



# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2018

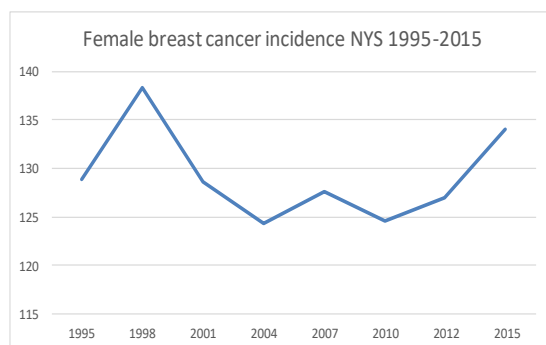
## Celebrating 20 Years of Service in the Capital Region and Surrounding Communities

In 1998, To Life! was founded to provide our community with breast cancer information and services for patients, families and friends. At the time, To Life! was intended to fill a void of information and services in the Greater Capital Region. The desire to provide education, information and support to our community 20 years ago is still our mission and we continue to develop and grow our programs and services.

As we look to our next 20 years, we recognize an additional challenge - addressing the needs of a growing survivor population. Breast cancer mortality rates have decreased significantly over the last thirty years. But with early detection, the number of women diagnosed has risen significantly. The good news is that most of these newly diagnosed women will live on long-term after treatment, but many will live with the after-effects of treatment and side effects from long-term endocrine therapy. And some diagnosed with advanced stage and aggressive cancers, will live much longer lives than previously expected, but with the often major ramifications of aggressive treatments.

### ***Breast Cancer over the Years***

In 1998 there were 14,397 reported cases of breast cancer in New York State. Starting in 2013, breast cancer became the most diagnosed cancer in women. The prediction for 2018 was 17,600<sup>1</sup>. Thankfully, the mortality numbers in New York have declined dramatically. The charts below show the trend over the past 20 years for which data is available.



<sup>1</sup> American Cancer Society

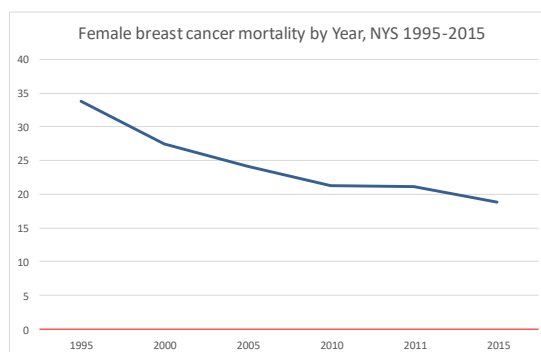
### ***Expansion of programs for Survivor Community***

#### **Exercise and movement**

- complimentary access to local ongoing classes
- Seasonal weekly program opportunities

#### **Nutrition**

- Address needs for treatment and post - treatment
- Cooking classes with community partners
- Complimentary therapeutic treatments



Honoring the past,  
Treasuring the present,



## To Life! 1998–2018 Timeline & Highlights

- 1996 - Mara Ginsberg's experiences as a breast cancer patient were filled with frustration. Her expectation was that there should be local access to information related to diagnosis and treatment along with support services. Her search yielded no such service available in the Capital Region.
- 1997
- 1998 Mara's makes the decision to start a community-based organization to help – to fill the gap she experience while in treatment herself. With a small group of advisors supporting the initiative, To Life! was formed.
- 1998 October 1998 Mara's vision turns to reality and the first education program is held. Additional education programs are held throughout that year; Mara launches an informational newsletter and holds the very first To Life! Spring Gala.

- 2005 The first Pink Ball is held in Saratoga Springs. Nearly 200 attendees danced the night away and raised money to support breast cancer programs and services. Highlights included ballroom dance performances by Leslie Valencia and her dance studio students.
- 2006 To Life! establishes a satellite location in Saratoga Springs, first in the Saratoga Hospital, then moving to 110 Spring Street where a boutique is opened.
- 2007 An updated To Life! website is launched
- 2011 The first Women's Health Conference is hosted—a full day of educational programs. Social media presence is launched through Facebook.



- 1999 Mara's vision grows as space is located for To Life! on Delaware avenue. Support groups begin to meet regularly, mentoring connections are formed, educational programs are held 9 times per year, engaging local clinical professionals and boutique services open to the public.
- 2005 To Life! launches a capital campaign and purchases a building on nearby Kenwood Avenue. After much cleaning and renovation work, To Life! moves to this friendly home-like building.



- 2012 To Life! embraces digital technology. The first e-newsletter is sent out to our on-line community.
- 2014 To Life! launches a support group for women living with advanced stage breast cancers. These women are living with more complicated and intense issues than lower stage breast cancer survivors and this type of peer support has been beneficial.
- 2017 Launch of the revitalized Spring Gala as: "A Toast to Life! Celebrating Friends with Food and Fun" still held the first Tuesday in May annually.

## To Life! Education & Support Programs in 2018

To Life! staff work with community partners, board members and advisors to organize and host education programs. In 2018, 366 individuals participated in one or more events.

### August 8, 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Beat The Odds



Saratoga Springs City Center, Saratoga Springs. Beat the Odds is an educational forum on Breast Cancer held every summer in Saratoga in August. This year's presenters included Luba Djurdjinovic, MS, Edward M. Liebers MD, and Jennifer

Herbert Benedict, RN, mom, and Breast Cancer Survivor. This program includes a light breakfast at the beautiful Saratoga Springs City Center.



**Presenters Edward Leibers, MD and Luba Djurdjinovic MS (far right) with Eileen Howe Bird, Executive Director and Mara Ginsberg, President and Founder to Life!**

**September 8, Leading a Full Life During and Beyond Cancer** Now in it's fourth year, this wellness day workshop was held in collaboration with Columbia Memorial Hospital at Olana State Historic Site, Hudson, NY. Presenters included Susan Spiegel Soloway, Roufia Payman, Anne Olin, Claudia Coenan and Dale Hills.

### November 3, Thankful Living Capital Region Cancer Consortium

Carondelet Hospitality Center, Latham  
The collective membership of the Cancer Consortium hosted this half day educational program for cancer survivors in the greater Capital Region. Topics included taking a look at the long term medical, psychological, and financial impacts of cancer treatments. Speakers included Cheryl Syta ANP, Jacqueline Dorn LMSW.

## Ongoing Programs

### Breast Health Workshops

Hosted at Community sites throughout the Greater Capital Region. To Life! hosted 5 workshops, with 188 attendees.

### Look Good Feel Better

To Life! Has been a host site for this program, working in collaboration with the American Cancer Society. To Life! hosted 4 programs during the year along with volunteer cosmetologist/ esthetician Paula Genovesi.

### December 13, 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Women's Health Conference

Carondelet Hospitality Center, Latham  
Full day conference offers the latest information regarding treatment and trends in breast cancer and related health issues. Continuing Education credits are offered for nursing professionals. Presenters and content are structured so as to be informative to an audience including healthcare professionals, cancer survivors, caregivers and friends interested in hearing from expert professionals in the area of women's health. The three morning speakers were Elizabeth Boham, MD, MS, RD of the Ultra-Wellness center in Lenox MA, Sara Brenner, MD, MPH of SUNY Polytechnic, and Dr. Ronald Stram of the Stram Center.



### Hike with To Life!

In collaboration with St Peter's Hospital Breast Center, this new program utilizes popular walking and hiking activities to promote health and wellness for Breast Cancer survivors. Open to all breast cancer survivors in the Capital District, the program began with short weekly walks that optionally expanded to longer, more challenging weekend walks and two moderately easy Adirondack Hikes. While officially on hiatus during the winter, participants have informally gathering on weekend mornings to keep up the pace!





## To Life! Community Events 2018



### (February) February 18 ' Siena College Women's Basketball Pink Zone Game

Marcelle Athletic Center, Siena College, Latham, NY

A celebration of survivorship hosted by Siena College and To Life! that seeks to honor local survivors and raise awareness about breast cancer. The evening consists of an early reception with light food and refreshments, a pre-game ceremony where Saints players escort honorees onto the court to be recognized for their fight against breast cancer, followed by the 7pm game itself. This year 20 survivors were honored during the game against Canisius College.

### (May) 19<sup>th</sup> Annual

#### Toast To Life! Celebrating Friends with Food and Fun

Franklin Plaza, Troy, NY

This fundraiser and culinary experience brings out some of the finest restaurants in the Capital Region. On this special evening To Life! honors individuals who have served the cause of breast cancer patients and survivors. A grand silent auction, wine pull, and raffles set for a festive evening. This year To Life! honored Helen Warner with the "You're an Angel" Award, Deb Nozik with the "Extra Mile Award". And Andrew Warheit, MD also received the "Extra Mile Award".



### (August) Fabulous Fillies Day

Saratoga Race Track, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12:30pm

An all-day event at the track, in which New York Racing Authority honors seven local survivors involved with To Life! Before each race, a survivor's name and story is read aloud on the track. After, survivors are treated to a luncheon at "the Stretch," a luxury box and dining area. They attend all festivities free of charge.



### (October ) Paint Bethlehem & Saratoga PINK!

Once again, To Life! Engaged volunteers in Bethlehem and Saratoga Springs to paint nearly 200 pumpkins pink for October breast cancer awareness. Scores of volunteers collected donated pumpkins and applied, not one but two coats of pink paint as well as fun decorations. Clearly a DIY of epic proportion! Finished pumpkins along with valuable screening information were then distributed to participating businesses and offices throughout the regions.



### (October) 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Pink Ball

Hall of Springs, Saratoga Springs, NY

Our elegant black-tie event honors members of the community dedicated to supporting women and families dealing with breast cancer. It is a major fund-raiser, providing the resources necessary to continue To Life!'s ongoing mission. This year was our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and it was a Pink Ball to remember. We recognized our honorees from year's past, our "shining stars," paid tribute to the memory of our dear friend and board member, Cynthia Shenker, and celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of our founder and board president Mara Ginsberg. Honorary Chairs this year were Herb and Annmarie Ellis.



# To Life! Community Support 2018

## Friends Fundraisers:

1st National Bank of Scotia – Dress Down Day  
 Bethlehem Town Hall – Pumpkin Raffle  
 Christ the King Early childhood Education Center  
 Cindi Martin – Birthday celebration  
 Clublife Health and Fitness – Swing the Bell  
 Rita Cox – Birthday Celebration  
 CrossFit Spur – Fight Like a Girl  
 Destination Kia – Car Sales Promotion  
 DZ Restaurants – October Entrée Promotion  
 Elsemere Elementary – Pink Ribbon Sales  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church Poestenkill  
 Fabulous Fillies –  
     Breast Cancer Survivor Day at the Races  
 Hannaford Supermarkets – Bags for a Cause  
 H & R Block- New Client Promotion  
 Knoll's Atomic Power Lab – Pink Day  
 Kate Kloss – Pink Ribbon Sales  
 Normanside Golf –  
     Women's Member Guest Tournament  
 NYSTEC – Pink Day Promotion  
 Quilters Spring get away  
 Quilters Fall get away  
 Saratoga Casino – Audiostars Concert Pink Party  
 Saratoga Clay Arts - Chili Bowl Cook-off  
 All Points Tennis - Serve for the Cause  
 Shawna's Dogs – October Dog Grooming Day  
 Stella Pasta Bar & Bakery – Jam for Cancer Coffeehouse  
 Sandra Foster and Ta Ta's Golf Tournament and  
     A Toast to the Ta Ta's Wine Tasting  
 Team Kinetic



Wine Tasting and Golf  
 Outing with Toast to the Ta  
 Ta's event leader Sandra



Stella's Pasta Bar hosted Jam for  
 Cancer in October

## Corporate Sponsors

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 Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits  
 St. Peter's Health Partners  
 Stram Center for Integrative Medicine

## To Life! Board of Directors

### President:

Mara B. Ginsberg, Esq.

### Vice-President

Lisa Anne Proskin, Esq.

### Treasurer:

Sorelle Brauth

### Directors:

Catherine Black

Rita Cox

Sandra Dollard

Kevin Dubner

Steven Lerner

Barbara MacDowell

Cynthia Shenker, Esq.<sup>(†)</sup>



## In Memmorium

## Volunteers

We could never accomplish all that we do without the continued support of many dedicated volunteers and contributors.

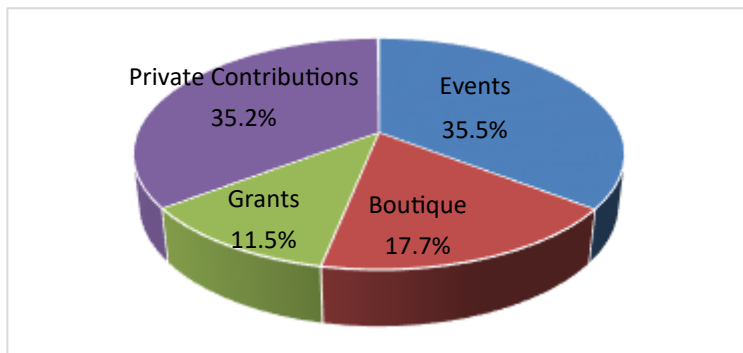
Volunteers work independently and side by side with staff members; answering phones, assisting at health fairs, facilitating programs, and mentoring others on their journey. The gift of your time talent and precious resources provide just the right assistance when needed.

Special thanks to the volunteer committees who organize and run fundraising events. These events provide an opportunity to celebrate the efforts of community members who have directly impacted the lives of breast cancer patients.

In 1998 To Life! lost a dear friend, advisor and ardent supporter. Cynthia Shenker was a member of the To Life! Board of Directors. She was instrumental in securing legislative funding for the 2005 purchase of the To Life building in Delmar.

Beginning in 2019, To Life! will launch the "Cynthia Shenker Speaker" series to be presented each August at our Beat the Odds program.

## To Life! Program Revenue Sources



## 2018 To Life! Staff

Eileen Howe Bird

*Executive Director*

April Jacobsen

*Boutique Finance*

Martha McCormick

*Director of Education*

Emily Pratt

*Executive Assistant*

Prudence Chapman

*Manager of Development*

Melanie Murphy

*Boutique Associate,*

*Saratoga*

Rachel Criscione

*Boutique Associate*

*Delmar*

Melanie Wagner

*Boutique Associate,*

*Delmar*

**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.

