

JEANNE BRODEUR: BATTLING CANCER WOMAN TO WOMAN

A New Campaign For The Pacific Shores Hematology-Oncology Foundation

When Jeanne Brodeur was diagnosed with cancer, she felt confident that at least she was going to have access to whatever treatment she needed to battle the disease.

"I have to say that one of the things I've always been grateful for is that I've had very good insurance and I can afford to pay for whatever needs to get done," said Jeanne, 57, an East Coast native who lives in Manhattan Beach today. The almost four-year cancer survivor serves as the vice-president for development at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, where she oversees fundraising and major donor activities. She notes how grateful she is that everyone there has been extraordinarily supportive from the start.

But Jeanne realized quickly that her good fortune was not shared by others.

"I sit in the chemo infusion room for a lot of hours and, looking around the room, one of the things that struck me is, how do some of the people who don't have access to good medical insurance, who don't have the means to pay for the extra expenses over and above what is covered, how do these people get treatment?" she wondered.

Jeanne did more than wonder. Jeanne decided to put her fundraising expertise to use to help other women who needed help in fighting their cancers. She is starting a woman-to-woman campaign with the foundation to help raise money for those who need assistance in obtaining treatment – or even just getting to the doctor's office.

Jeanne saw that Pacific Shores Hematology - Oncology Foundation's mission – to help patients and caregivers obtain access to education, research, and new diagnostic and treatment modalities, which all improve the lives of cancer patients – meshed with her vision.

The campaign is designed to make sure that qualified women with cancer who meet the campaign's criteria get the tests they need, the treatments that they may not have access to, or the assistance they need just to make it back and forth to the



"The Woman to Woman Campaign provides deserving and financially needy women undergoing cancer treatment with access to tests, procedures, investigational drugs, and other life-saving medical expenses that can extend their lives and increase their quality of life."

– Jeanne Brodeur

doctor's office – insurance, it turns out, sometimes doesn't cover basic things like transportation.

"There is so much stress on you when you go through cancer treatment. To add on the additional stress of paying for your medical treatments or paying for medications that your insurance won't fully cover," Jeanne says "is just more stress than anyone should have to deal with. I thought, it's great that we do all this research, but I want to be sure that every woman gets access to the best and latest in treatments and medication."

Jeanne has extensive personal experience with the disease.

She was diagnosed in August 2004 with breast cancer, which then metastasized into bone cancer. Since then, she's had a second breast cancer, and a recurrence of the bone cancer. She is currently in her fourth round of chemotherapy. Her

mother and father died of cancer, and her brother died at 49 from colorectal cancer. Her plans to help cancer patients come from a deep, personal desire to see the disease defeated.

"I honestly needed to think about how I could make it easier for other people who might be going through an even tougher time than I am," Jeanne says. "The only way to survive cancer and the treatments, is not to focus on your own illness."

Being a professional fundraiser, Jeanne has laid out a plan that will create a sustainable assistance fund.

"Our hope is that we will start the ball rolling by finding 100 donors who will commit to donating \$1,000 a year for the next five years," she says.

And what will make this fund different than others, is the connection that donors will have to the efforts they fund. The money will go directly into the Foundation's community of patients who need the assistance to continue their battle against the disease.

"As a contributor, all too often you really have no real connection to where your money goes or what it is doing," she says. "One of the reasons we're taking this approach is that we want the donors to know about who is receiving the benefit of their donations. It's to really give them a sense of what their money is doing. We want them to connect. We want to make it personal."