

VOICES OF THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Great Lakes Division, Inc.



Sharing Stories of Hope, Progress, and Answers Across Michigan and Indiana

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LOCAL AREA SPOTLIGHT

The Northern Michigan Area Service Center is partnering with local organizations for free cancer screenings.

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OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

To learn about making the Society the beneficiary of a personal gift through bequests, trust agreements, life insurance, retirement accounts, or other forms of planned gifts, please visit http://www.cancer.org/docroot/DON/content/DON_4_1_Find_Local_Contact.asp

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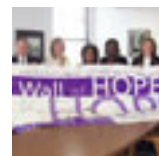


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community focus

Meet Patty Williamson, a dedicated Reach to Recovery volunteer

When Patty Williamson of Lafayette, Indiana, battled breast cancer in 1999 she was not alone. One source of support came from a Reach to Recovery volunteer. Reach to Recovery is an American Cancer Society program that offers breast cancer patients an opportunity to talk with a breast cancer survivor to ask questions, be encouraged, and find support.

After she finished treatment in 2003, Patty (not pictured with this article) was determined to give back. "I feel like I've been saved for a reason," she explained. She trained to become a Reach volunteer and took on the responsibility of being the area's volunteer coordinator the next year. As the volunteer coordinator, Patty organizes the Reach volunteers in her area and hosts multiple recertification trainings every two years in her own home. Last year, she traveled to Terre Haute, Indiana, to train the volunteers there as well and

always makes sure that informational materials in her local American Cancer Society office are in stock. "She works tirelessly to promote the program, to keep the volunteers up to date, and to make sure anyone who needs a visit gets one in a timely manner," said Dawn Clinkenbeard, the Society's quality of life director who works with Patty.

In her trainings, Patty teaches volunteers about American Cancer Society guidelines and goals, honoring patient confidentiality, informational booklets, and other components that will prepare volunteers to help patients. "I try really hard, when I meet with the women



to recertify, to constantly provide new information," explained Patty. She wants everyone to have a working knowledge of what current breast cancer patients might want to know.

She also wants to find more people interested in Reach to Recovery to keep her volunteer base strong and serve patients who do not already have support. In the program, a patient is matched with a survivor who has gone through a similar experience, such as the same type of treatment or at the same age. With each patient, she strives to find the best way to support their situation.

Patty's favorite part of her work with Reach to Recovery is seeing a patient make it through their treatment and going on with his or her life to become a volunteer, whether through Reach or another program. "Until the day when there is a cure for breast cancer, we will continue to need women who are willing to offer time, energy, and compassion for those who need our presence," she said.

To learn more about Reach to Recovery, visit www.cancer.org or call 1-800-ACS-2345.



• local area spotlight

The Northern Michigan Area Service Center partners for free cancer screenings

The Northern Michigan Area Service Center developed a partnership with other local health organizations to start the Annual Women's Cancer Screening. This project offers cancer education and free clinical breast exams, pelvic exams with Pap smears, and on-site mammograms in a mobile mammography unit (shown right). It is a response to a local need for accessible healthcare in an area where many women have none.

The need was uncovered by a cervical cancer analysis in five Michigan counties with a high incidence of cervical cancer and low cancer screening rates.

With this need identified the Northern Michigan Area Service Center, the Alpena Cancer Center, the District Health Department #4, the Women's Health Center of Alpena, the Thunder Bay Health Clinics, the Alcona Health Centers, the Alpena Regional Medical Center and the Ossineke Eagles chapter all partnered to put on the first screening in 2004.

To stretch the free screenings, as many women as possible were channeled into the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) which offers free screenings to women between the

ages of 40 and 64 who have no health insurance or a low-coverage plan. Women not eligible for the BCCCP were scheduled for the project's free screenings.

Results from the 2004 screenings showed that of the 188 participants, 4% had never had a Pap smear, 28% had never had a mammogram, and 34% indicated that they didn't have a routine healthcare provider. The screenings detected breast cancer in three women and cervical cancer in two, all of which may have gone undetected if the free screenings had not been available.

In its first year the project won the Michigan Cancer Consortium's Spirit of Collaboration award. Judy Wienczewski, a social worker at the Alpena Cancer Center, thinks collaboration is essential to the success of the project. "When you're looking at an illness like this that requires early intervention and prompt treatment for remission and positive outcomes, it's critically important that you have people on the same page helping one another," she said.

Now in its third year, the project took place April 5--May 23 and was met with success. More physicians are supporting it and women are beginning to return year after year.



To date, 18% of all women screened have had abnormal mammograms and 12% have had abnormal Pap smear results.

The model of partnership that the Northern Michigan Area Service Center established could be replicated to bring success to other areas. "If more and more health departments and ACS staff could mesh and work as well together as this group does on this project, there would be nothing that they couldn't accomplish," said Barb Rivenburgh, the BCCCP liaison for Northern Michigan.

The Great Lakes Division is proud of the work the Northern Michigan Area Service Center is doing to promote cancer control in their community. The Northern Michigan Area Service Center serves Alcona, Alpena, Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Crawford, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle, Roscommon, and Wexford counties.

• survivorship and patient services

Great Lakes Foundation scholarship program funds survivors' college dreams



Nicholas McNeely of Shelbyville, Indiana, was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor when he was

14 years old. After six months of chemotherapy, he was cancer-free. When it was time for Nicholas to apply for college, he heard about the American Cancer Society Great Lakes Foundation's College Scholarship Program, which supports students and their families who have been through a difficult and draining cancer experience, not only emotionally and physically, but also financially.

When he was a senior in high school, Nicholas (shown above) applied and was awarded the scholarship for his first year at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. "I was grateful for the assistance," said Nicholas. The \$1,000 scholarships are renewable up to three times based on academic performance and a completed renewal application, so he jumped at the chance for more financial help and renewed his scholarship multiple times.

Because of his scholarships, Nicholas looked for ways to give

back to the Society. He served on the Vigo County Relay For Life's committee during all four years at the institute and was a team captain for three years.

While pursuing higher education, Nicholas stayed focused to not waste the opportunity he was given. Last summer, he had an internship in St. Paul, Minnesota, at Guidant Corporation, which makes pacemakers and defibrillators. In May, he graduated with a degree in electrical engineering. "I was very proud that I was able to make it," he said.

Since graduation he has landed a job at Guidant Corporation, testing electrical chips that go into pacemakers. His personal cancer history is one of the reasons why he has chosen to work for a company that focuses on people's health. "I'm not going to be a doctor, my skills are geared towards engineering," he said. "I figured out in what way I could do something that I could help with that set of skills."

He encourages all students who are eligible to apply for a Great Lakes Foundation college scholarship. "I would highly recommend it," he said. "The assistance is very helpful in paying for school."

To be eligible, a first time applicant needs to be:

- a cancer survivor, age 20 or under
- a U.S. citizen and legal resident of Indiana or Michigan
- and attending, or planning to attend, an accredited college or university in Indiana or Michigan.

Since 1997, the Foundation's scholarship program has given over 350 first-time scholarships and close to 300 renewed scholarships.

For information on how to prepare for next year's applications, see this month's Resource Highlight on page nine.



New grant cycle includes a study to help families discuss end of life issues



The American Cancer Society's research program funds projects that study

how to prevent cancer, how it develops, how to help people coping with it, and how it can be cured. With five main categories (behavioral, molecular biology, drug development, epidemiology, and cellular biology) our grants are used to learn how we can ease the cancer burden in people's lives and, ultimately, eradicate the disease.

With our newest grant cycle, starting August 1, the Society is investing approximately 3.8 million dollars in Michigan and Indiana research projects alone. One of these projects is led by Cynthia Bell at Indiana University in Indianapolis (shown above). Cynthia is interested in the behavioral impacts of cancer and will study how to improve the quality of life for adolescents, and family members of adolescents, dying from cancer.

Her topic is hard-hitting, but one that she knows is needed from her experiences as a home care nurse.

She witnessed families become isolated because they were unwilling or didn't know how to talk to each other about death when medical treatment could no longer help. As a result, the young cancer patients' quality of life would drop significantly and families could not enjoy the time that they had left together.

"We've made some great advances in medications and things we can do but sometimes we need to learn better how we can address the hardships that families have to go through when they're experiencing cancer, the difficulties emotionally," Cynthia explained. "It's almost like a visual release that you see when it's finally out and you finally talk."

As part of her Doctoral program, she will use her Society grant to study when the topic of death should be introduced to a family and how to facilitate these discussions.

Cynthia, who was awarded a grant in her Master's program, is very grateful to have additional support from the Society. "It is so nice to have someone that believes in you and is willing to fund you so that you can concentrate on doing the research," she said. Her grant will be funded until 2008.

Once her research is complete, Cynthia's goal is to make an impact on the medical profession by helping doctors and nurses implement her strategies to improve patients' end of life. "What I'd really want is for everyone to be cured of cancer, the reality is that doesn't always happen," she explained. "For those people, I want to make this process as peaceful as possible. I want the kids that are going through it to be able to continue to live until they die."

To learn more about the American Cancer Society research program, visit www.cancer.org or call 800-ACS-2345.



• education

Great Lakes Division leads consortiums with statewide cancer control plans

The Indiana Cancer Consortium and the Michigan Cancer Consortium are coalitions of organizations, including the American Cancer Society, working in their respective states to fight cancer. By forming an organization of organizations, both groups realize the positive impact that teamwork can have to further their goals. Each has a plan with priorities based on what can be addressed in the upcoming years to reduce their greatest cancer threats.

The Indiana Cancer Consortium (ICC) began in 2001. The American Cancer Society, Great Lakes Division, serves as one of the 72 member organizations and provides financial and staff support. The consortium is driven by *The Indiana Cancer Control Plan 2005--2008*, which focuses on prevention, early detection, treatment, quality of life, data, and advocacy.

"One of the things that I have been impressed with over the years is the interest people show in the consortium and the continuing dedication people have shown," said Anna Miller, the American Cancer Society's director of cancer control in Indiana who works with the ICC. "We have moved very rapidly from a dream to having a cancer control plan." Approximately two years after its first meeting, the consortium was given a planning grant from the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention and these funds help them implement their plan.

To get its feet off the ground the ICC had help from the Michigan Cancer Consortium (MCC), which started in 1987. Their statewide cancer plan is called *The MCC Initiative Strategic Plan*. Comprised of 80 member organizations, The MCC's plan focuses on ten priorities, including cancer sites (such as breast, colon, lung, etc.), end of life care, and clinical trial participation.

Both consortiums are broken into committees to focus specifically on each aspect of their cancer control plans. "The way to make a difference in cancer is by having member organizations do things in their own communities," said Anna.

Gary McMullen, the MCC's chair of the communications committee and vice president of communication and public relations for the American Cancer Society, Great Lakes Division, agrees. When consortium members carry the cancer plans back to their own communities and organizations, it can be more effective by reaching a larger group of people. "It's a roadmap, a blueprint that everyone can utilize in their own plan," he explained.



In 2006, the MCC received the first Comprehensive Cancer Control Implementation Award from C-Change (shown above), an organization of national leaders fighting cancer. The award was presented by President George H.W. Bush, C-Change's chair.

Both the ICC and MCC have an amazing task in fighting cancer, and both are always looking for more member support from organizations in their state. "There are so many things that need to be done," said Vicki Rakowski, co-chair of the MCC and vice president for cancer control of the American Cancer Society, Great Lakes Division.

To learn more about the Michigan Cancer Consortium, visit www.michigancancer.org. The Indiana Cancer Consortium's website is currently under construction, but can be viewed at www.indianacancer.org in the future.

education

Statewide cancer report is available to all Hoosiers

Before 2003, residents of Indiana never had a source for compiled updated cancer data for their state. To solve this problem, the American Cancer Society, Great Lakes Division, the Indiana Cancer Consortium, and the Indiana State Department of Health partnered to create *Indiana Cancer Facts and Figures 2003*. With the numbers printed out for all Hoosiers to see, the report offers facts about the impact of cancer in local areas and shows that cancer is something everyone should be concerned about.

The publication offers answers to common questions about cancer; the incidence and mortality rates, which are numbers of newly diagnosed cancers and cancer deaths, in each county compared to statewide rates; and information for

each cancer type, including prevention, signs and symptoms, risk factors, and how it is affecting Hoosiers. The report also captures current trends in cancer and how they are expected to impact Indiana in the future.

The information for the report was made available because of significant progress to the Indiana State Cancer Registry. The Indiana State Department of Health improved the state's cancer registry, which tracks diagnoses, through additional staff and financial resources.

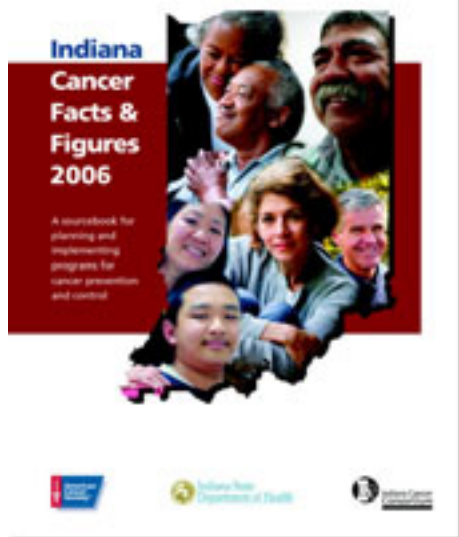
"It was a really nice sense of accomplishment that we had produced a document that had a nice comprehensive summary of the data," said Martha Graves, director of the Indiana State Cancer Registry.

Now that Hoosiers have a source for their cancer information, it is being used in many different ways. The Indiana Cancer Consortium, a coalition of organizations in the state working together, helped produce the report as the groundwork to creating *The Indiana Cancer Control Plan*, a map to how Indiana can best fight cancer. Hospitals also use the information to compare their cancer program information to statewide data.



The general public is also welcome to use the report and learn more about the impact of cancer in their local areas. "It's raised awareness," said Lesley Dufner, epidemiologist for the Society's Great Lakes Division.

The same organizations involved with the 2003 report are currently partnering again to create *Indiana Cancer Facts and Figures 2006*, which will be published in August. Call 800-ACS-2345 to request a copy. In the meantime, the 2003 edition can be found at the Indiana Cancer Consortium's website, www.indianacancer.org (currently under construction). Michigan residents can look for their state's information on www.michigan.gov/mdch.



• advocacy

Volunteers secure first nationwide signature on new advocacy document

If you think that you could never make a concrete difference in politics, become an American Cancer Society advocacy volunteer. A delegation of five Michigan volunteers recently made a big impact by visiting Congressman Dale Kildee's office and securing the first nationwide signature on an advocacy document from the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

The new document is the Congressional Cancer Promise, which asks congressmen to commit to eliminate suffering and death due to cancer. This includes making health system reform a priority; elevate prevention, early detection, and survivorship; increase commitment to research; and expand access to care.

Shuntai Beaugard, community development director for the East

Michigan Area Service Center (pictured third from right), scheduled the meeting and sent Congressman Kildee a copy of the Promise prior to the meeting to give him a chance to review it ahead of time. She also went to the meeting with the volunteers. "They introduced themselves, let him know what they were there for, let him know they will be in Washington DC in September, and some shared their story to make it more personal," explained Shuntai.

Congressman Kildee (pictured second from left) let the volunteers know he agrees that cancer issues need to be a priority and signed the Promise on the spot. "He was very interested in what we had to say, very open to signing the Promise, very supportive of what volunteers do for the ACS, and very interested in personal stories," said Becky Davidek, a volunteer at the meeting and a cancer survivor (pictured first on left).

If it the Promise is not signed by September, congressmen will be asked to sign it again during Celebration on the Hill, our nationwide

advocacy event in Washington DC. "Our goal is to get as many congressmen and U.S. senators to sign it as possible," said Patricia Richards, government relations manager for Indiana. Collecting signatures on the Promise is one of our main goals for Celebration on the Hill. Volunteers selected to go to our nationwide event as Celebration on the Hill ambassadors will be taking the Promise to congressmen until September.

These legislative visits are also a chance for congressmen to sign Wall of Hope banners, which are sponsored by local organizations or businesses and signed by community members at Relay For Life events to represent the thousands of people who can't make it to Washington DC with us in September. During their meeting, Congressman Kildee signed the Wall of Hope banner for the Flint event.

After their visit with Congressman Kildee, the Celebration on the Hill ambassadors were excited to learn they had the first Congressional Cancer Promise signature in the country. "That gives me goose bumps, I'm so excited," said Becky. "It's amazing that people like myself that do not really work in politics too much can make a difference... it's a step in the right direction."



• resource highlight



Great Lakes Foundation
College Scholarship Program

2007 Great Lakes Foundation College Scholarship Program Fact Sheet

Sponsor Name: American Cancer Society Great Lakes Division Foundation, College Scholarship

Type of Award: \$1,000 Scholarship

Intended Use: For tuition only at an accredited MI or IN college or university

Eligibility: Must be 20 or younger before deadline, Michigan or Indiana Resident, planning on attending a college or University in MI or IN, and have had a diagnosis of cancer

Basis for Selection: We have an extensive list of things that we take into consideration before awarding individuals, including having a personal history of cancer, academics, community involvement and financial needs. Overall, we are looking for well rounded, quality individuals that would be good ambassadors for the American Cancer Society.

Application Requirements: Essay, 2 letters of recommendation, IRS tax information for the student and parents, on time and complete application, letter from a doctor verifying their diagnosis, official high school and or college transcripts.

Deadline: 5:00 p.m. (EDT) on Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Additional Information: If a student is awarded they will automatically be eligible for award renewal for up to 3 additional years. (The renewal application is considerably less extensive, requiring only an essay and keeping a minimum GPA of 2.0.)

To obtain information on how to apply, please contact:

Katie Wilson
American Cancer Society
Great Lakes Division, Inc.
1755 Abbey Road
East Lansing, MI 48823
800-723-0360 ext. 314

Applications will be available to download in January at www.cancer.org/scholarships