



# CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY™

GREATER LEHIGH VALLEY

*So that no one faces cancer alone.®*



## Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley **ANNUAL REPORT** 2015/16

[www.cancersupportglv.org](http://www.cancersupportglv.org)

610-861-7555

Fiscal year ended June 30, 2016

# HISTORY

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.

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.



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, 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.

## 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.

*"Here, I get a feeling of life and living. I would get hope here when I saw other people. Monday night, we had a girl with colon cancer and a man with leukemia. To see what they went through, and to see hope in their faces gave me courage." ~ a participant*

## LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

As I wrote to you in this report last year, I shared the challenge that my family was facing as we dealt with my husband's pancreatic cancer. Unfortunately, our dear Steve passed away in March.

While the challenges were many during Steve's treatment and eventual passing, our entire family was lifted up by the many who reached out and supported us in a myriad of ways great and small. There are not adequate words to express the appreciation we felt. Our experiences underscored what we say here at the Cancer Support Community: it is crucial that no face such challenges alone.



The past year certainly has given me a new appreciation for the value that this organization brings to the Lehigh Valley.

Thanks to our many, generous donors, we are able to provide proven programs that offer emotional guidance, encouragement, social nurturing, artful therapy and the knowledge to help our participants make more informed choices about their lives. And, there's never a charge for our services.

We have now been in our new location for nearly two years, a facility that exudes a homey atmosphere while also providing a large multi-purpose room for our movement and stress reduction activities. We always welcome visitors who would like a personal tour.

Through our highly-trained, caring professionals, we provide more than 60 program and activities a month, serving more than 3,500 people each year.

I'm pleased to report that we had another very successful year in raising funds to support our mission. A key reason for that success was our Executive Director, Paula Ream-Dorward. We are very grateful for Paula's outstanding service to the organization and it is with sadness that I report that she will be leaving us for a new position elsewhere. We thank you for your superb contributions, Paula, and we wish you well in your new position.

We are conducting a search for a new executive director and will let you know when a new person is on board.

On behalf of all the staff and board members of the Cancer Support Community, I thank you for your continued trust and support. We remain committed to ensuring that "No one faces cancer alone."

With kind regards,

Sara George, *Board Chair*

*"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*

# REPORT FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Here at the Cancer Support Community, we have the pleasure of seeing how empowered our members are, and how they help support one another through the cancer experience. Yoga students share coffee at the table in our common area as they wait for the next class to begin. Weekly support group members arrive early so they can greet each other with updates while relaxing on the couch. They rally around newly diagnosed survivors who join their groups, arm them with valuable information to prepare for their next appointment, and even accompany them to appointments if they are alone during that vulnerable time. Our members are carrying out our mission to empower, educate and strengthen. We are here to give them those tools. I'm grateful for our donors and supporters who make that possible!

Ending June with our own local Cancer Moonshot summit emphasized what this past year was all about - working together toward the common goal of enhancing the quality of life for people affected by cancer. That day was about collaborations and advocacy. Together, we brainstormed ways we all could stay connected to these goals by making contributions along the cancer care continuum. We are seeing this happen at every level -- with our local healthcare professionals, staff, program providers, and within our own community of members. I'm proud that we've stayed connected to our supporting healthcare professionals at all of the surrounding local hospitals and health networks and our connection to other nonprofits who partner with us to create special programming for underserved populations. It takes all of us ... and we are ready for progress and change!

Jen Sinclair, LPC, *Program Director*

From July 2015 through June 2016, we offered over 700 programs and welcomed over 3,000 visitors, with over 100 new participants.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

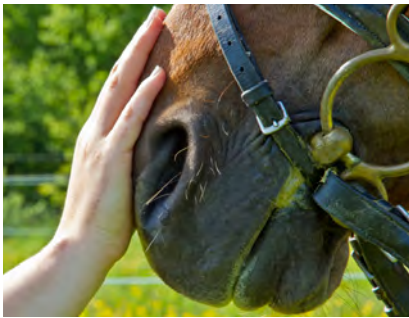
Each month, an average of 275 people representing all ages, races, ethnicities and socio-economic groups participate in approximately 60 programs and activities. Programs are provided at no cost to participants, made possible by the generosity of individual donors, private foundations, corporate contributions and proceeds from special events. Support groups are facilitated by licensed mental health professionals, 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.

*"This was the best I've felt all month! I'm glad I could bring my entire family out to experience this with me." ~ a participant*



## Programming this past year included:

- 134 weekly support group sessions to help patients and family members face the challenges of cancer
- 65 networking group meetings, designed to help connect people with similar cancers
- 21 Newcomer Orientation meetings
- 40 educational workshops on topics such as nutrition, side effects, long-term survivorship care planning, skin care, special considerations for oral and dental care, medical terminology, etc (301 attended)
- 204 gentle movement classes such as Tai Chi, Qigong, Yoga, and Danse Orientale
- 3 bereavement support groups
- 42 meditative programs
- 78 expressive art classes
- 28 new people joined weekly support groups
- 22 activities offered in the infusion centers within St. Luke's University Health Network
- 1 Frankly Speaking About Cancer presentation, curriculum topics provided by Headquarters
- 12 Spanish group meetings
- 11 All ages (family friendly) programs
- 34 Kempo Karate for Kids sessions



## Additional projects and initiatives:

- Piloted individual support services for people affected by pancreatic cancer, sponsored by J's Run.
- Enhanced our Spanish speaking group with additional nutrition education workshops
- Enhanced the piloted Kempo for Kids with Cancer program, to include all children affected by cancer in the family.
- Continued Cancer Support Source™, a distress screening tool developed by the Cancer Support Community and practiced throughout our network.
- Hosted our own local Cancer Moonshot Summit in response to the national pledge from Vice President Joe Biden to generate ideas and engage in the effort to make progress in cancer care.
- Expanded offsite programming: in addition to our regularly scheduled offsite Spanish-speaking group and healthy cooking classes, we formed new relationships with the Slatebelt Y in Pen Argyl and the Easton Public Market.
- Continued participating on the Cancer Committees at Easton Hospital, Lehigh Valley Health Network and St. Luke's University Health Network, as well as the Sussex Warren Chronic Disease Coalition.
- Introduced our programs through various Lunch-and-Learn sessions and speaking engagements within the community.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2015-16

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# AMBASSADORS OF HOPE – 2015-16

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 expand our Children's Programming and increase awareness through Glimpse Into Hope and Outreach Liaisons.

## AMBASSADORS

Elizabeth Scofield, *Ambassadors Coordinator*

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*"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*

# 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+

BB&T formerly National Penn Bank  
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Charles B. Patt Jr. Memorial Golf Outing  
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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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## SOCIETY OF HOPE

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.)

*"My close friend and I would often attend the art class every other week. Thanks for all you do - there are so many people who need your help and support. I plan on returning to the center to create artwork in memory of my close friend." ~ a caregiver*

## 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 2,449 hours of service this past year, which is valued at \$57,698.44 (per Independent Sector.)

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

Air Products Retiree Volunteer Group  
BB&T  
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services  
- Fox & Roach Realtors  
Boutique at the Rink  
Cedar Crest College  
Community Services for Children  
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# FINANCIAL REPORT

Fiscal Year ending 6/30/2016

## SOURCE OF FUNDS

Total Revenue: \$406,373

Grants, Corporate & Individual Contributions: \$163,081

Fundraising Events: \$221,341

Miscellaneous: \$21,951

## USE OF FUNDS

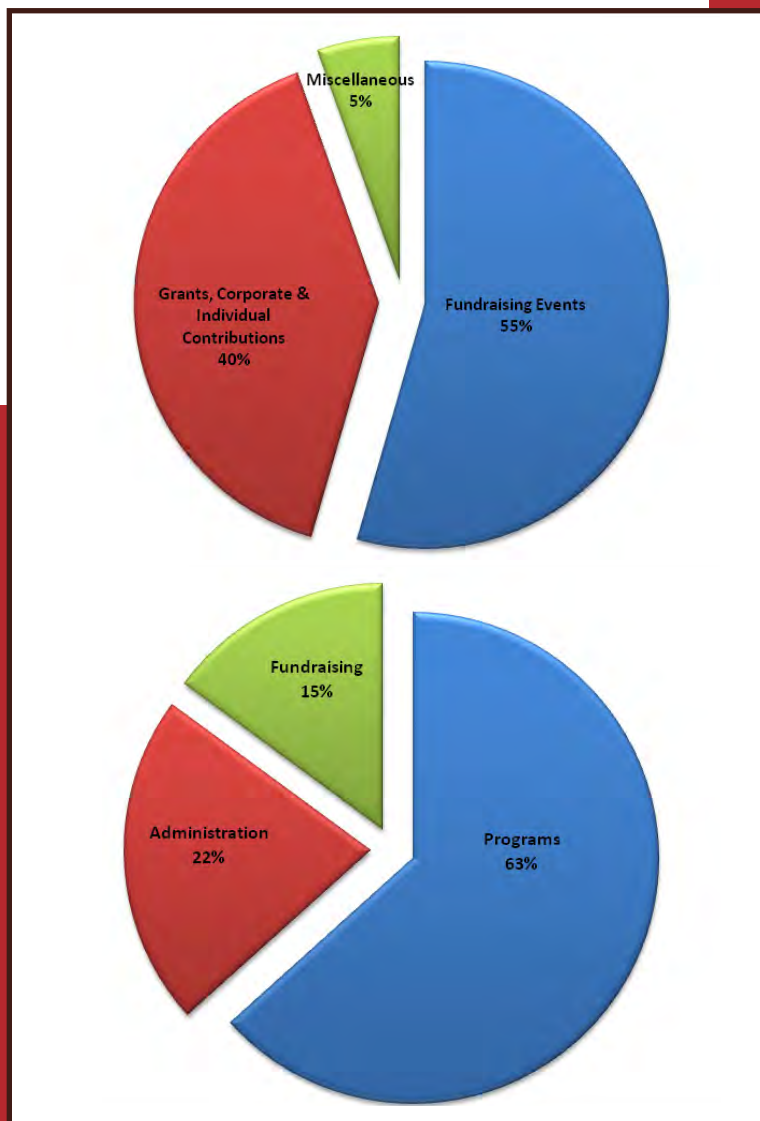
Total Expenses: \$400,522

Programs: \$253,621

Administration: \$87,241

Fundraising: \$59,660

Audited as of October 11, 2016



*"I would come here daily after radiation. I'd drive over from the hospital. Cancer Support Community showed me that everyone is a survivor. Everyone had such a great attitude." ~ a participant*

# SPECIAL EVENTS – 2016

**Strides for Hope** - April 24 - charity running team which raises funds while training for St. Luke's 5K and Half Marathon

**Garden of Hope** - June 30 - cocktail reception and community partner recognition, held at Ravenwood Manor the home of Phyllis and William Grube

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

**Wings of Hope** - September 6 - 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 June 4.

