



CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY™

GREATER LEHIGH VALLEY



Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley ANNUAL REPORT

2014/15



So that no one faces cancer alone.®



www.cancersupportglv.org

610-861-7555

Fiscal year ended June 30, 2015

HISTORY AND PROGRESS

The Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley was founded locally in 2004 as an affiliate of the original Wellness Community. Harold Benjamin, Ph.D. opened the first Wellness Community on the West Coast in 1982 with his wife, Harriet, who was a breast cancer survivor. They believed in the powerful connection between emotional health and physical well-being, and that their own support system aided in Harriet's recovery. From that experience, Dr. Benjamin developed the Patient Active Concept, sparking a transformation within the cancer care community and establishing dozens of Wellness Community centers across the country, with free programs within a homelike setting.

The name changed to the Cancer Support Community in 2009 when the national Wellness Community merged with Gilda's Club Worldwide, a similar organization named after the late comedienne Gilda Radner, who was an early participant with Dr. Benjamin. The Cancer Support Community is now headquartered in Washington, D.C., with a Research and Training Institute and 50 chapters internationally. In 2011, the American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer released accreditation standards for cancer programs, and the Cancer Support Community was instrumental in developing these patient-centered standards.

"It's not possible to deliver good-quality cancer care without addressing patients' psychosocial health needs." - Institute of Medicine of the National Academies: Cancer Care for the Whole Patient: Meeting Psychosocial Needs; 2007

Although we are an affiliate of a global network, the Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley is an independent nonprofit organization governed by a local volunteer board of directors with a compassionate staff focused on the psychosocial needs of people affected by cancer. We operate entirely on contributions from a caring community, and all of the funds raised are used locally in our chartered region serving the Pennsylvania counties of Berks, Northampton, Lehigh, Carbon, Monroe, Schuylkill, and Warren, New Jersey.

The benefit of our network affiliation affords us access to best practices, information shared by fellow chapters, and adherence to distinctive standards for cancer care programs. Our programs are uniquely defined as professionally-led, evidence-based, comprehensive and serving all cancers, and always free to anyone affected by cancer - patients, family members and caregivers. The hallmarks of Dr. Benjamin's concept still drive our grassroots efforts to continue providing free emotional support, educational resources and healthful activities in a comfortable environment that nurtures healing.

"I like the people I've come into contact with. I like the sense of community. Communities are based on having something in common and wanting to help each other. That's what we do here." ~ a caregiver



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 cancer care to help regain a sense of control, reduce stress and isolation, educate participants, and redefine hope for a better quality of life during treatment and in survivorship.

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



Life has its ironies.

Although almost everyone has been touched by cancer in some way, even as I accepted the position as chair of this board, my own encounter had been at an arm's length.

Life changed this spring when my husband was diagnosed with metastatic pancreatic cancer. Yes, the early tests suggested this was the case, but our minds refused to accept it until we heard those final words from the doctor. The air suddenly whooshed from the room in a cataclysmic vacuum.

Within hours, I realized we had not only a doctor and a team of infusion nurses, but an entire battalion of supporters from new and old dear friends who shared their own stories and listened patiently to mine, to professionals at the Cancer Support Community who I could turn to for support, information, and sources.

Dealing with cancer is hard. Being alone with cancer is truly devastating. And that's what the Cancer Support Community ensures: so that no one faces cancer alone.

With kind regards,

Sara George, *Board Chair*

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The heart of what we do at the Cancer Support Community is based on effectively proven programs that offer emotional guidance, encouragement, social nurturing, artful therapy, healthy activities for the mind and body, knowledge to make better choices, and a place where people affected by cancer can just "be."

In January of this year, the organization moved from its original location in Bethlehem to our new "home" in Allentown near the airport which is easily reached from anywhere in the Lehigh Valley and accessible via public bus transportation. While it was bittersweet to leave the charming farmhouse where we found our roots, the new center provides all-inclusive space for group meetings and classes, activities and resources, and supportive connections have more opportunities to blossom. The transition involved many helping hands and we appreciate the 50+ volunteers who took part in transforming the new space. The center now includes three support group rooms, a designated educational library and conference room, a spacious kitchen, a special place for the children's library, children's programs and creative expression classes, volunteer workspace, and a large multi-purpose room to host our gentle movement and stress reduction activities. We welcome visitors anytime for a personal tour!

We are so grateful to the individuals, groups, businesses and foundations that help to sustain all that we do. Following the celebration last year of a decade in service, 2015 truly marks another milestone for the Cancer Support Community, and for a community at large so fortunate to have such a vital organization close at hand.

Paula Ream-Dorward, *Executive Director*

"Without the Cancer Support Community - the participants and friendships I've made, the Mind/Body/Spirit programs I've participated in, and all the caring warmth, love and support from the staff, I don't know how I would have made it through." ~ *a participant*

REPORT FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

I reflect on this past year with great satisfaction in knowing the extensive impact we made within our community. Continued partnerships and new endeavors made this year fulfilling as well as exciting.

Our collaboration with St. Luke's University Health Network was enhanced to include activities conducted in the infusion sites at the Anderson, Allentown and Bethlehem campuses. Instructors found this new format very rewarding as they were able to reach more patients with vital information and relaxation techniques. This past spring, we also participated in the Dr. and Mrs. Littner Memorial Lecture Series with their presentation by Dr. Bernie Siegel. Many of our staff, volunteers and members found his words about trusting yourself and listening to your body a perfect match to our philosophy.

Relationships with other hospital systems and organizations within our serving area were strengthened through funding received to conduct programs offsite. Lehigh Valley Health Network and Pocono Medical Center both hosted educational programs on the topics of survivorship, care planning and clinical trials. We also maintained connections to local nonprofits serving families affected by pediatric cancer through our involvement in Art Days (where craft activities are brought to LVHN's pediatric clinic by our organization as well as Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Camelot for Children, Inc. and Dream Come True), participation in Camp Smile (Coco Foundation and Pediatric Cancer Foundation of the Lehigh Valley's summer program), and other various health fairs and expos.

As we look ahead, I feel hopeful about new prospective partnerships that will allow us to continue sharing our knowledge and expertise in the field of psychosocial oncology. Through our joint efforts and with our strong foundation of evidence-based programming and dedicated program professionals, we will continue making an impact of help and hope in the community.

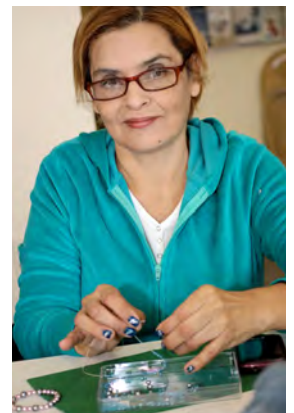
Jen Sinclair, LPC, *Program Director*

From July 2014 to July 2015, we offered nearly 700 programs and welcomed over 3,000 visitors, with nearly 250 new participants.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Each month, an average of 300 people representing all ages, races, ethnicities and socio-economic groups participate in more than 60 programs and activities. Programs are provided at no cost to participants, made possible by the generosity of individual donors, private foundations, corporate contributions and proceeds from special events. Support groups are facilitated by licensed therapists, educational programs are presented by clinical professionals, and wellness classes are led by certified instructors. We also have special programming for children diagnosed with cancer or with cancer in the family, have printed materials in English and Spanish, and offer a monthly Latino support group.

"At Cancer Support Community, I feel that I deal with cancer so well that I can help others. There is a lot of give and take here. People in my support group take turns being inspiring." ~ *a participant*



Comprehensive programming this past year included:

- 141 weekly support group sessions to help patients and family members face the challenges of cancer
- 56 networking group meetings, designed to help connect people with similar cancers
- 23 Newcomer Orientation meetings
- 17 educational workshops on topics such as nutrition, side effects, long-term survivorship care planning, etc
- 187 gentle movement classes such as Tai Chi, Qigong, Yoga, and Danse Orientale
- 4 bereavement support groups
- 23 meditative programs
- 61 expressive art classes
- 13 social programs
- 54 programs at St. Luke's University Health Network
- 3 Open to Options session, helping individuals prepare for treatment decisions
- 1 Frankly Speaking About Cancer presentations, curriculum topics provided by Headquarters
- 10 Spanish group meetings
- 1 eight-week KidSupport™ series for children with cancer or with cancer in the family
- 7 Family Connection activities
- 30 programs for pediatric cancer, such as Kempo for Kids with Cancer, Art Days at LVHN clinic, and a workshop at Camp Smile with PCFLV
- 2 Glimpse into Hope presentations, a sampling of programs specially designed for workplace employees

Additional projects and initiatives:

- Maintained the Lehigh Valley Childhood Cancer Network, an online resource collaboration of several nonprofits serving children with illnesses, combining information about all of our activities into one valuable Website.
- Completed the Kempo for Kids with Cancer pilot program, a specialized martial arts class helping children and their siblings face cancer with strength, healthful movements and mental disciplines, held in partnership with Camelot for Children. Next year's plan is to enhance the program to include all children affected by cancer.
- Launched Cancer Support Source™, a distress screening tool developed by the Cancer Support Community and practiced throughout our network
- Hosted a Pediatric Palliative Care conference for over 40 healthcare professionals to receive continuing education credits and learn more about our services as a resource for their clientele.
- Formed a local subset of volunteers trained by the Cancer Hope Network to build our own team of mentors who can provide phone support to newly diagnosed patients.
- Expanded offsite programming: in addition to our regularly scheduled offsite Spanish-speaking group and healthy cooking classes, we formed a wonderful partnership with a local artist who hosted an expressive arts series in Allentown.
- Continued participating on the Cancer Committees at Easton Hospital, Lehigh Valley Health Network LVHN and St. Luke's HH, as well as the Sussex Warren Chronic Disease Coalition.
- Introduced our programs through Lunch-and-Learn sessions and speaking engagements within the community.

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AMBASSADORS OF HOPE – 2014-15

Donors giving \$250 or more annually are invited to join **Ambassadors of Hope**, a group that meets twice yearly and targets their collective funding to a specific program, project or purpose. We are grateful for their support this year which helped us to launch a new monthly **Melanoma Support Group**, and to conduct a **Healthy Lifestyle Series** in the neighboring Slatebelt area.

AMBASSADORS

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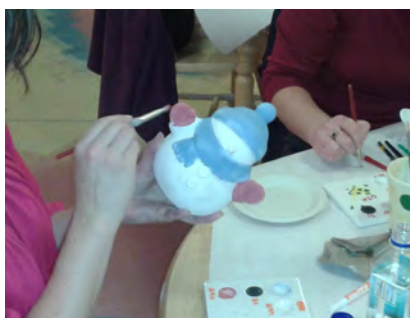
Lauren Savchak McHarris

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Jennifer Van DeVoorde



“This has become my second home and sanctuary. My family is very supportive, but they can’t really understand, because they haven’t been through it. Here I can talk to other survivors and share my true feelings and concerns. When I come home from here, I am refreshed, rejuvenated, and ready to fight my cancer. My attitude is positive and I look forward to my next class.” ~ a participant

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
Charles B. Patt Jr. Memorial Golf Outing
Fox and Roach Charities
Highmark Blue Shield
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St. Luke's University Health Network
Teva Pharmaceuticals
Women's 5k Classic

\$5,000 - \$9,999

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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 6/30/2015

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Total Revenue: \$512,446

Grants, Corporate & Individual Contributions: \$249,970

Fundraising Events: \$213,032

Miscellaneous: \$49,444

USE OF FUNDS

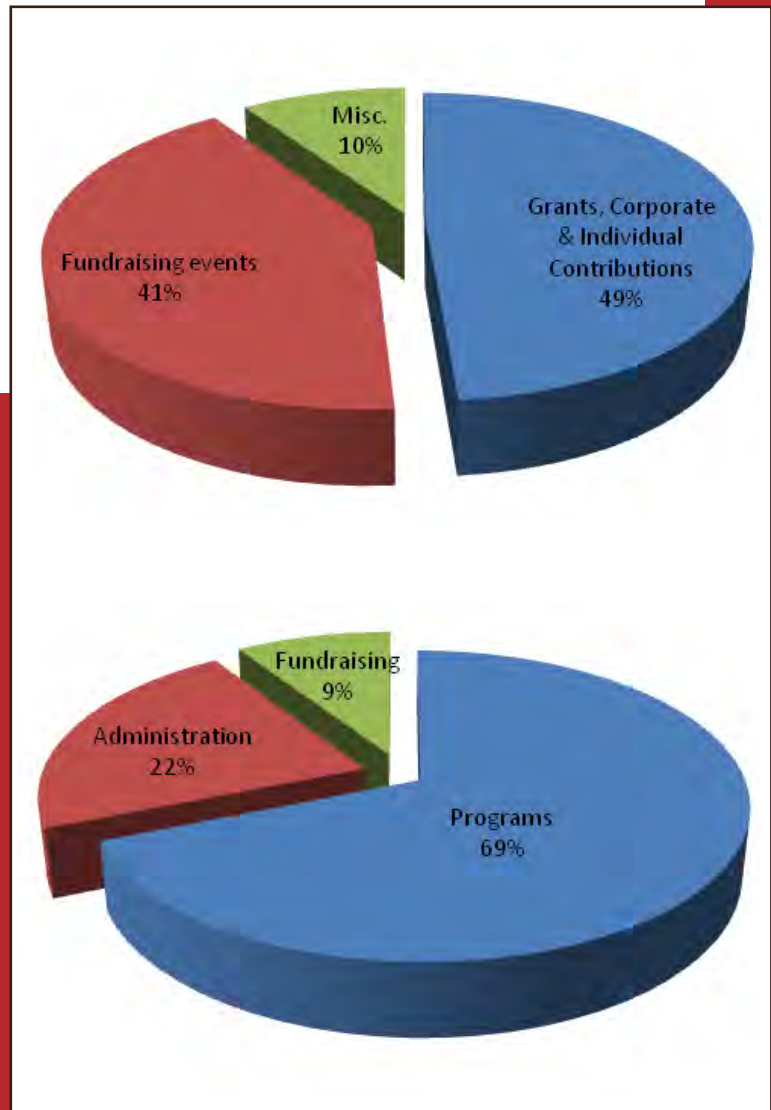
Total Expenses: \$463,752

Programs: \$319,134

Administration: \$102,018

Fundraising: \$42,600

Audited as of September 30, 2015



"I very quickly realized that without the support of CSCGLV, I wouldn't have been able to get through my cancer treatment process. The Cancer Support Community was the only place I felt comfortable enough to be myself, a person living with cancer. I couldn't get there fast enough." ~ a participant

SPECIAL EVENTS – 2015

Open House - February 20 - official ribbon cutting ceremony at new location

Strides for Hope - April 26 - charity running team which raises funds while training for St. Luke's 5K and Half Marathon

Garden of Hope - June 25 - cocktail reception and community partner recognition, held at Sunset Acres in Bethlehem, the home of Laura Bennett Shelton and historic Laros Estate

Ride for Hope - July 11 - inaugural motorcycle benefit run held at Bicentennial Park in Bethlehem

Wings of Hope - September 21 - signature event held at Cedar Crest College in Allentown, a butterfly release to memorialize and honor loved ones

The Cancer Support Community participates in numerous community events and health fairs throughout the year, providing program information and volunteer opportunities. The organization was a recipient of proceeds from the annual **Boutique at the Rink** in Bethlehem as well as the annual **Charles B. Patt, Jr. Memorial Golf Outing** coordinated by Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Fox & Roach Realtors at Woodstone Golf Course in Danielsville, both events held in May. We were also a participating agency in the annual **Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community** at DeSales University on May 30.



VOLUNTEERS

We are grateful beyond words to the dozens of individuals, community groups and businesses who shared their time and efforts with us. Our volunteers contributed approximately 2,178 hours of service this past year, which is valued at \$49,288 (per Independent Sector.)

Our volunteers represented many organizations and companies in the Greater Lehigh Valley, including:

Air Products Retiree Volunteer Group
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services
- Fox & Roach Realtors
Boutique at the Rink
Cedar Crest College
Clear Channel Airports
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