

Time to Give Thanks!

The timing couldn't be better. It's the Thanksgiving season, and we are overwhelmed with gratitude for all the support from our communities-sponsors, volunteers, donors, and local businesses. We have just wrapped up a busy Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which followed a successful Walk/Run. Be sure to scroll down to read the inspiring stories of two volunteer fundraisers.



Here's a list of BCAM supporters so you can see how rich we are in community! We couldn't do what we do without you.

- Blackhawk Country Club
- Pacific West Gymnastics
- District 10 Car Club
- East Bay Bridal
- Stella & Dot
- Moffett Towers Club
- Wristband Creation
- Livermore/Pleasanton Firefighters
- Fremont Firefighters
- Grace Yoga
- Lira Clinical
- PG & E
- Raymond Handling
- Level 5 Salon
- Trina Turk
- Fremont Elks Lodge
- Premier Automotive
- Shop Love Breath
- SMI Corporation
- Clink to Pink

- Pink-TOBER
- Ruby Hill Golf Club
- St. Francis Central Coast Catholic High School
- USF Volleyball
- Page Mill Winery
- Warriors Community Foundation
- AND many, many individual donors!!!

Funda Dervisoglu: Fundraiser Extraordinaire

Every year, volunteer fundraiser Funda Dervisoglu manages to be the top individual contributor to our online Walk/Run fundraising effort, helping us meet our \$15K goal so we can receive matching funds from the East Bay Community Foundation. This year, a local radio station corporation donated a prize package to be awarded to our top fundraiser, and we're happy to report that Funda is the winner! She raised almost \$6000, more than a third of the total funds raised on Crowdrise this year. Amazing! A huge thank you from all of us!

Funda shares her uplifting story with us:

My family spent many years living outside of Boston, and then we all made our way out West. I was the last one to come, settling down in Sunnyvale in 2010.

My parents are retired and spend their summers in Turkey, where our family is originally from. In 2014 during their summer vacation I received a call that changed my life forever. I'm not sure I can actually recall the entire conversation other than I heard "your mom may have cancer, she found a lump and the doctors out here think it's cancer. We are flying out in a day and need you to call the Breast Cancer Clinic at Stanford..."

Fast forward to the 9th of July...I was getting my hair done and my parents were at Stanford going through tests. It was towards the end of the day and I remember sending my dad a text asking how it was going and he wrote me one word back "cancer." I don't know how I made it home from the hair salon without crashing my car to be honest, but somehow I made it to my parents house and there starts our cancer journey.

Mom was diagnosed with HER2 positive, an aggressive form of breast cancer, and it had already spread to her lymph nodes which



meant this monster of a disease had a good head start on us (Stage 2A).

Once she was diagnosed, I felt absolutely helpless and compelled to make a difference. Every time we went to the cancer clinic or the infusion area they were full, and that broke my heart. I kept thinking there's no way all of these people are sick, but I was wrong. I started to research local charities and found the HERS Breast Cancer Foundation. I loved what it had to offer, and I had seen their store at Stanford. My first involvement with the organization was in 2014.

By December, my mom had to have surgery to remove the area around the tumor and some of her lymph nodes, which meant that she would need to take some extra precautions with her right arm, including wearing compression sleeves every time she flies. The HERS Breast Cancer Foundation helped her to get the necessary compression sleeves. So I felt even more compelled to continue giving back.

Mom went through a full year of treatment including chemotherapy, surgery, radiation and targeted therapy. We found out that her tumor responded well to the treatment and she was declared to have achieved PCR (Pathological Complete Response). That was fantastic news!

I've currently finished my 3rd year of fundraising/running for the HERS Breast Cancer Foundation Walk/Run and plan on continuing my annual tradition. Mom was in the middle of chemo for the first run and she came out for just a short while, but she did it. I remember thinking raising money and running is the least I can do for these amazing women who are fighting this formidable disease.

I keep my fundraising efforts simple and real. I reach out to friends and family and co-workers and tell mom's story and then let them know if they'd like to help and donate how to do that, and if they choose not to that's okay. But I get them to promise me that they will remind the women in their lives to get their annual mammograms and check-ups.

Gloria Buentello: Survivor Strength

Gloria Buentello is a HERS Breast Cancer Foundation client and volunteer. This year, she and her family set up the gorgeous "footprint" station at the Walk/Run, complete with a bevy of pink balloons, a photo backdrop, and a heartwarming way to honor survivors.



We are inspired by Gloria's strong and generous spirit, and grateful she shared her story with us:

Every year I get my annual mammogram in February, my birthday month. I never went into these appointments thinking about breast cancer; no one in my family has had it. In 2012 after the initial scan, they asked me to wait. Then they told me I could leave and they would email the results. The next day I had a message from my doctor that I had an appointment in Hayward for another screening. The appointment was the first one the next morning. My husband and I showed up early. I had the second mammogram and sat in the waiting room while I watched woman after woman come and go. Finally the nurse came and said that the doctor wanted to see me. The doctor showed me areas of concern in the mammogram photos and said she wanted to do an ultrasound. After the ultrasound she told me she wanted to do a biopsy that afternoon. My husband and I went home that day after being at the hospital for almost 8 hours.

The doctor called me at 10:15am that Friday morning. She said "It's cancer." I was completely in shock, no way, no one has ever had breast cancer in my family. I kept thinking, I am 59 years old and my life is over. But by Sunday I said, let's do whatever we need to do. I called Monday to tell my doctor "Okay, I am ready." The surgery was scheduled in two weeks. The doctor said I was at Stage 3; they removed 27 lymph nodes. I started 16 weeks of chemo and radiation. The first part of chemo was a piece of cake, part two was grueling. But it saved my life! I got past the "why me" and realized everyone has a struggle in their life, and this is what God chose for me. I now realize that I am so much stronger because of this journey.

I am a 4 year survivor and life is good. Having my husband of 44 years as my caregiver helped me stay strong during my treatment. He had just retired and I thank God he was there for me. He took over everything at home—the shopping, the housework—and also provided me with emotional and spiritual support. He was there for every appointment with me. I have a huge support system from my two daughters and their families, my brothers and sisters and lots of friends.

When I lost all my hair, the hospital had recommended some places to check for a wig. I wore knitted hats for a little while but really wanted a wig. I visited three salons that made me feel very uncomfortable. I went online and was surprised that there was a salon really close to me and the web site was so pretty and pink!

Their name was "HERS." I called and made an appointment for the next week. From the minute I walked into the HERS Breast Cancer Foundation office, I felt so comfortable with the people and the way they made me feel. Their salon was private, serving just one person at a time. The wig consultant was so patient and caring. I will never forget the care I received, it made me feel so special. I ordered my wig that day.

A year later, when I was looking for someone to come to my work and talk for Breast Cancer Awareness month, (I do all the company events) I visited HERS Breast Cancer Foundation again. I walked in and met the program director, and within 10 minutes she told me "I'll do it!" The event at work was even better than I had imagined. Everyone loved listening to her talk about her journey and about HERS Breast Cancer Foundation. Right then and there I knew I had to help this group and the cause by volunteering. The director asked me to help with one of their events, and I was so honored. I went into it full steam. The event was amazing. I have met so many wonderful women because of HERS Breast Cancer Foundation. The next year, Vera came to speak at my work event. My daughters and I help with restaurant fundraisers, the annual Walk /Run, and other events. We enjoy it all so much.

I have arm compression sleeves and bras from HERS. After my surgery I had so many problems finding bras that fit well. When I mentioned this to Chris, she set me up for a fitting. I had the appointment with Annette, who was very kind and professional. I got a prosthesis (which I would not have known about) and three beautiful bras. What a difference it made for me. I felt somewhat whole again.

I have recommended HERS Breast Cancer Foundation to so many people that have gone through the same journey as mine or are going through it now. The foundation's approach to supporting women healing from breast cancer is what we all need. The women at HERS Breast Cancer Foundation understand and show compassion and are so caring. I am so proud to be a HERS volunteer and help other women.

Although I would not have chosen cancer, it has been a blessing. Along this cancer journey, my life has been enriched with beautiful people and experiences. It has taken on new meaning and a new direction. I am a 4 year survivor and life is good.

Thanks for a Fun Night! Go Warriors!

A few staff members and several clients were treated to a super special night at the Golden State Warriors season opener. Everyone needs a little fun, and this night was just what the doctor ordered. Thank you, Warriors Community Foundation, for raising

awareness at the arena!



We're Not Fooling! Save the Date for PWP

Please plan to join us April 1, 2017 at Castlewood Country Club in Pleasanton for our **2nd Annual Pink Tie Gala** to celebrate People With Purpose. Check this newsletter and our web site for details to come. Ticket sales will be open early 2017.



HERS Breast Cancer Foundation

Program Stores:

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