



2017 Annual Report

Your Personal Resource for Breast Cancer Education and Support

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The Year in Review

The Sum is Bigger Than it's Parts

What a difference a year makes! 2017 was a year of exciting happenings here at To Life! and we rose to the occasion once again. As one of the Statewide recipients of a 5 year grant from the NYS Department of Health we confidently prepared an ambitious educational programming agenda for the year. As you will see elsewhere in this publication, our conference and other educational offerings were well attended and well received. Hats off to Martha McCormick, our Director of Education, our Board of Directors, advisors and volunteers, representing many hours of hard work and adroit planning. It was a joy to be part of these events.

2017 was also a year of change here at To Life! and we rose to the occasion to keep our services of the highest quality. We said farewell to two long time boutique staff members: our mastectomy fitter Ann Rose and our wig fitter Helen Warner. They were instrumental in helping To Life! set the bar high for our boutique services. Our fitters personify the mission of To Life! and were so good at their jobs. It is with profound gratitude that we bid them farewell. We have terrific new personnel already providing valuable service and it bears testimony to the network of friends that To Life! has amassed over time that we were able to search, hire and train our new fitter team members in short order.

Throughout this publication you will see evidence of our organization's commitment to those dealing with a breast cancer diagnosis – day by day, week by week, month by month. Our competent and creative staff, extraordinary Board members and cadre of volunteers, committed and engaged supporters bring it all together. Thank you for making good health a priority in your lives and the lives of those in our community.

Warmly,

Eileen Howe Bird
Executive Director

Mara Ginsberg
President and Founder



Friends of To Life! have come together in celebration for the good work of distinguished members of our community each year and to raise funds for the organization. Without giving it a thought, we called it the “Gala” and continued to invite guests to the Gala every spring. Last year, the committee took on the task of rethinking how the event should be introduced to our community. After a series of lively discussions “A Toast To Life! Celebrating Friends with Food and Fun!” was introduced in May 2017. As anyone who has attended this event can attest, the evening is special – top shelf food offerings – small plates from some of the finest restaurants in the area, a dazzling silent auction, wine pull, balloon auction, extraordinary honorees, old friends and new friends, truly a night to remember! So as this article is being written, the plans are in the works for a memorable evening in 2018. Cheers!

*“This place was a real blessing!
Very helpful and uplifting!”*

To Life! Client

Educational Programs

To Life! has earned a reputation for hosting high quality educational programming. It is our delight and pleasure to have a host of wonderful program advisors, gifted speakers, and engaged board members who help us pull together the formidable slate of events hosted throughout the year. Many of these programs are co-sponsored with medical provider partners and fellow community organizations. These cooperative endeavors help us all achieve more with limited resources. Most of the programs we offered are featured below.

Total attendance for 14 programs in 2017 was over 603!

February and March: Getting Your Life Back From Cancer

3-part workshop with Patricia Fennell, MSW, LCSW-R, and Martha McCormick present a survivorship program with strategies and solutions for getting on with your life after cancer.



March, June, September and December: Look Good, Feel Better

Quarterly workshop for women currently undergoing cancer treatment, are about to, or have recently completed treatment receives full attention to gain skills and confidence for increased independence.

March 25: Healing Retreat for Breast Cancer Survivors

A relaxing day with workshops on Dreamwork and Music featuring Wanda Burch of Creative Healing Connections and John Kenosian, singer/songwriter/performer. Hosted by Creative Healing Connections and To Life! with support from Susan G. Komen NENY!

March 28: Know Your Breast and Ovarian Cancer Risk

Focus on hereditary risk for those with Ashkenazi Jewish heritage. Panelists: Lindsey A. Morse, Ferre Institute, Jenny Romero, MD and Mara Ginsberg. Hosted by To Life! with support from Jewish Federation of Northeastern NY.

June 24: Weekend Wellness: Mindful, Playful, Creative

Held in Schenectady, NY
A wellness event for those dealing
with breast or gynecological cancers.
Presenters included Lu Allegretti-
Freeman, Ellen Rupert and Christine
Barton.

August 3: Beat The Odds

Held at Saratoga National, Saratoga Springs. Presenters included Elizabeth Boham, MD, Martin Tenniswood, PhD, and Keri Lyn Walsh, teacher and breast cancer survivor.

**September 9: Wellness Workshop:
Leading a Full Life During &
Beyond Cancer
Olana State Historic Site
Hudson, NY**

Partnering with Columbia Memorial Hospital and Dr. Samira Khera. Workshop topics; developing a resilient perspective, nutrition, development mindfulness with yoga practices. This workshop was open to women diagnosed with breast and gynecological cancers.

*November 4: Thankful Living—
Capital Region Cancer Consortium*

Consortium hosted a morning educational event in Latham. Program addressed Life after Cancer.

*The 7th Annual Women's
Health Conference
Latham, NY*

On November 15th, To Life! hosted a full day comprehensive educational forum addressing state-of-the-art breast cancer treatment and trends. Each of the 12 presenters featured over the course of the day all are based in and/or practice here in the Greater Capital Region.

Presenters included: Douglas Conklin, PhD, Duncan Savage, MD, B. Marie Ward, MD, Alexis Kutski, Esq., Edward S. Dick, LCSW, Wendy Gapczynski, Geraldine Pfeiffer, PT, Amy Zuchelkowski, RN, Debra Nozik, LCSW.

Audience members, including survivors, clinicians, and friends were eager to share their thoughts on the day:

"literature presented was described in depth and intelligently -well done –useful –great clarity in presentation and good info"

"I learned so much and the speakers were great –very organized"

*“seeing familiar faces and learning –
networking, continuing ed credit,
exploring new topics”*



Special Tributes in 2017



The “You’re an Angel” Award was presented at the 19th Annual Gala: “A Toast To Life! Celebrating Friends with Food and Fun”

“You’re An Angel” Award

Barbara Rizzo McHale, BS, RN,
OCN, CBCN, ONN-CG

Barbara has been a dedicated nursing professional, serving the Capital District community since 1977 when she completed her Registered Nurse training.



Barbara has held various nursing positions, specializing in oncology, breast cancer navigation and hospice. Her career included roles of increasing responsibility and management in the field of public health and within the hospital setting.

Barbara has recently retired from her most recent role, as the Nurse Navigator of the Hildegard Medicus Cancer Center at St. Mary’s Hospital and Hildegard Medicus Radiation Oncology at Samaritan Hospital. Barbara held that position since 2009. Prior to formally taking on the role of the nurse navigator, Barbara held clinical management positions at St. Marys Hospital, Samaritan Hospital and Saratoga Hospital.

Distinguished service and awards - Power up the Pink Medical Professional, 2013 WO-MEN Who Rock, To Life! “You’re an Angel” award, 2017.



Community Advocate Award

Presented to **Rufus Collea, MD,**



Partners in Hope Award

Presented to **the Smith/Murphy family,**

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 Knoll's Atomic Power Lab
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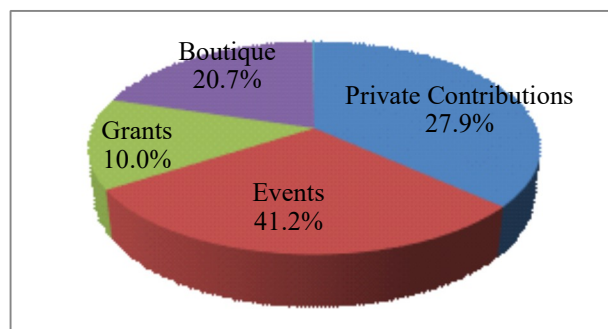
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Attorney General Registration: *To Life!* is a IRC (501)(c)(3) tax exempt organization. Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 7-A, a copy of this report is filed with the New York State Attorney General's Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.