

Front Line

On the front line in the battle against breast cancer.

FIRST LADY MICHELE RIDGE ANNOUNCES INCOME TAX CHECK-OFF RESEARCH GRANTS

MANY HAPPY RETURNS

PBCC President, Pat Halpin-Murphy, joined First Lady Michele Ridge and PA Secretary of Health, Robert Zimmerman, at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute April 4 to announce the third-year grant winners from the Income Tax Check-Off for Breast and Cervical Cancer Research. Dr. Ronald Herberman, Director of the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, hosted the event.

Research grant amounts range from \$30,000-\$35,000 and go to eight Pennsylvania cancer researchers from the University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, Magee-Womens Hospital, Penn State University and the University of Pittsburgh. For a complete list of grant recipients and their research titles, turn to page five.

"The Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition is a powerful force in the fight against this tragic disease," said First Lady Michele Ridge, PBCC Honorary Chair. "On behalf of all Pennsylvanians, we're deeply grateful for the PBCC's dedication to finding a cure now. Breast cancer is more than a woman's health issue - it affects fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. The PBCC's compassion, commitment and hard work give new hope to women and their families throughout the Commonwealth."

The research grants are administered through the PA Department of Health's Income Tax Check-Off Committee, chaired by Pat Halpin-Murphy.



Mark Nichols, Ph.D., explains the latest in breast cancer research to Pat Halpin-Murphy, First Lady Michele Ridge, and PA Secretary of Health Robert Zimmerman. Dr. Nichols is an Income Tax Check-Off grant recipient, and took the three on a tour of his lab at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute.

**More than 25,000 state taxpayers
donated their state income
tax returns to help find a cure
for breast cancer.
The average individual
donation is between
\$7 and \$8.**

**Thank you
Pennsylvania taxpayers!**

pat halpin-murphy

president and founder, pennsylvania breast cancer coalition

a message from



New Coverage for Cancer Clinical Trials

The Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition has just learned that one of the major insurers in Pennsylvania, Highmark/Pennsylvania Blue Shield, will now cover typical care costs associated with qualified breast cancer clinical trials. Highmark will cover services such as physician visits, laboratory testing, administration of treatment and evaluation of the patient during the course of the cancer trial.

To be qualified, a clinical trial must be funded, authorized or approved by the National Institute of Health or another designated federal agency. When asked about the coverage decision, Brent O'Connell, M.D., Vice President and Medical Director of Highmark, said, "We made the decision based on a number of factors. Cancer trials have become a therapeutic option for some patients; they are essential for obtaining important outcomes-based information, and for some, they may offer the best chance for survival or a better quality of life."

The PBCC knows that in order to find a cure for breast cancer, we must support clinical trial research. We have long called on insurers to cover any cost to patients that might be incurred by the patient's participation in a clinical trial. We salute Highmark and its medical and administrative leadership for staking out an aggressive leadership position on a matter vital to every woman in Pennsylvania.

*Early detection is
our best protection.*

*Call KePRO at
1-800-209-3991
for an all-occasion
mammogram gift card.
Ask about this and our
other free breast cancer
materials!*



www.pamedicare.org

Alice Sanders, PBCC South Central Vice President, participated in Governor Ridge's monthly radio address in April. Alice joined the Governor and Mrs. Ridge to discuss the PBCC's Income Tax Check-Off initiative for breast cancer research.

The radio address aired Saturday, April 7 on many statewide media outlets.



Alice Sanders, shown here with husband Billy, at the Snyder County exhibit opening of "67 Women - 67 Counties: Facing Breast Cancer in Pennsylvania".





Survivor Spotlight

Diane Funston-Dillon
Harrisburg, PA



Diane Funston-Dillon was diagnosed with Infiltrating Ductal Carcinoma in October of 1996 at age 42. She found the lump through a breast self-exam. Here is her story.

Q: What was your initial reaction to the diagnosis?

A: I couldn't think straight, and my thoughts were all about dying. I had no risk factors! I had a thousand questions, but was afraid to ask even one. I wanted to disappear or turn back time. Dread and terror consumed my life.

Q: How were you treated?

A: Lumpectomy with axillary node dissection. Later I had a mastectomy, coupled with the placement of a tissue expander to start the process of reconstruction. Then came six cycles of chemotherapy, followed by five years of Tamoxifen.

Q: What was the hardest part of this process?

A: Navigating chemotherapy was definitely the hardest part of my journey with breast cancer. My treatments left me ill and unable to work. I found it unbearable to deal with the loss of my hair. I felt like I was stranded in a barren and foreign land where no one else spoke my language.

Q: How did you get yourself out of this dark time?

A: I kept reminding myself that if my hair was falling out, then the chemo must be working. My hair indeed grew back, this time a different color, texture, and it was curly. I tell everyone that this was the most expensive perm I've ever had! I also joined a support group and found encouragement and empathy among them.

Q: Describe your recovery process.

A: Recovery is slow and dreary. Sometimes it seems endless. Doctor appointments will be part of my life for many years. I have gotten on with my life, but I never forget – not for one day – my experience with cancer.

Q: How has cancer changed you?

A: I know I am a stronger person. I've met some very special people. I appreciate things I used to take for granted. I am grateful for every birthday and I surround myself with positive, happy people. I slow down and take time for quiet gratitude each day.

Q: What have you learned from breast cancer?

A: I learned that I could help another person through diagnosis and treatment. I've learned

to tell everyone of the importance of self breast exams, clinical exams and mammograms. I believe God gave me this diagnosis for a reason. I may not understand the reason, but helping another along the way makes the path easier for both of us. And if someone tells me that they got a mammogram because of me, then my cancer has served some purpose.

Q: Any advice for newly-diagnosed women?

A: Facing breast cancer involves fear, distress, courage and hope. Armed with knowledge, a positive attitude and a will to survive, we can prevail, overcome and even triumph.

Diane serves on the PBCC Board of Directors, co-facilitates a breast cancer support group, and works for KePRO, a peer review organization that protects the rights and health of persons on Medicare in PA.

To profile someone in
"Survivor Spotlight",
email Heather Hibshman at
heather@pabreastcancer.org

ARE YOU A KNOWLEDGEABLE BREAST CANCER ACTIVIST?

THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO.

**GET MORE INVOLVED
IN ACTION ON ISSUES
IN YOUR COMMUNITY.**

**LEARN MORE ABOUT
BREAST CANCER
AND BREAST CANCER
RESEARCH.**

**JOIN THIS EXCITING
NEW PROGRAM THAT
ALLOWS THE VOICES
OF THOSE AFFECTED
BY CANCER TO BE
HEARD.**

HERE'S HOW

We want you to join us for a FREE Scientific Training Seminar Wednesday, October 17, 2001 in Harrisburg.

The PBCC is looking for 20 enthusiastic and committed individuals to represent us as knowledgeable breast cancer activists in your own community.

- Learn the latest about breast cancer from the medical experts.
- Sessions on "The Science of Breast Cancer", "What is a Clinical Trial" and "Clinical Trial Research."
- No charge for this training seminar. PBCC will provide lunch and lodging October 17 at the Harrisburg Hilton.

**CALL THE PBCC FOR AN
APPLICATION TODAY.**

1.800.377.8828 X102

email: heather@pabreastcancer.org

fax: 717.738.9535

or write:

Pat Halpin-Murphy
President & Founder
PA Breast Cancer Coalition
c/o Doneckers Complex
55 New Street, Suite 5
Ephrata, PA 17522

Completed applications are due
by July 31, 2001.

PA
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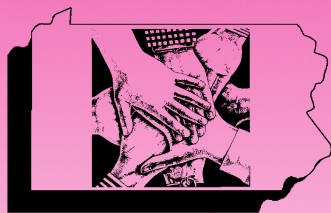
WWW.PABREASTCANCER.ORG

CONGRATULATIONS INCOME TAX CHECK-OFF RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS!

***THANK YOU FOR BEING ON THE FRONT LINES
IN THE BATTLE AGAINST CANCER.***

- 
- ✓ **Jean Latimer, Ph.D.**
Magee-Womens Hospital
"Modulation of human mammary epithelial architecture in vitro and SERM testing"
 - ✓ **Kenneth McCarty, Jr., M.D., Ph.D.**
University of Pittsburgh
"Estrogen receptor cofactors in the evaluation of Tamoxifen/Raloxifene resistant breast cancers"
 - ✓ **Francesmary Modugno, Ph.D.**
University of Pittsburgh
"Estrogen metabolism, body mass index, hormone replacement therapy and postmenopausal breast cancer risk"
 - ✓ **Mark Nichols, Ph.D.**
University of Pittsburgh
"Analysis of defective estrogenic signaling and resistance in SERM treated women"
 - ✓ **Yvonne Paterson, Ph.D.**
University of Pennsylvania
"Cancer immunotherapy with a live recombinant vaccine"
 - ✓ **Scott Shore, Ph.D.**
Temple University
"Role of Aak in DNA damaged-induced signaling in breast cancer"
 - ✓ **Henry Simpkins, M.D., Ph.D.**
Temple University
"Expression of the calcium binding protein, sorcin, as a marker of breast cancer sensitivity to paclitaxel"
 - ✓ **Michael Verderame, Ph.D.**
Pennsylvania State University
"Disruption of breast epithelial cell differentiation by Tyrosine Kinase signal transduction"

For more information about the grant recipients and their research, contact Vicki Gingrich, PBCC Community Outreach Director, at 800-377-8828.



Grassroots Partners across the State

● **Memorials**

Joseph DeMarco, a research chemist with Merck & Co. for 40 years, passed away in January. His family asked that contributions be made to the Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition. \$1,255 was contributed in his memory. We thank the DeMarco family.

● **Corporate Support**

Karen Brosey, a Doncaster wardrobe consultant in York, is donating part of her sales on all pink items to the PBCC. Thank you Karen for this wonderful idea.

WROZ-FM Radio held a Second Chance Prom at the Lancaster Country Club on April 7. PBCC benefited from raffle ticket sales and silent auction bids, totalling \$2,900. Thank you prom attendees!



● **Special Events**



The Girls Leaders Association of Pittsburgh's Plum High School raised over \$3,500 as part of their "Make a Difference Day" campaign. Here, First Lady Michele Ridge joins the GLA as they donate the money to four Pittsburgh cancer researchers as part of the Income Tax Check-Off program.

Pat Halpin-Murphy joined PA Representatives Carole Rubley and Connie Williams at the "Celebration of Women 2001" in recognition of March as Women's History Month in Pennsylvania. The event, hosted by Speaker of the House Matt Ryan, saluted the 28 women currently serving as Members of the PA House of Representatives.



West Chester University President, Madeleine Wing Adler, hosted a regional Income Tax Check-Off event at the University on March 21. Thank you West Chester University for opening your doors to us.



We welcome your inspired ways to support the PBCC. Call PBCC Community Outreach Director, Vicki Gingrich, at 717-738-9567 x 101 with your ideas.

Genetic Privacy & Discrimination

By Senators Jane Earll (R-Erie) and Allyson Y. Schwartz (D-Philadelphia)

HARRISBURG — The human genome – our genetic code – has been described as the “blueprint of human life” that dictates how human beings form and develop.

We were fascinated when experts recently announced they had substantially decoded the human genome. Scientists are hopeful that human genome research will eventually lead to astounding advances in our efforts to combat serious diseases, including breast cancer. Genetic research holds incredible promise for our future health, but it is our responsibility to manage this progress wisely.

Genetic Markers

Everyone may have a genetic marker indicating the potential for a life-threatening or debilitating disease. This genetic information is only a marker, an indicator that may never materialize into the disease that it identifies. But would you feel comfortable being tested for such a marker if you knew that the information could jeopardize your chance of receiving affordable insurance or maintaining your employment?

We are proposing bi-partisan legislation to protect Pennsylvanians against discriminatory practices in the use of their genetic information and to recognize that Pennsylvanians have a right to privacy for genetic test results.

Important Legislation

Senator Earll’s legislation (Senate Bill 541, the Genetic Testing Confidentiality Act) would



(L-R) Bonnie Squires, PBCC V.P. for Development, joins Senator Allyson Schwartz and Senator Jane Earll at a press conference announcing Genetic Testing Privacy Bills March 27 in Harrisburg.

ensure the confidentiality of information obtained from a genetic test by requiring a patient’s informed consent prior to its release. Senator Schwartz’s legislation (Senate Bill 542, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination in Health Insurance Act) would prohibit insurers from denying or canceling health insurance coverage, or varying the terms and conditions of coverage, on the basis of genetic

information. It would also bar insurance providers from requesting or requiring an individual to obtain or disclose genetic information without prior consent.

Bi-partisan Effort

The two of us, from opposite corners of the state and different political parties, have joined together because of the importance of acting now to prevent genetic discrimination. We share enthusiasm for the potential medical breakthroughs genetic research may bring and want scientists to move forward confidently. But we must act now to respond to legitimate fears of threats to our privacy and our civil rights.

The General Assembly should promptly consider our legislation to protect your privacy, support Pennsylvania scientists, and improve the health of millions of Pennsylvanians.

The Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition urges you to contact your State Legislators to support this important legislation.

SAVE THE DATE

**PBCC
Keystone
Breast Cancer
Conference**

Thursday, October 18, 2001

Harrisburg Hilton & Towers

*Look for your individual
registration flyer later*

*this summer or register online at
www.pabreastcancer.org/register.html*

Mother's Day Mammograms®

The PBCC joined First Lady Michele Ridge to kick off Mother's Day Mammograms® April 23 at Harrisburg's Susquehanna Township High School. Joining them were student athletes from STHS and neighboring Central Dauphin East, and their mothers. The students stressed the need to take an active role in their mothers' health.

FREE mammograms were available the month of May through private facility partners across the state and through the PA Department of Health's HealthyWoman program. Mother's Day Mammograms® is a partnership of the PBCC and the Rite Aid Women's Health Foundation that enables eligible women to receive FREE mammograms.



First Lady Michele Ridge and Pat Halpin-Murphy join Susquehanna Township High School students Lauren Pringle, Emily Roumm and Lee Anne Gardner, to kick off Mother's Day Mammograms®.

Address Service Requested

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55 New Street, Suite 5
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