Needs Services, St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation and St. Vincent's Immediate Health Care Centers. It is a member of Ascension Health, the nation's largest Catholic healthcare system. St. Vincent's is a teaching affiliate of the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and of New York Medical College. The Medical Center is also sponsor of Swim Across the Sound, one of the nation's largest hospital-based cancer prevention and patient support programs. For referral to a St. Vincent's physician or about programs and services, call the toll-free Care Line at 1-877-255-SVHS (7847) or visit [www.stvincents.org](http://www.stvincents.org).