

A Glance Back at 2020 - *A Year Like No Other*

By Karla Nichols, Executive Director

2020 will be remembered as a historic year, a year like none other, one that is almost indescribable. What will be remembered about this unprecedented year? Foremost, 2020 will be remembered as the year that a global pandemic brought unparalleled challenges to every aspect of our society, touching every area of our lives. Seemingly overnight, the world as we knew it drastically changed.

Cancer Action will remember many things about 2020 as well. As I thought about last year and its impact, I was reminded of how cancer can turn a person's world upside down, also seemingly overnight. Cancer patients, especially those receiving treatment, are at higher risk for contracting COVID-19. Therefore, those fighting cancer have had unparalleled challenges due the impact of the current health crisis. Many cancer patients are facing financial and emotional difficulties that are overwhelming.

Cancer Action has been a critical support for these cancer patients and families, offering financial assistance and providing emotional support and guidance, helping them navigate this difficult time.

Like many nonprofits, we faced a myriad of challenges as an organization during this past year. The agency had to pivot quickly to



Sunflowers to Roses presented their largest donation yet to Cancer Action, \$70,000 from their annual Bike Ride!

offer services and support in a safe and effective manner. We worked diligently with our partners in the cancer centers across the metro to establish procedures ensuring that cancer patients received the vital services they needed to reduce their distress and improve their well-being.

We were proactive in reaching out to our clients financially impacted to connect them with resources they needed to meet their essential needs, while also helping to meet their medical needs. Whether paying for their medications, providing nutritional support while they go through the rigors of cancer treatment, making sure they have medical supplies and equipment, ensuring women who are experiencing hair loss have a wig and headwear or offering vital support through our caring case managers - Cancer Action was there for some of the most vulnerable cancer patients in our community.

Cancer Action will also remember all of those who stepped up during 2020 so we could continue

to provide the services and support cancer patients so desperately needed. While the agency struggled with the loss of grant dollars and support from in-person special events, many individuals and groups were there for us. The phrase "when the going gets tough, the tough get going" comes to mind as I think of the work and effort many of our friends and supporters expended to do something to help! Their determination to overcome obstacles and find ways to safely raise funds made a huge difference. Our Champions for Survivorship Breakfast became our first ever virtual event, and was a great success!

In a year like no other, it took fortitude and resolve to face the challenges and demands that seemed to change almost daily. Our Cancer Action board of directors and leadership team provided great oversight to guide the agency through this time, utilizing our resources as prudently as possible to ensure we continued to maintain our high level of care and support.

Indeed, 2020 will be a memorable year. While much had to change, the very "heart" of the organization remained the same, sustained by compassionate caring people. Cancer Action remains strong in its mission to offer support through every step of the cancer journey!

Serving Our Community... Cancer Action's Impact in 2020

2020, a year to *remember*. Much will be remembered about this past year. Those with cancer *remember* the day they were told "you have cancer." They *remember* those who stood with them during their struggle. Those in our community living with cancer have faced significant challenges and have had overwhelming needs. With the support of caring people, Cancer Action will be *remembered* for coming alongside them, lifting them up, bridging the gap, offering desperately needed support to help them through this time of crisis. *But we couldn't do it without the help of our volunteers and donors!*

- Supplied **almost 50,000 servings of nutritional supplements** to more than **375 cancer patients** to help maintain their weight and energy during cancer treatment.
- Provided **40 rides** to life-saving or life-prolonging treatment and doctor appointments.
- Filled **approximately 1,000 prescriptions** for those who could not afford their medication to relieve pain, nausea, treat infections and meet other cancer supportive care needs.
- Helped women going through treatment by providing almost **90 wigs and over 300 turbans and scarves**. This program was also suspended in March 2020 due to COVID-19 and resumed July 1, 2020 with safety protocols in place.
- Issued **over 215 pieces of medical equipment** to help families members care for their loved ones.
- Distributed **approximately 9,000 medical supplies** to support cancer patients and decrease the financial burden of cancer.
- Gave out over **2,700 bed pads and 2,139 comfort items** (afghans, pillows).
- Our case managers went the extra mile to provide ongoing emotional support, guidance and education to all of our clients, helping deal with the impact of the pandemic; and also helped hundreds who called requesting assistance from our community.

In loving memory of Molly Hammer, who has shared her beautiful voice with us at every breakfast the last seven years. Molly lost her battle with breast cancer in November, 2020.

Champions for Survivorship Breakfast a VIRTUAL success!

Of the many ways Cancer Action had to pivot this past year, one was turning our Champions for Survivorship Breakfast into a virtual event. This opened up the opportunity for many others to join us the morning of the breakfast!

We are so grateful for our special guests and presenters that helped us tell the powerful story of how Cancer Action impacts and helps those with cancer in our community. You can still view last year's breakfast video at www.canceractionkc.org/breakfast-video

We are grateful to Rachel Moore who shared part of her journey battling stage 4 colon cancer with us.



Leaving A Legacy Makes a Difference For Years to Come

Leaving a Legacy gift to Cancer Action brings hope and help to others, making a difference at a very difficult time in their lives.

One lady through her thoughtful planning helped make such a gift was Mildred Hoegler. Mildred was a wonderful volunteer for Cancer Action, giving of her time and talents for over 30 years, working through her church, giving thousands of hours to ease the burden of cancer patients.

Mildred was known for her keen sense of humor, quick wit and love of others. She and her husband gave countless hours to various organizations. Helping others was something Mildred found great joy in doing. She was an exceptional, caring woman who touched the lives of many as she served, and now continues to be a blessing even in her passing.

We are so grateful for Mildred and many other volunteers who have named Cancer Action in their estate planning. They ensure that Cancer Action is here for cancer patients and their families for years to come.

There are many ways you can leave a gift to Cancer Action. Whether your gift is large or small, every gift will help us make a difference. If you would like more information on making a legacy gift to Cancer Action, please contact Karla Nichols at 913-642-8885.





VOLUNTEERS ARE SPECIAL

Many of our volunteer groups suspended their meetings in 2020 due to COVID-19. We are so grateful for all our volunteers and their continued concern for Cancer Action and those we serve. Cancer Action also remembers all the wonderful volunteers who we lost this past year. We are grateful for their dedicated service and tremendous spirit of compassion they shared. We look forward to having our volunteers return to their areas of service as soon as it is safe. Meanwhile, know how much we appreciate and care for each of you!

Jerry Grey AKA “The Holy Tearer” Cancer Action’s 2020 Volunteer of the Year

Written in memory of our friend, Jerry Grey

Volunteers have always been an important part of Cancer Action’s work. Jerry Grey exemplified the joy and enthusiasm that is at the very heart of our volunteer program. Jerry enjoyed being with people! His keen sense of humor and warm welcoming personality made him a person people enjoyed to be around! He was the chairperson of Laura Dell Grinter Chapel service unit. He was co-chair, helping provide leadership to this dedicated group of volunteers since 2010 and became the chairperson in 2018.



Grinter Chapel has been a service group since 1959! Jerry jokingly stated he attended the group one time to learn more information and never left. His positive attitude, good organization and hard work helped make this group a success!

Jerry’s nickname was “The Holy Tearer” because one of his primary jobs was to tear the sheets in strips for the other members. He prepared the bed pads for sewing. Jerry had been a volunteer since 2003 and had given over 1,500 hours of service to Cancer Action and those we serve. Jerry volunteered because he “liked helping others.” This was his way of helping people in a small way during a difficult time in their life.

Jerry and his wife lived in Wyandotte County Kansas and he was very active in the community. Jerry was described as humble, dedicated, and a faithful man with a great sense of humor. He always had a smile on his face and a great story to share. He was one of a handful of men who worked in our service groups making items for Cancer Action. We were honored to name Jerry Grey as Cancer Action’s Volunteer of the Year for 2020. We will miss his kind and caring spirit which brought joy to all.

Financial Overview

Total Support and Revenues **\$589,959**

Donations/
Memorials \$ 199,587

PPP Loan
(forgiven) \$ 61,687

Patient Services
Grants \$ 99,200

United Way/CFC \$ 42,433

Investment Interest
& Dividends \$ 26,056

Unrealized Gain
on investments \$ (92,388)

Realized Gain (Losses)
on Investments \$ 87,001

Income from
Perpetual Trust \$ 6,270

Special Events \$ 65,389

Other revenue \$ 2,366

Operational Expenses **\$525,877**

Programs and
Services \$ 414,069

Management/
General \$ 86,546

Fundraising \$ 25,262

A full copy of the 2020 audited financial statements may be obtained upon request

*“We rise by
lifting others.”*

Robert Ingersoll

Special thanks to the following for their support of Cancer Action:

Foundations and Businesses

Addington Design
Bank of Labor
Bra Couture KC
Aileen V. and Redman Callaway Fund
Cenetric, Inc.
Coram/CVS Speciality Infusion Services
Cremation Society of Kansas and Missouri
Gary and Janet Hall Family Foundation
Health Forward Foundation
Heartland Combined Federal Campaign
HNC Living Foundation
Independence Police Department
Insurance Auto Auctions
Farmers Bank of Kansas City
Fern Jewell Trust
Kansas City Medicine Cabinet
Kansas Department of Commerce
Kevin and Erica Sweeny
Lathrop GPM
Mariner Foundation Fund
Menorah Heritage Foundation
Mildred Hoegler Estate
Masonic Cancer Alliance
National Comprehensive Cancer Networks, Inc.
Pink Dinosaur
Realm Construction
Richard and Annette Bloch Family Foundation
Ride 2 Boulevardia
RPM Photography and Cinematography
Marilyn Pyle Estate
Sara's Floral
Sarah Cannon Cancer Institute at Centerpoint Medical Center
Sarah Cannon Cancer Institutes/ HCA Midwest Health

Security Bank of Kansas City
Doug and Melanie Simpson
Sunflowers to Roses, Inc.
Talk of the Town
Truman Heartland Community Foundation
Truman Medical Center
United Way of Greater Kansas City
United Way of Wyandotte County
University Of Kansas Health Systems
University of Kansas Medical Center, Division of Medical Oncology
Wendy Foil Team
Whalez Candles

Community Groups

Beyoutify
Blue Hills Golf Club Women's Golf Association
Blue Springs Ladies Elk Club
Brookridge Women's Golf Association
Dazzling Divas
First Christian Church, Christian Women's Fellowship, Independence, MO
First Presbyterian Church, Independence, MO
GNO-4-BC (Girls Night Out for Breast Cancer)
Heartland Indoor Horseshoe Association
Independence Young Matrons
IO Maiden Designs
Kimbell McCurry Paintings
Merriam Christian Church
National Horseshoe Association
Pay It Forward Nick's Way
Poppy's Handmade Creations
Rotary Club of Eastern Independence
Rotary Club of Kansas City, Kansas
Woods Chapel United Methodist Church

2020 Board Members

BOARD OFFICERS

MELAINE SIMPSON, President
University of Kansas Health Systems

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Neighborworks America

RHONDA CHERRY, Recording Secretary
University of Kansas Cancer Center

CLAYTON HARPER, Treasurer
The KC Estate Planner

ERIC JACOBSON, Past President
Ascend Media

BOARD MEMBERS

MATTHEW ALLIN - Children's Mercy Hospital
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PATRICIA CARUTHERS
Retired, Administrator KCK Community College
KIMBERLY GEORGE
University of Kansas Cancer Center
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ANITA MACON - Making Positivity
ELAINE MCINTOSH - Community Volunteer
VANGIE RICH - Community Volunteer
MARY SHAFER - Lathrop GPM
CHRISTIE SHELTON - HCA Midwest Health
SUSAN STILES - Cerner
SARAH TAYLOR, M.D.
Oncologist, University of Kansas Cancer Center

Mission Statement

Cancer Action is dedicated to reducing distress and promoting the well-being for those living with, through and beyond cancer in the Kansas City area.

