LETTER FROM SHARON PHILLIPS, OUTGOING PRESIDENT

As my term as President draws to a close, I would like to thank our hard working board, many committee members, generous supporters and dedicated staff for all that they have done to make my past three years at the BCA so successful.

This year we were able to fund six exceptional projects, three young investigators, two breast surgeon fellows and maintain our education and outreach giving levels for approximately $1.5 million!

To fund this work our events were numerous, including Kids for a Cause, the Junior Fashion Show, our 20th Anniversary Dinner, the 5K Run/Walk for Hope, Golf Outing, Go For Pink and our largest annual Luncheon and Fashion Show ever, chaired by the outstanding team of Kelly Buchalter and Xandy Duffy.

We capped it all off with a holiday party featuring famed designer Jonathan Adler. In addition, we went on dozens of site visits from Boston to Philadelphia, and many places in between, and were honored by Massachusetts General Hospital at their 100 Gala. The challenges of cancer research continue for funding and approvals. Most people don’t know how many inquiries the BCA receives for advice and referrals. Our website, which we are constantly updating, is widely used.

It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as BCA President. We have accomplished a great deal, but there is so much more to do. I am sure that under the leadership of our new president, the wonderful Mary Jeffery, BCA will continue to thrive and achieve.

I would be remiss in not particularly thanking Yonni Wattenmaker, our tireless Executive Director, and Crystal Stoute, our Executive Assistant. Between them, they handle so many tasks, so skillfully, that it is dizzying. The BCA is truly blessed to have them.

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Spring is almost here...and we can feel the energy it is bringing with it! There are so many great things going on at BCA. The Junior Fashion Show, 5K Run/Walk for Hope, Medical Symposium and Golf Outing are just around the corner. Shortly thereafter, we will start visiting our grant recipients. All it takes is one site visit with our grantees to understand why BCA does the work it does. BCA funds cutting-edge, scientific venture capital research for which other agency support is so difficult to get. These researchers are true rock stars because they are the ones who will find the cures.

I am personally so honored to serve as President of BCA over the next two years, and thank Sharon Phillips for her tireless and passionate leadership during the last three years. I follow some amazing women who laid the groundwork for BCA and had the vision for what we could accomplish. With fierce determination, they helped set BCA on its course.

Now we continue to take that vision forward. We continue to grow our base of support as we look more broadly at potential grants, young investigator and fellowship opportunities to ensure that we are funding the most important, relevant research possible.

I look forward to working with our amazing Board, volunteers, Medical Advisory Board and Advisory Council, Yonni and Crystal, and with you!

MESSAGE FROM MARY JEFFERY, INCOMING PRESIDENT

“I am personally so honored to serve as President of BCA over the next two years, and thank Sharon Phillips for her tireless and passionate leadership during the last three years.”

We are proud of the work we are funding, and we are grateful to our donors for making it all possible by supporting us for the past 21 years.
BREAST CANCER ALLIANCE IS PROUD TO HAVE AWARDED THE FOLLOWING GRANTS FOR 2017:

EXCEPTIONAL PROJECT RESEARCH GRANTS

Sidi Chen, PhD
**Yale University.** “Discovering inhibitory factors of T-cell function in metastatic breast cancer immunotherapy”
*Supported by the Mitchell Family*

Anthony Koleske, PhD
**Yale University.** “Profiling of circulating tumor cells to identify targets for adjuvant therapy in metastatic triple negative breast cancer”
*The Black Family Grant*

Alessandro Fatatis, MD, PhD
**Drexel University College of Medicine.** “New small-molecule compounds for the therapy of metastatic cancer”

Robert Schneider, PhD
**NYU School of Medicine.** “Molecular inhibition of T-regulatory cells for breast cancer treatment”
*Supported by ReMission Foundation*

E. Premkumar Reddy, PhD
**Mt. Sinai.** “A targeted therapy for triple negative breast cancer stem cells”
*Honoring Tami Eagle Bowling*

Robert Weinberg, PhD
**Whitehead Institute.** “Understanding the contribution of the epithelial-to-mesenchymal transition (EMT) to immuno-suppression in breast carcinomas”
*The Walsh Family Grant*

YOUNG INVESTIGATOR RESEARCH GRANTS

Aarti Asnani, MD
**Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.** “Developing new therapeutic strategies to prevent Doxorubicin-induced cardiac toxicity”

Aaron Goldman, PhD
**Brigham and Women’s Hospital.** “Hck-disruptive nanomedicines to overcome treatment resistance in triple negative breast cancer”
*Supported by the Masin Family*

Jason Sheltzer, PhD
**Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.** “Targeting aneuploidy in breast cancer”

BREAST SURGERY FELLOWSHIPS

Anya Romanoff, MD
**Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.** *Debbie Taylor Breast Surgery Fellowship*

Jennifer Sasaki, MD
**Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey.** *Rodkin Family Breast Surgery Fellowship*

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH GRANTS

- Gilda’s Club, White Plains, NY
- Greenwich Hospital, Greenwich, CT
- Griffin Hospital, Derby, CT
- Hartford Hospital, Hartford, CT
- Hospital of Central Connecticut, New Britain, CT
- Norma F. Pfriem Breast Care Center, Bridgeport, CT
- Norwalk Hospital, Whittingham Cancer Center, Norwalk, CT
- Open Door Family Medical Center, Port Chester, NY
- Stamford Hospital, Stamford, CT
- St. Vincent’s Hospital, Bridgeport, CT
- White Plains Hospital, White Plains, NY
- Yale-New Haven Hospital, New Haven, CT
Mary Quick is a philanthropist dedicated to child education and welfare. Her efforts have been focused towards organizations that support and cultivate the needs of underprivileged and disabled children by placing them in equal opportunity environments. She has served on the boards of several Connecticut schools, including Waterside School, Greenwich Academy, Eagle Hill School and Forman School, where she has worked on development and strategic planning teams to implement programs that fostered creative, supportive and interactive learning environments. She has also served on the board of Domus in Stamford, Connecticut. In New York, Mary currently sits on the boards of the National Center for Learning Disabilities, and FACES at NYU Langone Medical Center, and is very active with Share Our Strength, an organization that is focused on child hunger. Mary is a graduate of Fairfield University, and the mother of 5 children.

Mary Jo Riddle is honored to be on the BCA Board. Her mother was a breast cancer survivor of 30 years before recently passing away. She, her husband Bill and 4 children moved to Greenwich in 2005, after living in Atlanta, GA for 17 years. There she worked as Director of Sales and Marketing for MTV Networks and was responsible for the networks in the southeast region: MTV, Nickelodeon, VH-1 and Comedy Central. In Atlanta, she served on the Board of Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and co-chaired the 2001 Gala Event which was the first year they raised 1 million dollars. She also co-chaired the Ballet Luncheon which happened to occur on September 11, 2001.

Mary Jo has been involved in many organizations in Greenwich, including the Greenwich Hospital Gala committee, Breast Cancer Alliance luncheon committee, Arch Street 25th Anniversary event, and currently serves on the board for Arch Street, Boys and Girls Club of Greenwich annual fundraiser, American Red Cross Gala event, United Way Sole Sister, and Old Bags Luncheon. She has been very involved at her children’s school, Greenwich Country Day School, and in 2013 she co-chaired their Gala. Mary Jo was also an Elder at First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich. She also volunteers at Episcopal High School in Alexandria, VA where her two older children attend. What she loves most is spending time with family and friends and helping others.

Lisa Skinner is very happy and honored to return back to the Alliance Board where she previously served from 2011-2014. During her prior tenure, she chaired the 2013 Long-Range Planning Committee, and served as Vice-President. Additionally, she co-chaired the 2009 Annual Benefit and Luncheon, which was what sparked her passion for the organization. Lisa spent the majority of her professional career as a senior executive with American Airlines serving in many roles in its international headquarters in London.

She and her husband Chip, and their three children, moved to Greenwich 17 years ago. Since this time, she has been a committed community volunteer serving as President of the Brunswick Parents’ Association, and a member of the Brunswick School Board of Trustees. She currently serves on the Executive Board of Hortulus, Sea Island Club Advisory Board, Southern Methodist University Parent Leadership Council, the University of Richmond Parent Leadership Committee, and is an active member of Christ Church, Greenwich.

Diane S. Zarrilli has served on BCA’s Education and Outreach Committee since June of 2013. Diane spent 37 years at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, where she held a number of cancer research positions and coordinated several cancer related medical studies, including a National Cancer Institute sponsored study on Primary Brain Tumors. She completed two Healing the Children surgical missionaries in El Salvador. She volunteered at Brunswick School, Greenwich Academy and Kids in Crisis. Diane has served as the President of the Centrum Homeowners Association in Telluride, Colorado for 8 years. She received an R.N. from Kings County School of Nursing and a B.A. in Psychology from Marymount College. Diane is married and has three grown children.
RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT:
NIKHIL WAGLE, MD

Young Investigator Grants through Breast Cancer Alliance encourage a commitment to breast cancer research by supporting clinical doctors and research scientists who are in the early stages of their career, fostering their professional growth as they pursue important questions in breast cancer.

The 2016 Walsh Family Grant recipient, Nikhil Wagle, MD, deputy director of the Center for Cancer Precision Medicine at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, appreciates the importance of this funding at this critical time when traditional sources of grant allocation favors established scientists over emerging leaders in the field.

New approaches are required to better understand breast cancer treatment resistance, and Wagle’s research aims to do just that.

“In spite of tremendous advances in the treatment of ER-positive breast cancer using therapies directed against the estrogen receptor, patients frequently develop resistance to these therapies,” says Wagle. “These resistant tumors remain the most common cause of breast cancer death, yet mechanisms by which this resistance develops are poorly understood.”

His project, “Identifying mechanisms of response and resistance to selective estrogen receptor degraders in ER-positive metastatic breast cancer,” ultimately stands to inform clinical sequencing approaches aimed at revealing specific resistance mechanisms in individual patients. Then, based on the specific mechanism identified in each patient, physicians could identify clinical trials of appropriate combination therapies to overcome that resistance mechanism.

In the first year of his $125,000 two-year grant, results from Wagle’s large-scale tumor-tissue analysis show that drug-resistant, estrogen-fueled breast cancers that have spread beyond their initial site often have different genetic alterations than the original tumors. The discovery of these differences, which may guide the search for new drug targets and influence the treatment patients receive if their cancer metastasizes, were presented at the 2016 San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium in December, where support from Breast Cancer Alliance was acknowledged. In addition, Breast Cancer Alliance was acknowledged for its investment at the AAP/ASCI/APSA Joint Meeting in April and American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting in June.

According to Wagle, support from Breast Cancer Alliance is enabling progress at a faster pace than would otherwise be possible.

“BCA funding is creating opportunities for my lab to engage in higher-risk projects, and has also enabled me to interact with a broad range of experts. The importance of this collaborative, team science cannot be overstated and stands to have a significant impact on my research program and my ability to obtain subsequent grants,” said Wagle.
ANNUAL BENEFIT
LUNCHEON AND FASHION SHOW

Record numbers filled the seats at the Hyatt Regency Greenwich raising over $1.4 million for BCA! Emcee Carson Kressley and guest speaker, Billy Baldwin, entertained the crowd while Oscar de la Renta’s fashions wowed the guests. The Celebration of Survivorship had everyone in standing ovation, leaving us all hopeful about the future.
Each of us considers the legacy we will leave to our families, loved ones and institutions we value.

Breast Cancer Alliance has formed the Three Girls Society as a way of recognizing and honoring those who are including BCA in their estate plans.

Our logo symbolizes the way friends, family and community come together and support one another. Named in the spirit of our logo, the Three Girls Society highlights the generosity of individuals who have pledged to support our future by naming Breast Cancer Alliance in their will or trust, or designating Breast Cancer Alliance as beneficiary of an investment account or insurance policy. Anyone can become a member of the Three Girls Society, regardless of the amount committed. This society will help BCA continue its mission to support underserved women, provide fellowships for future breast surgeons, and fund innovative research in the field of breast cancer until we reach our ultimate goal: finding a cure.

If you would like more information on becoming a founding member of the Three Girls Society by making a lasting gift to support the work of Breast Cancer Alliance, or if you have already designated Breast Cancer Alliance as a beneficiary, please contact our office at info@breastcanceralliance.org.
A CHILDREN’S STORY:
BRIAN JR. AND CAITLIN ELMO

Lorraine Elmo was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2015. Now cancer free, her children share their perspective on what it was like to go through this journey with their mother.

Q: How did you first react to your Mom’s diagnosis?
B: I was kind of shocked, but I kind of didn’t know what it was until she explained it to me, and then I just hoped she’d feel better because she had this diagnosis. It was pretty scary, and I was a little afraid she would die. But she lived!
C: I reacted at first – Wow, is she going to die? I don’t want her to die, I don’t want anything to happen to her, I’m really scared. What if something goes wrong? I was just really, really scared. As it went on, I felt better.

Q: How did you feel watching your Mom go through this?
B: When I was looking at her, she looked very brave, and the fact that she could handle all those treatments is amazing. It was kind of fun when we waited with her during treatments. The people who treated my Mom were really nice to us.
C: I felt really bad for her because she had to get all these shots, and had to deal with things that caused her pain. When I saw her without her hair and doing those things, it was scary.

Q: What helped you stay positive?
B: We created these breast cancer songs, like “Left Side Boobie Blues,” and “Cancer-Cancer-Go-Away.” Some of the songs my Mom wrote by herself, but we enjoyed them also. The fact that she could sing about breast cancer is amazing, and so that makes me stay positive about her. Look at her now – she survived!
C: What helped me stay positive was when we listened to songs, and I knew she felt better. When my Mom felt better, I felt better. When we wrote and performed songs, that helped me.

Q: What did you learn from all this?
B: I learned never to give up, because everything ends well. There’s always a problem, and there’s always a solution.
C: I learned that too. Even with this diagnosis, she still worked out every day, even after she lost her hair. She never gave up.

Q: What do you appreciate about being together with your Mom now that she has had this experience?
B: Well, lots of people honor her, and now she’s getting a little famous. She’s been part of some fashion shows, and the dresses she wears are very expensive! We get to be with a mom who’s very nice, kind, sweet, a mom that’s brave, because she went through all this and she’s a survivor. It’s so fun to watch breast cancer fashion shows and do breast cancer fundraisers and magazine articles.
C: I appreciate how she still makes time for us, even though she’s always busy. She’s been through a lot, and she’s very, very, very brave. I really like that about her – that she’s very brave. She’s a true survivor. I appreciate that she never gives up.

“I learned never to give up, because everything ends well. There’s always a problem, and there’s always a solution.”
This day of learning, shopping and coming together as a community was a special one. As always, we are grateful to our partners in this event, which raises both awareness and funding for BCA.
KIDS FOR A CAUSE

Future philanthropists strutted their stuff on the catwalk, courtesy of Hoagland’s, in this adorable fashion show to benefit BCA.

Photo credit: Elaine Ubiña – Fairfield County LOOK
I am a third generation designer, being the granddaughter of Couturier, Rose Taft. I make people more beautiful for a living. I love being involved in people’s lives by designing dresses for special moments & celebrating with them. I am a strong supporter of women in business. At 46 years old, I was diagnosed with breast cancer.

ONE WOMAN’S STORY: MELANIE HARRIS

Breast cancer threw me. No BRCA. No family history. But there I was with a Stage 1 diagnosis, and a double mastectomy. This wasn’t supposed to happen. I was the one raising money for breast cancer research. I donate money. I donate time. I donate gowns for auction. I associated breast cancer survivor” or “mastectomy patient” with older women until it happened to me. Now I am a member of a “club” I never wanted to join, and a fighting force knowing early detection saves lives — it saved mine.

After my diagnosis, I immediately changed from a confident, outgoing mom who loved to dress up and be social, to an insecure woman, too uncomfortable with her “new” body image to even attempt a date night or a girl’s night out! I dressed differently, and slept in a bralette to avoid seeing myself bare-chested, without the body and breasts I had come to love. Tears came to my eyes in the shower, the place where I was forced to face reality. That’s where I allowed myself to cry, far away from my two incredible daughters, Sam and Sloane.

Survivor. That word terrified me, but not anymore. I survived the initial horror of hearing the words, “you have breast cancer,” the surgeries, the countless doctors’ appointments, and the unknown. Surviving cancer was never a question for me, it was what I was determined to do. I did not want sympathy from family, friends or colleagues. I wanted privacy and positivity, as sympathy only scared me and knocked me off track when I had a business and children to care for.

I tried hard not to let fear take over. I absolutely was not going to let cancer define me, but it certainly was going to change me.

Having this experience has impacted my life tremendously; mentally, physically, personally and professionally. After several weeks, I slowly rediscovered my strength. I feel blessed for having the ability to recuperate quickly, for being a better role model to my daughters, and am putting my renewed energies into helping others move forward from breast cancer as well. I realized that many other women must feel the same sense of pride as a survivor with the strength of a warrior for their children, yet still have that same insecurity — the lack of enthusiasm when dressing for a special occasion — so I changed my mission.

Gone are the days of only keeping my eye on the bottom line. It’s not just about the money and making ends meet anymore. It’s not just about red carpet appearances and styling TV personalities. I am going to continue to make a woman feel more beautiful, even if only for a few hours, to take her mind off how she feels emotionally or looks undressed in the mirror at home.

Chiffon, sequins, feathers, leather and lace can help dress up the scars beneath — even for a few moments. And I know this because it’s now my story. Feeling beautiful on the outside can make you feel more beautiful on the inside and vice versa. And if my story can help women — then I am doing something positive for the “club.” I have always been passionate about philanthropy as well, and now a portion of my sales have a new destination: breast cancer research.
Junior Fashion Show
Sunday, April 2
Richards, 359 Greenwich Avenue
http://donorperfect.com/juniorfashionshow

5K Run/Walk For HOPE
Sunday, April 30
Richards, 359 Greenwich Avenue
http://www.flipcause.com/secure/cause_pdetails/MITM4MDc

Medical Symposium
Monday, May 15
The Golf Club of Purchase
Purchase, NY
http://weblink.donorperfect.com/2017MedicalSymposium

Golf Outing
Tuesday, May 23
GlenArbor Golf Club, Bedford Hills, NY
Call to request an invitation

Go For Pink
Early October
Greenwich, CT

Benefit Luncheon & Fashion Show
Thursday, October 26
Hyatt Regency Greenwich
Old Greenwich, CT

Holiday Gift Boutique
Tuesday, November 14 and Wednesday, November 15
Greenwich, CT