



CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY™

GREATER LEHIGH VALLEY

Cancer Support Community
of the Greater Lehigh Valley
ANNUAL REPORT

2013/14

So that no one faces cancer alone.®

www.cancersupportglv.org

610-861-7555

Fiscal year ended June 30, 2014

HISTORY

In 1982, Harold Benjamin Ph.D. and his wife, Harriet, opened the Wellness Community in California - the first walk-in, homelike, community facility of its kind, helping people face the challenges of life with cancer. They revolutionized the way our culture faces cancer; enhancing the lives of thousands of people and ensuring that no cancer patient or family is ever charged for supportive services. Dr. Benjamin believed in the powerful connection between emotions and physical well-being. Harriet was a breast cancer survivor, and both she and Harold had benefitted from the encouragement of family and friends. This support system aided in her recovery and became the foundation of Dr. Benjamin's Patient Active Concept, encouraging one's participation in his/her cancer treatment, camaraderie and community "to improve the quality of life and enhance the possibility of recovery." The Benjamins sparked a transformation within the cancer care community that continued building momentum, and local chapters sprouted across the country.

Among the early participants at Dr. Benjamin's Wellness Community was the late comedienne Gilda Radner, whose friends established Gilda's Club on the east coast in her memory. In 2009, the Wellness Community and Gilda's Club joined forces to become the Cancer Support Community, headquartered in Washington, D.C. In 2011, the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer released accreditation standards for cancer programs, which included psychosocial distress screenings as an essential element of quality cancer care. The Cancer Support Community was instrumental in developing these new patient-centered standards.

Founded in 2004 as the Wellness Community then later renamed, the Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley became the only organization of its kind in our region. The benefit of our international association is access to clinical trial results of the headquarters' Research and Training Institute, as well as shared best practices with fellow chapters. Although we are an affiliate of a larger network, we are an independent nonprofit organization governed by a local volunteer board of directors. All funds raised support services in the Pennsylvania counties of Lehigh, Northampton, Berks, Carbon, Monroe and Schuylkill, and Warren New Jersey.

All programs are free to participants. We operate entirely on contributions from special events, foundation and corporate grants, and individual donors.



An estimated 9,000 people are diagnosed with cancer each year in the Greater Lehigh Valley. Many more family members, friends, and caregivers are also impacted.

MISSION

The Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley aims to ensure that all people impacted by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action and sustained by community.

Our programs of emotional and social support, education and wellness activities are an integral part of conventional medical care to help regain a sense of control, reduce stress and isolation, educate participants, and redefine hope for a better quality of life, regardless of the stage of disease.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Each month, an average of 300 people participate in more than 60 programs. Since opening in 2004, we've served nearly 30,000 visitors. Support groups are facilitated by licensed mental health professionals, and classes are led by highly trained, compassionate instructors. A wide selection of books, pamphlets and other educational materials are available for the taking from our free resource library.

From July 2013 to June 2014, we offered 742 programs to 3,384 visitors, with more than 181 new participants.

Comprehensive programming this past year included:

- 141 weekly support group sessions, helping patients and their family members face the day-to-day challenges of a cancer diagnosis and treatment
- 60 networking group meetings, designed to help connect people with similar cancers, including young adults, and those with breast or thyroid cancer
- 33 educational workshops on topics such as nutrition, managing side effects, and understanding cancer's financial impact
- 215 gentle movement classes
- 4 bereavement support groups
- 44 meditative programs
- 28 expressive art classes
- 15 social programs
- 1 breast cancer overnight retreat
- 60 programs at St. Luke's University Health Network
- 4 Open to Option sessions, helping individuals prepare for treatment decisions
- 8 Spanish group meetings plus 2 special survivor days
- 6 children's horsemanship classes for kids affected by cancer, in partnership with Equi-librium
- 2 Legacy Series, guiding people through their ancestry search and creating ways to leave a loving legacy
- 1 eight-week KidSupport™ series for children with cancer or with cancer in the family
- 12 monthly Family Connection activities

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



The 2013-14 year was both a milestone and a transition year for the Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley. We celebrated 10 years as the region's only comprehensive source for free emotional support, education, wellness classes and hope for all people affected by cancer.

Our new executive director, Paula Ream, joined us in October 2013. With many years' experience in fundraising and marketing, she brings stability and a foundation for going forward into our next 10 years.

Although last winter's weather wreaked havoc on schedules, more than 60 program offerings reached an average of 300 people a month. We began a new partnership with St. Luke's University Health Network, providing cancer support at their Anderson Campus. We launched a new program for children facing cancer. And we celebrated the efforts of a special group of volunteers who produced another amazingly successful Boutique at the Rink event. In this, their 40th year, they raised an incredible \$269,000 which was divided among three cancer-supporting organizations, including ours. We are eternally grateful to the Boutique!

We remain dedicated to providing research-based programming led by master's level clinicians and highly qualified professionals - a unique distinction thanks to our affiliation with the Cancer Support Community's international network. The funds we raise stay local to fuel our programs so that everyone is able to participate without paying fees of any sort.

With growth comes challenge, of course.

- We've outgrown the space at the "farmhouse" on Route 512. Many months were spent seeking a new home that will meet our needs for years to come, including accessibility and affordability. At this writing, we are preparing for the transition to a new location.
- The numbers of patients diagnosed with melanoma, oral, head and neck cancers are increasing.
- Teens and young adults increasingly need support as new cancer patients and in survivorship.

Reviewing and identifying needs is how we remain relevant to our clients and to our mission. Strategic planning must also be pragmatic and practical. How will we accomplish our mission? We count on people like you to partner in this mission.

With gratitude to our outstanding staff, volunteers, donors, and board, thank you for another year to serve those affected by cancer in the Greater Lehigh Valley.

Kind regards,

Sara George, *Board Chair*

"When I was diagnosed, I thought I had to find a group that only dealt with my kind of cancer. Later I realized I had so much in common with everyone with cancer - how I felt, how I looked, what I ate, trying to build myself up. Everything. What did the Cancer Support Community do for me? I realized I wasn't alone." - *a participant*

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I marvel at the history of this impressive organization, instituted globally but having a grassroots impact thanks to our philanthropic founders. The energy of our programs has deeply touched the lives of many, made possible by the generosity of a caring community.

Community alliances play a vital role in the success of our outreach, and we collaborate with other organizations to have a greater effect to serve those affected by cancer. We streamlined the office this year, and adapt to fundraising challenges, being sure to utilize resources for the best programmatic impact. Behind every statistic, there is a life-changing story that resonates - a scared boy bravely shares feelings about his mother's treatment, a teenager discovers ways to cope during her chemo, laughter and fellowship replace sadness, gentle exercise revitalizes the body while meditation refreshes the soul, nutrition classes teach healthier ways to nourish families, and stress turns into moments of accord. Essential support, knowledge to better manage their care, social connections, and healthful activities open the door for renewal each day for people in the Greater Lehigh Valley - our neighbors, friends, coworkers, and families.

The achievements of our first ten years would not have been possible without the remarkable support of our donors, volunteers, board and staff. We celebrate this milestone and look forward to the next decade of helping our neighbors on their cancer journey.

Paula Ream-Dorward, *Executive Director*

REPORT FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Over the past year, we strengthened our community relationships and continued building successful partnerships in all of our service areas.

St. Luke's University Health Network, Lehigh Valley Health Network, Easton Hospital, Pocono Medical Center, Blue Mountain Health System and Reading Hospital have continued hosting educational programs which empower our members with the vital information they need. Managing the cost of care, healthy nutrition, caregiver burnout, clinical trials - are all important to help our members become better consumers in their care, especially in these changing economic times.

Through the *Hope and Healing Series* at St. Luke's Cancer Center-Anderson Campus, our instructors have delivered our programs into the hospital setting to truly complement a patient's medical care. Yoga in the evening, a candlelight labyrinth walk, mandalas and hope flags - these are some of the expressive arts and gentle movement classes that bring balance to the mind, body and spirit.

Together with five other nonprofits serving childhood cancer survivors, we collaborated with organization leaders to create a special website and Facebook page so that families have a direct connection for all of our resources and activities. A new program that came to fruition as a result of enthusiastic collaborations was our Kempo for Kids with Cancer series. The idea originated in October 2013 from one of our existing instructors, Soke Dai David Nemeroff of Aikido Masters in Whitehall, PA. Camelot for Children, Inc. agreed to partner on this endeavor, which was launched to families in October 2014 and funded by a generous donor. Based on research that shows the benefits of martial arts with children facing physical and mental challenges, we developed a new series for families in our community to help them regain balance, restore strength, build stamina, boost confidence and increase concentration - all to help them keep up their 'fighting spirit,' regardless of the obstacles they face. This new series reflects the level of compassion that we've sustained through this past year - new ideas coming from our long-time instructors, professional support from our peers in the field of psychosocial oncology, and community support which allows us to fund programs that improve the quality of life for all who face cancer.

Jen Sinclair, *Program Director*

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Donors giving \$250 or more annually are invited to join Ambassadors of Hope, a group which targets funding for a special program, project or purpose each year. The Ambassadors help us to build a nest egg and then direct the funds they raise to a critical program at the Cancer Support Community. We are grateful for their funding of these vital programs this year:

- a monthly support group and special activities for Teens and Young Adults
- a monthly support group, Survivor Day Retreat, and translated Resource Guide for the Spanish Group
- Glimpse Into Hope, a new pilot program for outreach to businesses

AMBASSADORS

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Susan Wise



“The Cancer Support Community helped me get through the illnesses of two family members. As a caregiver, I’ve learned how to take care of my own health and wellbeing, so I can stay physically able and emotionally strong to take care of them. I don’t know how I would have done it without the friendships, the meditation programs, the caring warmth and support. I’ve learned how to control my anxiety, talk about my fears, and manage all the stress.” - *a caregiver*

SINCEREST THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Our mission is accomplished through the generous support of individual donors, foundations, businesses and community organizations, and we extend gratitude to all who make it possible.

The Cancer Support Community also thanks those who conducted fundraisers and collection drives to respond to our needs, and everyone who provided in-kind donations throughout the year.

\$10,000+

Anonymous
John and Shirley Biggar
Boutique at the Rink
Cancer Support Community - National
Charles B. Patt Jr. Memorial Golf Outing
Highmark Blue Shield
The Vollrath Foundation
Women's 5K Classic

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We appreciate every donation! Our monthly electronic newsletter *Notes of Hope* recognizes contributors who donate up to \$99 each month.

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A gift of \$1,000 or more distinguishes a donor in our *Society of Hope*. Contributions at this higher giving level are acknowledged on our Website, included in our monthly emailed newsletter and bi-monthly program calendar, and posted in our reception area. (Those requesting anonymity are not included.)

FINANCIAL REPORT

Fiscal Year ending 6/30/2014

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Total Revenue: \$371,813

Grants, Corporate & Individual Contributions: \$156,362

Fundraising Events: \$159,883

Miscellaneous: \$55,568

USE OF FUNDS

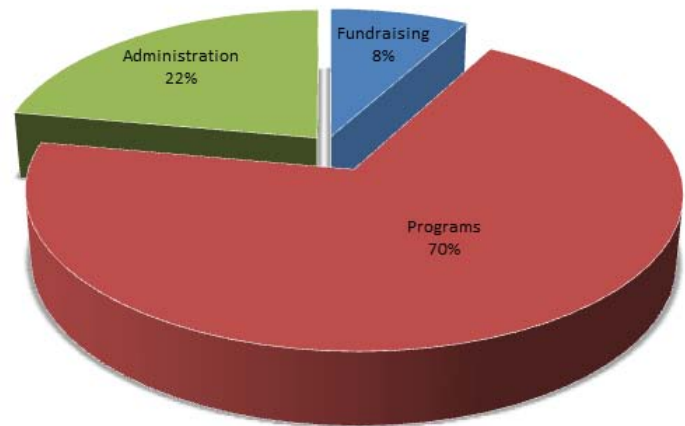
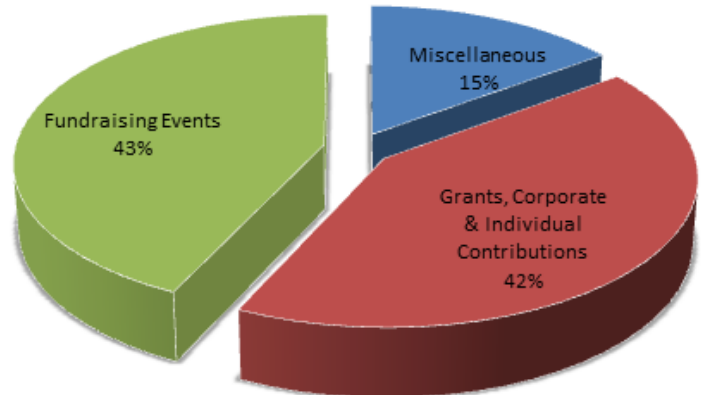
Total Expenses: \$425,225

Programs: \$296,820

Administration: \$94,212

Fundraising: \$34,193

As of October 1, 2014; unaudited



“This was the perfect place for me. Classes were my life-line of hope after my wife died. I was able to integrate my grief physically, emotionally and cognitively through creative expression and meditation. I believe I would still be in a deep depression, unable to get out of bed, work or focus, had I not been invited to join the Cancer Support Community. I’ve been able to embrace hope and live again.” ~ a caregiver

SPECIAL EVENTS – 2014

Strides for Hope - April 27 - charity running team in training

Red Balloon Birthday Celebration - May 3 - 10th year anniversary

Wings of Hope - September 6 - a butterfly release and our signature fundraising event

Garden of Hope - September 8 - cocktail reception and community partner recognition

The Cancer Support Community was a participating agency in the annual Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community. We were also a beneficiary of the annual Boutique at the Rink, and the Charles B. Patt, Jr. Memorial Golf Outing coordinated by Berkshire Hathaway Home Service, Fox & Roach Realtors.



In May, dozens of festive red balloons drifted throughout the farmhouse to honor and memorialize loved ones, as part of the Cancer Support Community's 10th birthday celebration. Numerous congressional and mayoral citations were received from area dignitaries acknowledging the impressive milestone of a decade in the Greater Lehigh Valley.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are one of our essential resources, and we are grateful beyond words to the dozens of individuals, community groups and businesses who shared their time and efforts with us. The Independent Sector estimates the value of volunteer time in Pennsylvania to be \$21.94 per hour. Our volunteers contributed approximately 2,368 hours of service this past year, a \$51,954 value.



“The tasks I do help to free up the time of the staff so they can do the things they do best. I’ve made new friends, and have the satisfaction of doing something meaningful for the community.” ~ *an office volunteer*

