

The尔ma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund

Outreach. Education. Support.

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Get In Touch

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Support Group Schedule



November 18 | December 16

Third Wednesdays at 6 PM via Zoom & Facebook Live

<https://www.facebook.com/TDJBreastCancerFund/>

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Campaign

by Corinne Bombowsky

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's first-ever virtual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of Washington, DC event! We had an incredible week filled with music, dancing, survivor and caregiver story sharing, looking back at Making Strides dating back to 2010 and so much more.

This event season we were able to raise a total of \$164,000 and we are still fundraising! It's not too late to make or turn in donations. We will be accepting donations for this event season through December 31st. If you missed our virtual event, you can view and share the videos on our Facebook. We appreciate your support!



Making Strides Washington, DC



/makingstridesdc



Founder's Corner



Thelma D. Jones

Dear TDJBCF Friends and Supporters,

Please join the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) for our Annual Thanksgiving Support Group Meeting on Wednesday, November 18, at 6 pm via Zoom and Facebook live. For details on the meeting, please see page four.

Also, the TDJBCF is very saddened by the loss of Metastatic Breast Cancer Survivor Chawnte Randall who transitioned on Thursday morning, November 12. As you may recall, Chawnte was a guest speaker at our well-attended virtual October Breast Cancer Awareness Month Celebration on Wednesday, October 21. One of her greatest concerns was starting a new, long-awaited chemo treatment and the impact it might have on her ability to speak at our meeting that evening. "I'm excited and I really want to be there but you just never know how I'll be feeling after taking the medicine." Chawnte was spunky, courageous, exuberant and so full of life, and we were looking forward to working together on breast health matters, especially relating to people of color. Please see Tigerlily's tribute to Chawnte on page three.

The TDJBCF will have a moment of silence for Chawnte during our upcoming meeting and hope that you will join us. The TDJBCF is also rededicating our commitment to continuing the fight for a cure. When will the madness stop? Rest in Peace and Power, my Friend! I look forward to seeing you Wednesday, November 18, at 6 pm via Zoom and Facebook live.

Thelma D. Jones

In Memoriam

Chawnte Randall

This morning, our ANGEL Warrior, Chawnte Randall, met the God within her in eternity. She is with Him. No longer with us and we are heartbroken. After being diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer (MBC), Chawnte turned to a life of advocacy, bringing her heart, soul and her truth, working tirelessly to amplify the voices of those living with MBC, particularly Black women facing disparities globally. Chawnte was a spunky, outspoken soul that was not afraid to speak the truth about her life and the lives of those who she met along her MBC journey.

She was a voice for many women. Chawnte, a beautiful soul, a believer, a thriver and an advocate. As we absorb the shock of this moment, we feel the magnitude of her life, knowing that it is not how she died, but how she lived. As sisters, we carried one another. We will continue to carry her. When people die of cancer, it is often said that they lost their battle and gained their wings. However, Chawnte has won the battle - as she lived her legacy daily and earned her wings before she left this Earth.

Chawnte touched everyone she met. Her passion and advocacy knew no bounds. While living with MBC, she filled her waking moments by educating other women, amplifying patients' voices, helping to raise money for MBC research and sharing the real perspective of what it is like to live with MBC, while working to ensure that one day it becomes a chronic, not terminal disease. There are people in this world who fight for something when it is convenient, and then there are those who take action even while facing seemingly insurmountable challenges. Chawnte's work, laughter, passion and voice emanated through everyone she touched. Her legacy will continue to touch lives and echo in the rooms she fought tirelessly to enter. Because of her, others have learned about MBC and are advocating, amplifying, uplifting and working to end disparities in our lifetime.

When we separate physically from someone we love, the pain is palpable, and made even more so when we can still feel that someone's spirit hugging us and feel the warmth of their smile. In the days, weeks, months to come, may we all remember that her spirit is always close, and may she inspire us to do more. Just days ago, even while on the verge of here and there, Chawnte was still ever the advocate and making plans to use her voice so that others might live. Our girl!!!

As Chawnte said often, "Metastatic breast cancer is the only breast cancer that kills." May we all carry forth the great work that she was a part of - working to end MBC and healthcare disparities; and may we all #Live.Laugh.Love as Chawnte did.

We love you, Chawnte.

Thursday, November 12, 2020





Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund Virtual Support Group Annual Thanksgiving Celebration

Wednesday, November 18, 2020, at 6 pm via

Zoom and TDJBCF Facebook Live

<https://www.facebook.com/TDJBreastCancerFund/>



Welcome & Opening Remarks

Mamie W. Mallory, MS
Disabilities Advocate &
TDJBCF Board Chair



Greetings

Kim Beer
Director
Public Policy
Christopher and Dana
Reeve Foundation



Regina Blye, MPAff,
Moderator
Disabilities Advocate &
TDJBCF Ambassador



Sheri Denkensohn-Trott,
Co-Founder
Happy on Wheels, LLC
Breast Cancer Survivor,
Disabilities Advocate &
TDJBCF Ambassador

Panel Discussion:

**“Being Thankful in an Ever-Changing World:
The Voices of Breast Cancer Survivors
and Advocates with Physical Disabilities”**

Panelists:

**Sheri Denkensohn-Trott, Co-Founder, Happy on Wheels, LLC,
Breast Cancer Survivor, Disabilities Advocate and TDJBCF Ambassador**

**Linda C. Brown, Breast Cancer Survivor, Caretaker,
and Disabilities Advocate (not pictured)**

**Kim Beer, Director, Public Policy,
Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation**

So join us for an evening of thanksgiving and gratefulness as we celebrate life and hear amazing stories of survivorship from those who are really blessed and thankful for the beauty and joys of life in spite of the Covid-19 pandemic and other challenges.

For information, please contact thelma@tdjbreastcancerfund.org or (202) 251-1639

TDJBCF SPOTLIGHT

I am Grateful – My Story Matters: The Journey of Melanie A. Nix

On Wednesday, October 21, 2020, I shared my story at the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund Annual October Breast Cancer Awareness Month Celebration. It was another opportunity for me to talk about my breast cancer survival and I am grateful.



My fears dominated my thoughts. As a 38 year old, married mother of a four-year-old son and a 19-month-old daughter, my breast cancer was Stage 1, Grade 3 and I prayed that God would allow me to watch my children grow up. I was not sure that my outcome would be favorable. I am a Black woman, and we have higher breast cancer mortality rates. I was under 40 and, as a fifth-generation breast cancer patient with the BRCA1 genetic mutation that increased my risk for both breast and ovarian cancer, many of the women in my family who had been diagnosed with breast cancer did not live beyond their 40s, including my own mother. I had triple negative breast cancer, an aggressive form of breast cancer that disproportionately impacts African American women and has no long-term treatment.

With my dedicated doctors and my small but mighty team of family and friends, my A-team, I outlined my treatment plan. My treatment included surgeries, a bilateral mastectomy removing the 1.5 cm tumor and breast tissue in my left breast and the breast tissue in my right breast (prevention), 16 cycles of chemotherapy, a preventive bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy that removed my ovaries to reduce my risk of ovarian cancer, and breast reconstruction. After about one year, I finished my treatment and continued to walk uncomfortably into my survival.

I had spent many days and nights scared, unsure of the future. Getting comfortable with my survival meant getting comfortable with my “new” body, scars and all. It meant being okay in my new normal. I think I found the most discomfort in expecting life to go back to what it was before breast cancer. It did not. It could not. I had gone through one of the most difficult periods of my life, my body had been through a lot and I had been through a lot mentally and emotionally. I would never be the same. I would never go to a doctor’s appointment again and check no for a personal history of cancer. Scanxiety is real. I was always waiting for recurrence or more devastating news around the corner. Some friendships and relationships changed or ended. And I felt awkward walking in this new space of my life.



Melanie A. Nix

Story continued on next page.

The Journey of Melanie A. Nix

continued



Melanie A. Nix and her husband, Raymond L. Nix

But, as awkward as it was, the constancy in my life helped me gradually get more comfortable in my survival, in my new normal. My husband, who I say loved me back to life, and my two young children were an ever-present source of support. My sister and close friends and family worked to provide for me a space of comfort and understanding.

Moment by moment, I gained more confidence in this new part of my journey. I found a place in advocacy, grounded by my belief that the advocacy of my late mother and late aunt and my own self-advocacy afforded me access to information, resources, and care that proved to be lifesaving and invaluable for my quality of life.

Almost 12 years later and cancer free, I continue to share my story. Hopefully, it will encourage a young to gather her family history and better understand her risks. Maybe it will encourage someone to question their doctor, get a second and third option to ensure that they have a full and thorough analysis of their options. Each and every day, as my now 16-year-old son learns to drive and my 13-year-old daughter gets ready for high school, I am grateful to be alive, to watch my children grow, spend time with my family and friends, and continue on this journey with my husband by my side.



From left: Melanie, son – Carter, daughter – Kennedy, husband – Raymond



From left: husband – Raymond, daughter – Kennedy, Melanie, son – Carter

Making Strides with Team Undaunted Determination

Update

by Corinne Bombowsky and Sheri Denkensohn-Trott

For the American Cancer Society, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer DC campaign, Team Undaunted Determination originally started with the goal of \$10,000 in honor of the 10th cancerversary of team leader Sheri Denkensohn-Trott and the 10th anniversary of the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund Support Group. After surpassing \$10,000 the goal was raised to \$12,000.

Currently, the team has raised \$12,842. With your help we can raise the \$255 necessary to meet our new \$13,000 goal. The money is needed now more than ever. There are many ways that you can contribute, and campaigns are underway for the holidays. Money from any purchases go toward our team. If you have any questions, contact corinne.bombowsky@cancer.org.

[Donate Here](#)

main.acsevents.org/goto/undauntedtermination10



Cocoa for a Cure



This holiday season enjoy a cup of cocoa w/a loved one, even if they are far away. For a small donation, we will send your loved one hot cocoa and a holiday card.

Deadline to Order
December 10th, 2020

[Order Online](#)

<https://forms.gle/FYbSL6LyaVUufuAq7>

Personalized Letters from Santa



This holiday season send a personalized letter from Santa to your child for a \$10 donation to the American Cancer Society.

Deadline to Order
December 10th, 2020

[Order Online](#)

<https://forms.gle/qrZgXBh64ghBRPm16>

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Recap

by Jennifer Fei and Thelma D. Jones

On Wednesday evening, October 21, the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund (TDJBCF) Support Group held its Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Month Celebration via Zoom and Facebook live. Attendees tuned in from as far as North Carolina, Georgia, and New York to celebrate their survivorship and to support others fighting breast cancer. According to Derek Tawiah, TDJBCF Social Media Coordinator and Ambassador, more than 380 people tuned in through Facebook Live. TDJBCF Founder Thelma D. Jones served as emcee. She welcomed guests and discussed her 13 years of breast cancer survivorship with a rare Late Stage III B and HER2+. In total, there were over 100 years of survivorship among the attendees, who Jones recognized for their courage, strength, tenacity, and advocacy.

Guest speakers Chawnte Randall, Stage 4 Metastatic Triple Negative Breast Cancer Survivor and Advocate, and Melanie A. Nix, MBA, Triple Negative Breast Cancer Survivor, Transformational Speaker, and Resilience Coach, provided powerful testimonies about their journeys as breast cancer survivors and advocates. Randall, who is an Army veteran who works for the federal government and the mother of a recent college graduate, serves on many patient advocate initiatives, including the Tigerlily Foundation's Young Women's ANGEL advocacy program for metastatic breast cancer disparities, a Living Beyond Breast Cancer (LBBC) Young Advocate and an individual member of the Metastatic Breast Cancer Alliance (MBCA). Melanie A. Nix, MBA, TDJBCF Board Member, and mother of two, also discussed her journey as a fifth-generation breast cancer survivor. A native Washingtonian, Nix discussed how her family ties have shaped the way she lives her life.

Dr. Richard Kennedy, MD, former Chief Medical Officer, World Bank Group and TDJBCF Board Member, hosted the closing portion of the event, where he also emphasized the importance of holding providers responsible and accountable to patients' needs. Dr. Kennedy moderated a question and answer discussion with Nix and Randall, where the two women discussed the importance of honesty when discussing the realities of breast cancer with children, and finding ways to focus on their own self-care and mental and physical well-being. Nix and Randall also emphasized the importance of having a support system, noting that within the first weeks of their diagnoses, both women had surrounded themselves with trusted people they could rely on.

In concluding the discussion, both women stressed that young women need to be actively attending to their health by making their annual checkups part of their self-care, being aware of their own family histories, and working to prevent and reduce their risk of breast cancer and other diseases. Randall stressed that many statistics do not cover young Black women, and that being a self-advocate is key to maintaining one's health. With regards to prioritizing the experiences of Black women in the breast cancer community, Nix added that you have to find a way to be part of the community conversation whether you get an invitation, invite yourself or start your own organization.



The full article can be found at TheSouthwester.com

"SW Support Group Celebrates Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Month"