



Celebrating
10 YEARS
of **SURVIV** *R* **RS**
in the Valley!



Kissie Moore *Michelle Apple* *Susan Aey* *Sherri Spivey* *Kathryn Audia* *Marie Dicesare* *Kristina Juratovic* *Roslyn Castillo* *Goldie Tiltman* *Cyndi DiClaudio*

MEDIA KIT



Allen Ryan
Covelli Enterprises
Cell: 330-501-2380

[Allen.Ryan @covelli.com](mailto:Allen.Ryan@covelli.com)

FOR RELEASE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 25

THE MAHONING VALLEY GATHERS IN CELEBRATION OF PANERATHON'S 10 YEARS OF CHANGING, SAVING LIVES

Youngstown's largest community event surpasses \$3 million raised for local breast care center

Warren, OH —The Panerathon 10K/2 Mile Walk/Run celebrated its 10th year as the Valley's largest fundraising event, gathering 11,000 community members Sunday at the Covelli Centre in downtown Youngstown in support of its cause. This year's Panerathon raised more than \$525,000, and the mass-participation over the past decade has generated more than \$3 million for the Mercy Health Foundation and the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center (JACBCC), the first and only of its kind in the area.

The center became the vision of Dr. Rashid Abdu after losing his wife, Joanie, to an aggressive form of breast cancer in 1994. Many years later, with the help of Panerathon, Dr. Abdu's dream of a comprehensive breast care facility in Youngstown was brought to fruition when the JACBCC opened its doors in 2011. Since then, it has performed more than 83,000 exams along with an additional 4,000 through its mobile mammography unit, the only in eastern Ohio with 3D mammography technology, which dramatically improves breast cancer detection. These breakthroughs have changed the quality of breast care for women in the region – allowing more women access to the early detection, rapid treatment, and interdisciplinary care proven to decline breast cancer mortality rates. Covelli Enterprises and Mercy Health Foundation underwrite the costs of hosting Panerathon, so 100% of community sponsorships and registration fees may be donated directly to the cause.

“This is a special year as we come together to celebrate where our Valley began – with one of the highest breast cancer mortality rates in the nation – to where we are today,” said Sam Covelli, Owner/Operator of Covelli Enterprises. “Over the last 10 years, the quality of life for the people in our community has been improved through Panerathon and its mission to support the JACBCC, and we are so grateful to the participants, sponsors, volunteers, and supporters who have made this all possible. Year after year, we continue to show the world the strength, resolve, and unity of the people of our Mahoning Valley.”

“For ten years, tens of thousands of our neighbors have collectively contributed over \$3 million to the JACBCC through Panerathon. We are grateful to the community, to Sam and Caryn Covelli and to Covelli Enterprises – but we are all humbled by the generous and caring Mahoning Valley community who come together to make certain that we have the best possible care available right here, close to home,” said Paul Homick Jr., President of Mercy Health Foundation Mahoning Valley. “Panerathon is the largest fundraising event in the Valley and because of Panerathon, lives are saved and anyone who needs care gets it regardless of ability to pay.”

The 10th anniversary of Panerathon was promoted by spotlighting 10 survivors and patients of the JACBCC. Each of the featured women was showcased on a mile marker of the Panerathon event course to serve as a reminder to the community of the impact its participation has had on the lives of real women. **Their incredible stories and additional event information may be found in a Digital Media Kit at Panerathon.org/media-kit.**

This year, the event hosted more than 300 teams encompassing 5,000 of its participants, and had a record-breaking 110 sponsors. The 8th Annual Kids Run presented by PNC hosted 1,500 kids, and the fun continued with a post-race celebration including PNC's Grow Up Great Mobile Learning Adventure, Youngstown Phantoms Slap Slot, face painting, exhibits from OH WOW! Science Center, a variety of other local vendors, and O'Charley's food being sold to raise additional funds for the cause.

About Covelli Enterprises

Covelli Enterprises, the largest franchisee of Panera Bread, LLC operates more than 300 Panera Bread bakery-cafes in eight states. In 2018, Covelli Enterprises donated \$32 million to non-profit organizations. www.panerathon.org, www.covelli.com.

###



2019 Teams

300 teams consisting of approx. 5,000 participants

Top 10 Largest Teams:

1. **YSU Team Penguin Mega Team & sub teams – 377 members**
2. **Team Sweeney – 305 members**
3. **Letts Fight the Fight Together – 208 members**
4. **YSU Nursing 4 A Cure-Team Penguins- Mega Team – 180 members**
5. **GREENWOOD – 112 members**
6. **Awesometown Panera – 107 members**
7. **Team Peacock – 94 members**
8. **Cousins for a Cause – 93 members**
9. **YSU Team Penguins-Mega Team – 86 members**
10. **Girard School – 64 members**

All Teams Listed in Alphabetical Order:

- 2 Slow 2 Win 2 Dumb 2 Quit
- 3.1 Mile Mamas
- 4 da tattas
- 4 the Girls
- AFLAC Empire
- African American Male Wellness Walk
- Akron Children's Hospital Mahoning Valley
- Aleo-Chem Inc
- Amy's Army
- Angi's Angels
- Anna Marina
- Annah B
- Ashley Homestore
- Autosoft
- Awesometown Panera
- Badger School
- Barclay Babes
- Beaus Heroes
- Ben's Team
- BERK ENTERPRISES
- Beth's BFFs
- Big Cookies
- Biotest Pharmaceuticals
- Block-Perkins
- Boardman Glenwood School
- Boardman School
- Boardman Spartan Volleyball
- Bobbie's Angels
- Bonnies Bunch
- Bosom Buddies 2019
- Breast Friends Forever
- Brookfield School
- BSHM Architects
- Burgan Bunch
- Caitie's Crew
- Candy Kisses
- Canfield Athletics
- CARPE DIEM
- Carries Crew/Carrie's Crew
- Cats For the Cure
- Champion School
- Chase Bank
- Chrissy's Breast Team Ever
- Church Hill Chargers
- City of Youngstown
- Cohen & Company
- Columbiana School
- Compassionate Wigs
- Cousins for a Cause
- Curo Clinic
- Davis
- Dead On Arrival
- Desalvo Construction.
- D-Face
- Downtown Striders
- Dubiel
- East Liverpool School
- Elm Rd
- Exal
- Executive Landscaping
- Exzalt Fitness
- Faith
- Farmers Trust Company
- Faster Than Snails
- Fastsigns
- Firestone Health Care, Inc
- First National Bank
- Fit Family
- Fitness Together
- FITTEAM FIGHTERS
- Flaquita
- Friends of Angels
- Fumc Of Niles
- G Unit
- Gervelis Law Firm
- G-FIT
- GiaRussa
- Girard School
- Glazed & Confused
- GOAT Training
- Gonda Family
- Grass Stains
- GREENWOOD
- Grswold
- HAKUNA MA TATAS
- Harrington Hoppe & Mitchell
- Heartland School
- Hobe & Lucas CPAs Inc
- Hollywood Gaming Maho
- Holy Family School
- Home Savings
- Hummingbirds
- Huntington Bank
- Irun4u#1
- Jackson clan
- Jayne's Minions
- Jenny's Warriors
- Jimmel7
- Joanie
- Joanie Sisters/Joanie's Sisters
- Joe Lantz Fitness Kickboxing
- Jones Wealth Management
- Journey X
- Just Keep Swimming
- Justa running
- Kelley Frazier Fitness
- Kelly Warren & Associates
- Kittys Krew
- Laura Lane Crew
- Laurie socie



2019 Teams

300 teams consisting of approx. 5,000 participants

- Lauri's Crew
- Leiden Cabinet Company
- Leo's Ristorante
- Letts Fight the Fight Together
- Lewis Construction
- Lite-Weights
- Lordstown School
- M7 Technologies
- Mahoning Valley Historical Society
- Malaniak
- Maplewood School
- Mariposa
- Marlys
- Marty Hume Democrat for Judge
- Mary's Musketeers
- Mary's Pink Ribbon Racers
- Mayo Realtors
- Mazz's Angry Anchors
- McDonald School
- McMahon
- Mega Barre Youngstown
- Memory Of Patty D
- Mercer County Running Club
- Mercy Cardiology
- MERCY HEALTH PAYROLL
- Mercy Health Rockstar Recovery
- Mercy Milers
- Mi State Penitentiary
- MJs 50th Jubilee
- Modern Office Products
- Mooney School
- Ms Consultants, Inc.
- MVEDC
- MWCW
- New Soles Run for God
- NF Tigers
- Niles School
- NilesTable and Chair Rental
- Oath Pizza
- OH WOW! Science Center
- Ohio Star Forge
- Ohio State Penitentiary
- ONE Health Ohio
- Our Mary
- Pacemakers
- Panera FDF
- Panera4636
- Panerathon squad
- Party On!
- Patty's Pack
- Peacock
- Pebble
- Phantom Fireworks
- Phillips Sekanick Arc
- Pinc
- Pink Ribbon Racers
- Pink, Pray, Love
- Pittsburgh Sikh Gurudwara
- PIZZA JOE'S
- Pleasant Grove Campus of VCS
- PNC Bank
- Poland Howard Hanna Office
- Prancers Against Cancers
- PREMIUM PEDIATRICS
- Rebel Runners
- Retirement Ready
- Rivers
- Rockwood Painting Contractors
- Rossi Insurance Agenc
- Rotary Club of Youngstown
- Running On Empty
- Running Warriors
- Ryan Carpet Sales & S
- Sam & Mi
- Sams Club
- Sanders Family
- Saving 2nd Base
- Schroedel, Scullen &
- Sela Salon & Spa
- SERVPRO
- SEY Pharmacy
- Sherri Spivey
- Simon Roofing
- Sodexo Roth
- Soft Touch Furniture
- SomeNights
- Springfield Grille
- Springfield School
- St E's 6
- St Michaels Fun and Fitness/St. Michael's Fun & F
- Steph Strong
- Stifel
- StronG
- Stronger Than The Storm
- Struthers School
- Super Duper
- Sweet & Strong
- Taylor Chevrolet-Toyo
- TCI WIC
- TEAM AMY
- Team Audia
- Team Aunt TT
- Team Beast
- TEAM CANDI
- TEAM CARRIE K
- Team Cathie
- Team Chem
- Team Chrissy The Classroom Elite
- Team Coonce
- Team Donna Y
- Team Fiorino
- Team French
- Team Gloria
- Team Goldie
- Team Grandpa Economus
- Team Harvey
- Team Jean
- Team JFK
- Team JJ
- Team Joanie
- Team Lawson
- Team Lisa Valerio
- Team Marie
- Team Mc Mahon
- Team Moowah
- TEAM NAPLES
- Team Pati
- Team Peacock



2019 Teams

300 teams consisting of approx. 5,000 participants

- Team Pinky
- Team Rachel
- Team Sandy
- Team Shroder
- Team Survivors
- Team Sweeney
- Team Weser
- The 2 Milers
- The Joanie Abdu Breast Care Team
- The Lite-weights
- The Original Rack Pack
- The Patio Girls
- THE RACK PACK
- Tim Ryan for Congress
- TLF Productions
- Trauma Troopers
- Treasured Chests
- Trotters Chase Walkers
- Trumbull Industries,
- Udder Cream
- Valley Industrial Trucks
- Vector Security
- Volunteer
- Warren G Harding School
- Western Reserve Build
- Window World
- WKBN 27 / 33 WYTV
- Wonder Warrior
- Youngstown CityScape
- YOUNGSTOWN MUNICIPAL COURT
- Youngstown Orthopaedic Associates
- Youngstown State Univ
- Youngstown VA Clinic
- YSU - Phi Sigma Rho YSU Team Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU acCOUNTing on a Cure-YSU Team Penguins-MT
- YSU Athletics-YSU Team Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU Financial Aid YSU Team Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU KSS-YSU Team Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU Living Well-YSU Team Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU Math Running Club-Team Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU Nursing 4 A Cure-Team Penguins- Mega Team
- YSU Pete's Pride-YSU Team Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU Relay For Life & Guinathon - Mega Team
- YSU Run Prof Run-YSU Team Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU Team Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU Women's Bowling YSU Penguins-Mega Team
- YSU Youngstown Student Education Association



2019 Sponsors

Platinum

- Arthur J. Gallagher
- Chevy All Stars and Sweeney Chevrolet Buick GMC
- Covelli Enterprises
- Huntington Bank
- iHeartMedia, WKBN News Radio 570, Mix 98.9
- Jones Wealth Management, Merrill Lynch
- Leiden Cabinet Company
- Mercy Health Foundation Mahoning Valley and Mission Partners
- Nationwide Insurance
- O'Charley's
- Panera Bread
- PNC Bank
- SERVPRO
- The Zenith Workers' Compensation Specialists
- WFMJ-TV, the CW
- WKBN-TV, WYFX, MyYTV, WYTV

Gold

- Exal Corporation

Silver

- Anchor Development
- E.J. Rossi & Company
- Gia Russa
- JAC Live
- John and Michelle Perdue/McDonald's
- Knightline Embroidery
- Mercy Health
- Oh Wow! The Roger and Gloria Jones Children's Center
- Pebble
- Phantom Fireworks/Youngstown Phantoms
- Rossi Insurance Agency
- Scott Electric Company
- Susan & Richard Sokolov
- The DeBartolo Corporation
- Youngstown State University, Youngstown State University Foundation

Medallion

- Albert M. Covelli Foundation
- Budros Ruhlin & Roe

- Capitol Construction Services, Inc.
- Classi-Co Foods/PIZZA JOE'S
- DeSalvo Construction Company, Inc.
- Doubletree by Hilton Youngstown Doubletree
- Harrington, Hoppe & Mitchell, Ltd.
- Hobe & Lucas CPAs, Inc.
- Hollywood Gaming Mahoning Valley Race Course
- H.P. Technologies, Inc.
- Lane Life Trans
- LaSalle Solutions
- M-7 Technologies
- Party On
- Proforma Connected
- Redex Industries/Udderly Smooth
- Sam's Club
- Schroedel, Scullin & Bestic, CPAs
- Stambaugh Auditorium
- Window World

Bronze A

- A & N Refrigeration, Inc.
- Akron Children's Hospital Mahoning Valley
- Alco-Chem Inc.
- Berk Enterprises, Inc.
- Biotest Pharmaceuticals
- Burdman Family
- City of Youngstown
- Coates Car Care
- Cohen & Company
- Cornerstone Plumbing
- Fastsigns
- Gervelis Law Firm
- Giant Eagle (Columbiana Foods Inc.)
- Greenwood Chevrolet
- Greg and Susan Kokal
- Leo's Ristorante
- Lewis Construction
- Lori and Bob Fiorino
- Merrill Lynch James Carchedi Wealth Management
- Phillips/Sekanick Architects, Inc.
- Prout Boiler, Heating & Welding, Inc.

- Rockwood Painting Contractors
- Simon Roofing
- Soft Touch Furniture
- Stifel
- The Auxiliary of St. Elizabeth Youngstown, Boardman Hospitals
- Thomas Sign and Awning Co., Inc.
- Tim Ryan for Congress
- tlf productions
- Valley Industrial Trucks, Inc.
- Warren Glass and Paint Co.
- Wellspring Financial Advisors, LLC
- Western Reserve Amateur Radio Club
- Youngstown State University Athletics

Bronze B

- Alex Downie & Sons Co.
- Armstrong
- Bob Ferrando Ford Sales, Inc.
- Bochert Bros. Painting and Decorating Co.
- Dom's Ice
- Eastern Gateway Community College
- Executive Landscaping, Inc.
- Farmers Trust Company
- First National Bank
- Furniture Design Studios
- Great Garage Doors
- Modern Office Products, Inc.
- ms consultants, inc.
- Orange Theory Fitness Youngstown
- Penguin City Beer
- Physicians Ambulance
- Ross Development
- Ryan Carpet Sales & Service, Inc.
- Shook Construction
- Valor Recovery Centers
- Vector Security
- Western Reserve Building and Construction Trades Council
- White House Fruit Farm Inc.
- Windsor House, Inc.
- York Mahoning Mechanical Contractors Inc.



Panerathon 10th Anniversary Featured Survivors Contact Information

- Katie Audia 330-207-2282 kmchadwick87@gmail.com
- Rosalyn Castillo 330-207-3487 beccacas.2016@gmail.com
- Kristina Juratovic 330-717-3233 Kristina_Juratovic@mercy.com
- Michelle Apple: 330-519-2423 michelleapple71@icloud.com
 - <https://www.vindy.com/news/2019/jan/01/boardman-cancer-survivors-rx-always-be-a/>
- Marie Dicesare 330-501-8092 maried0969@yahoo.com
- Cynthia DiClaudio 330-506-9875 cyn8691@gmail.com
- Susan Aye 330-518-6978 jpaeye@zoominternet.net
- Krissie Moore 330-502-5022 kpenezich1@gmail.com
 - <http://www.vindy.com/news/2018/oct/30/joanie-abdu-center-helps-patient-through/>
- Sherri Spivey smccoy4841@hotmail.com
- Goldie Tillman goldtillman12@gmail.com



Kathryn
Audia



By Rachel Gobep, Story330

Katie Audia had a cyst for two years. After she gave birth to her daughter, she realized it had changed – growing to the size of a softball. She sought help at the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center.

Audia, 32, had just bought a house with her husband. Her daughter was 10 months old when she got a call from the center while at working at Turning Technologies in Youngstown.

When the biopsy results came back, she learned it was cancerous.

“It was initial shock. I wasn’t sure what to do. But honestly, I worked the rest of the day,” Audia said.

She decided to tell everyone after work, and her husband couldn’t believe she worked through the day.

“I’M JUST THE TYPE OF PERSON THAT YOU KNOW, I KIND OF JUST PUSH THROUGH THINGS ... IT’S ONE OF THOSE THINGS THAT I CAN’T CHANGE ... IT IS WHAT IT IS,” AUDIA SAID.

She said there is a history of breast cancer in her family, but there has been no genetic testing.

Her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer when she was 41 in 1995 and had a single mastectomy. She has been cancer-free for over 20 years. In 2014, her aunt endured both breast and ovarian cancer at 53.

She said this has changed her outlook on life and has made her become closer with her mother and aunt through talking about their experiences.

Audia finished chemotherapy in April and the radiation process began after Easter.

She said it made her realize she needs to make changes in her life, such as becoming healthy, striving to live every day and changing eating patterns because her cancer is estrogen-induced.

This experience has taught her to listen to her body and to know what’s right and wrong. She said it was caught early because she knew about the cyst and realized something was different.

Audia said she has had a great experience at Joanie Abdu since Day One, and had all same day services. She said Dr. Nancy Gantt, who conducted her surgery, is “better than the best.”

Although she has not participated in the Panerathon which benefits Joanie Abdu, she said she will take initiative to become more involved. She plans to participate in the 10th annual Panerathon on Aug. 25.

Roslyn
Castillo



By Alyssa Weston, Story330

Before her Stage 2 breast cancer diagnosis in August 2018, Roslyn Castillo's life was a balancing act between raising her three children and working. When she was given her diagnosis, Castillo, 43, was in shock.

"After it hit me, I started getting nervous, worried, sad and afraid."

It became clear to Castillo that breast cancer would not only affect her, but also her three children.

"My mind goes 'What if I'm out of this life? How are they going to take care of themselves?'"

Although too young to understand the full extent of her diagnosis, her children knew she was sick – or had a "boo boo" as they called it. She was getting treatments and losing her hair.

Castillo procrastinated on getting her first mammogram and didn't go until she felt a lump.

When Castillo felt the lump, her sister-in-law, who works for Mercy Health, suggested she go to the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center in St. Elizabeth Youngstown Hospital for a mammogram.

Castillo described the staff at the Joanie Abdu as welcoming and informative.

"It was my first mammogram. I didn't know what to expect, how it is done, or if it hurt. But the (nurses) are really nice and friendly. I was nervous. But after it was explained, I was more relaxed," she said.

Her mammogram results showed two lumps. Because it was Castillo's first mammogram, they were unable to tell how long the lumps had been there. She needed a sonogram and a biopsy.

"I felt scared, nervous. I waited five days for the results."

One lump was cancerous. Surgery was set for two months later. Castillo finished eight rounds of chemotherapy. Radiation continued through this spring.

Although Castillo has never been to Panerathon, she has heard about it and is planning to attend this year.

Castillo said having breast cancer gave her a push to get healthy again and eat better. Her manager let her take time off work and now she is focused on taking time not to rush through life and take care of her body.



*Kristina
Juratovic*

By Rachel Gobep, Story330

Kristina Juratovic describes herself as “patient zero” because there was no history of cancer in her family.

“It was a big shock for everybody,” she said.

Juratovic, a pharmacist at St. Elizabeth’s from Brookfield, did her breast exam two and a half weeks before she found the lump.

“I realized [I was] one of the few people that did my monthly breast exams,” Juratovic said.

She went to the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center for a mammogram and ultrasound in November 2014 and had a biopsy the same day. Three days later she was diagnosed with Stage 3c breast cancer. She had cancerous spots on her ribs and sternum and had lymph nodes under her arm that were positive. After going through the scans, she found that her cancer was growing about a centimeter a week in each direction.

Juratovic said by the time she began chemotherapy, she believes her original lump grew to about 80 percent of her left breast.

“From Day 1, there was not one step of the process that I had to do alone. I had all the resources, help and guidance that I needed to fight my battle and become a survivor,” Juratovic said.

She said she had no question about where she was going to go for treatment, and she believes Joanie Abdu is fantastic, relaxing and state of the art. Juratovic was diagnosed at 36 and has had three sets of stable scans as of April, which she said she has taken a long road to get to this point.

“They tell you you’re cancer free, but you’re never cancer free in your brain. You worry about it all the time ... It’s something you live with for the rest of your life,” Juratovic said.

She has gone through chemotherapy, had a double-mastectomy with reconstruction, “extensive” radiation and a total hysterectomy.

“Children were not a priority before. But when that’s taken away, it’s a really hard situation because it’s just not something that’s ever a possibility,” Juratovic said.

She then developed lymphedema in 2018, which can be caused by the removal of lymph nodes and causes swelling of the arms and legs. She said that before she was diagnosed, she feels like she didn’t appreciate life like she does today.

“AFTER GOING THROUGH TREATMENT AND EVERYTHING I WENT THROUGH, I WAKE UP EVERY DAY HAPPY TO BE ALIVE,” JURATOVIC SAID.

She said Panerathon’s fundraising is fantastic.

“Panerathon’s helping take care of people,” she said.

Additionally, Juratovic said it shows that people in the community are pushing what Dr. Abdu set up in the area.

“He did it in memory of somebody like me. He did it in memory of his wife, to support her and what she had to go through in the hope that somebody else wouldn’t.”



By Alyssa Weston, Story330

Bodybuilder and animal lover Michelle Apple ignored the lump she found in her armpit for a year and a half before getting a mammogram. She was told it was just a lymph node and not to worry. The lump grew as she took care of her sick mother, but she ignored it. When Apple's mother passed, she decided to get retested at Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center. She was diagnosed with Invasive Carcinoma Breast Cancer. The center was unable to do her lymph node transfer, so she had that procedure at the Cleveland Clinic.

"The scary part was when they did do my surgery, they did remove lymph nodes, and 21 were cancerous. So, moving forward, obviously, that makes me a little anxious," she said.

Before cancer, Apple spent her days working and traveling for her full-time job as a dietitian for AVI food systems in Warren Ohio, as well as balance her home life, fur babies and a fitness routine. Apple said she has continued to work and exercise during her treatments, and her body has responded well to chemotherapy and radiation. Although she has maintained a sense of normalcy, cancer has taught her to slow down her "type A" personality.

"It's OK to have a bad day. But don't stay in those days. Pick yourself right back up and the next day you continue to go. Allow yourself to have those moments," she said.

Apple said through the bad days, her support system of family and friends have been there to lift her spirit. A difficult part for Apple was telling her father. He has leukemia himself and lost his wife to cancer 18 months before.

"I stood strong. I did not cry in front of him because I didn't want him to worry. The first thing I told him is 'you know, I competed as a bodybuilder and I rode my bike hundreds of miles. I'm a strong woman and I'm going to get through this.' I think that reassured him that I was going to be fine."

Apple finds strength in mentoring other cancer patients at the Cleveland Clinic and Joanie Abdu, just like women from Apple's job and gym mentored her. In Apple's opinion, being in good physical shape before diagnosis and her bodybuilder mindset helped her navigate her cancer journey.

"I have an athletic mindset. I really truly believed as I approached cancer, I approached it the same way," she said.

It was important for Apple take full control of the effects of the chemotherapy treatments and shave her own head. So, she invited her girlfriends over for wine and to help her shave. "I felt like Demi Moore in G.I. Jane," she said.

Apple participated in Panerathon last year and did the 2-mile walk. She plans to take part this year.

"Panerathon is a great event. I think it's a great way to advocate, meet survivors and to honor those that we've lost," she said.

In Apple's opinion, Panerathon is heartwarming and a great way to raise money for Joanie Abdu.

"It is impactful. You see these people coming together for a cause to raise money to bring not just awareness, but information so that we can help other patients and bring new technology to this area," she said.

"I believe now, it's my duty and my responsibility to advocate, promote and talk about the Joanie Center and talk about this great facility that we have here."



Marie
Dicesare

By Alyssa Weston, Story330

Marie Dicesare feels like she was twice struck by lightning in 2017 and 2018. First, she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Then, she learned she had Stage 2 Invasive Ductal Carcinoma Breast Cancer. But the cancer survivor didn't let the thunderbolt diagnosis bury her beneath the ashes. Instead she was jolted to take her challenges head on and live life to the fullest.

"I didn't let it get me down to the best of my ability. I don't I don't think I've changed a lick. I think I'm just the same as I was before, just a little bit smarter and a little bit wiser of things that I don't take for granted a lot of things now," Dicesare said.

After finding a lump on her breast in the shower, Dicesare visited the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center for a mammogram on January 2018. The tests showed two areas that required biopsies. Both areas had cancer cells present. From there, she developed a relationship with Dr. Gant, Dr. Francis and Dr. Peterson at Joanie Abdu. Dicesare had surgery in March 2018, followed by eight chemotherapy treatments and 30 radiation treatments. In January 2019, she was given a clean bill of health. She thought being diagnosed with cancer was never going to happen to her.

"Boy, you know, it's a reality check. I learned that it can happen to anybody."

But this reality check didn't just affect her, Dicesare's family shared the pain of her diagnosis, especially her parents and three kids.

"[My mother] was a lot better than I thought she would take it. My father was a wreck being that he was diagnosed with cancer twice (prostate and lung). He cried," she said.

Dicesare's youngest son, Jaden, was 9 at the time of her diagnosis.

"HE HAD NO IDEA WHAT THE HECK WAS GOING ON. HE JUST KNEW THAT I WAS BACK AND FORTH TO THE DOCTORS AND THAT I WASN'T FEELING WELL. MY OLDER KIDS I THINK WERE A LITTLE CONFUSED, BUT THEY UNDERSTOOD. BUT TRY EXPLAINING TO THE 9-YEAR-OLD," SHE SAID WITH TEARS IN HER EYES.

She had to stay strong – not only for her own sanity, but for her family, especially Jaden. But Dicesare's family was there to support her every step of the way. Her brother helped her shave off her hair once it started falling out from chemotherapy treatments. He told her if she was going to lose her hair, he had to be the one to shave it off for her.

"We are Indians fans and I said, 'there's an Indians game on tonight. Let's order pizza and let's shave this head.' So, he did. He came over on that night. It was a Thursday night. And we sat there, then he shaved what was left," she said. "I wouldn't want anyone else to go through that with me."

Although Dicesare has not attended Panerathon, she is interested in attending in 2019 and feeling the positive energy the event provides for cancer patients and survivors alike.

Dicesare said her experience at Joanie Abdu was wonderful and she was welcomed with open arms.

"I hope I never have to go through this again. But, if I did ever have to go through this again, I would come back here without a second thought."

Cyndi DiClaudio



By Rachel Gobep, Story330

Cyndi DiClaudio became a grandmother soon after she was cleared from breast cancer. She never thought she would get this far in life after cancer.

"There's a lot of what-ifs and struggles through the treatment," she said.

DiClaudio, 54, from Warren, came to the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center. She paid for a 3D mammogram to make sure all was fine because a lump was found in her left breast that was not cancerous about two years before, after a 2D mammogram.

In September, a suspicious lump was found in her breast.

"They would not have found that out if they did not do that 3D mammogram. The 2D did not show it," she said.

DiClaudio said at the time of her diagnosis, she had no lumps. It was a shock. Her treatment began a little more than a month after her biopsy.

"It was just so fast. It was just a whirlwind," she said.

When DiClaudio was told her diagnosis, she didn't cry. She felt like she was in good hands because she said Joanie Abdu is better than any place she has gone for a mammogram.

"I knew that I was in a good place for some reason," she said.

DiClaudio underwent six rounds of chemotherapy and 30 rounds of radiation.

She said this is not the first tragedy she has been through. She lost a son.

"Losing a child is a parent's worst nightmare," DiClaudio said.

She said she believes it helped her through this experience.

"I WASN'T GOING TO LET CANCER BEAT ME," SHE SAID.

DiClaudio said cancer has changed her life because things she thought were important aren't so important to her anymore – such as cleanliness of her house and doing the dishes. She found what is more important is going out to dinner with friends and enjoying life.

DiClaudio also loves to travel and wants to experience everything that is around her.

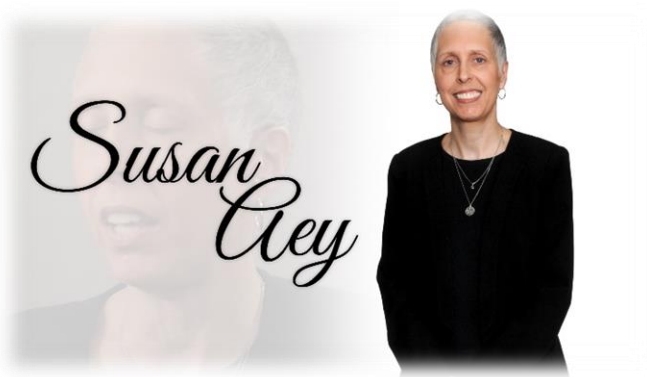
"I want to take [my grandson] and show him what the world has to offer," she said.

DiClaudio attended Panerathon for the first time in 2018. At the time, she was still getting radiation, so she couldn't walk the whole way.

"I was just in awe. I could not believe how big and how wonderful the whole situation was," she said. "It was overwhelming."

DiClaudio said she believes Panerathon has done a lot to educate and allow people to know that there are others going through breast cancer.

"When you find out that you have cancer, you can look. You can do research," she said. "You can ask doctors questions ... but until you talk to somebody else that has had cancer... that's when you feel like you connected. I think Panerathon does that. It allows people to get connected."



By Alyssa Weston, Story330

For Susan Aey, breast cancer was the furthest thing from her mind until one night in bed.

"Imagine my shock when late one night while lying in bed, I had a sharp uncomfortable pain in my left breast, half asleep. I felt for a small lump the next morning – not sure if I had been dreaming. Unfortunately, it was," she said.

Aey – a physician herself – said it was difficult just calling her gynecologist and saying the words, "I have a breast lump."

Even though her tests came back inconclusive from the first breast cancer center she went to, Aey's gynecologist urged her to visit the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center. After being tested immediately, she got her diagnosis.

"I'm kind of an example of what not to do because I just never, ever considered that breast cancer was a possibility for me. I had no family history; had no risk factors. I was active and I felt healthy; I felt wonderful. Because of that attitude, I stopped doing breast exams," Aey said.

Before breast cancer, Aey was a stay-at-home mom with a hectic lifestyle of running her kids around. Her unexpected diagnosis hit her hard. Aey didn't think the lump could be cancer and was hopeful that her biopsy would come back fine.

"I still have kids at home, I really was thinking more about them than myself. It was scary. It really was scary."

In Aey's opinion, she is fortunate that she had the sudden pain and caught her cancer in the early stages. Otherwise, she might not have have found out for another six months when she was due for her next mammogram. Aey said with her medical knowledge, she felt she was in good hands at the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center and was impressed at how frequently evaluations were.

"(The center) is so calming and comforting. It's not like a normal clinic where you're, you know, sitting in a large waiting room with a lot of other people under the bright lights," Aey explained.

Aey's advice for other cancer patients going through similar treatment is that although it's scary and anxiety provoking, the treatments have come so far and the prognosis for most breast cancers is good now.

"You just have to look at the end result and try not to get bogged down and so worried about the process in between. It isn't pleasant all the time. But you know, if I can get through it, I think most people can," she said.

Cancer gave Aey a reset that she didn't ask for – it slowed her down.

Aey navigated a new pace while going through chemotherapy and radiation treatments because she was unable to do all the "hustle and bustle" and rushing around she did before.

"It just makes you think of what's important," she said. "I just feel I have a lot of gratitude to everyone along the way from Joanie Abdu that helped me through this."



Krissie
Moore



By Rachel Gobep, Story330

For Krissie Moore, her journey through breast cancer was the “deepest, darkest foggy day” for a year and a half.

“I was walking through that fog [not knowing] what was in front of me,” she said. “I knew someday there’d be a rainbow at the end.”

Moore, 48, of Liberty Township found the rainbow in 2015, when she learned she was cancer free. When she was diagnosed, it was an exciting time in Moore’s life. The day before Moore’s son graduated from high school, she felt a lump in her breast while taking a shower. But while she didn’t want to deal with it, something in the back of her head told her to take care of it. Moore said she made an appointment at the doctor’s office, and they told her it was probably nothing because she was so young, but to get it checked. She immediately scheduled an appointment at the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center, and she was in there two days later. Moore said when she was told she needed a biopsy, she wanted to leave immediately.

“At that point, everything is a blur,” she said.

The staff at JACBCC told her they did not feel comfortable letting her leave. Moore said that they knew she had cancer. The biopsy would see what kind of cancer it was. She was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer. In just five days, it had spread to her lymph nodes. Her treatment started within a week. She believes JACBCC saved her life.

“There was no waiting game. It was immediate ... They take such good care of you,” Moore said.

Telling her children of her diagnosis was very hard.

“I tried to be strong in front of them. I never cried in front of my children. If I had to cry, I went into my own room or the bathroom,” she said.

Moore said it became her “new normal.”

“They get used to seeing mom sick, and you just put on a brave face and tell them that you’re going to be okay ... They persevered through it, and they’re a lot stronger for it,” she said.

She underwent 15 months of chemotherapy, six weeks of radiation and multiple surgeries. Moore said she had a difficult time emotionally with her diagnosis. But after she was cancer free, she wanted to share her story to help other women.

“You have to not only be smart and be your own advocate, but you have to make sure you’re going to the right places to get the care that you need,” she said.

If it wasn’t for her diagnosis, Moore would have never been able to experience things she’s passionate about – such as walking dogs at Animal Charity.

“It made me want to do it for them. It took me out of the picture,” she said.

The first time she went, she could only walk one dog for about a half a block. After a while as she healed, she would walk every dog in the kennel around the block twice. She became active in Panerathon in 2015. She said it was emotional and overwhelming for survivors.

“You just look around and you know that there are other women there who have been through what you’ve been through. You’re so happy to see them. You’re happy to learn their stories.”

Sherri Spivey



By Alyssa Weston, Story330

At age 53, Sherri Spivey's life was back on track in January 2016, having just re-enrolled at Youngstown State University to finish her social work degree. Then she was diagnosed with Stage 1 breast cancer. When the doctor told Spivey the lump in her breast was a small tumor, she immediately thought of death and believed her life was coming to a sudden halt just as she felt she had started living again.

"[I thought] 'Oh lord, I'm getting ready to die,'" she said. "I just broke down and I just cried for like two hours before the doctor could even finish telling me the rest of my diagnosis."

Before breast cancer, Spivey, now 56, described herself as a happy-go-lucky. The diagnosis, however, made her shutdown – crippled by worry that she was on death's doorstep. But through the support of the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center in St. Elizabeth Youngstown Hospital, her friends and family as well as the power of prayer, she said "not today" to death. During her treatment, Spivey had a lumpectomy to remove much of her left breast and the lymph nodes to ensure the cancer hadn't spread. After the surgery, she had to have four cycles of chemotherapy over 3 months and 30 radiation treatments five days a week for two months.

Although she was overwhelmed with the thought of chemotherapy and losing her hair, Spivey was determined not to stay home and feel sorry for herself. One of the most difficult experiences of battling cancer for Spivey was telling her son and daughter about her diagnosis. They were devastated. Her son ran in the other room and shut the door. Her daughter fell in the corner and cried.

"[They] automatically thought 'Oh, mommy's gonna die.'"

Although it was a difficult time, Spivey's children were by her side every step of the way. Spivey participated in a clinical trial at Joanie Abdu which involved new medication to help renew the blood cells that chemotherapy damaged.

"Participating in this trial made me feel like I was doing something to help myself and other women," she said.

Through Spivey's experience at Joanie Abdu, she gained a second family. She still keeps in touch with the staff and regularly visits the center, even without an appointment, just to say hello. Additionally, Spivey is now part of a support group called Joanie's Sisters.

"If it wasn't for the center, I honestly don't know what I would do," Spivey said.

Now a two-year survivor, Spivey is done with her treatments but still comes to Joanie Abdu for check-ups. Although Spivey has never attended Panerathon, she is looking forward to attending it this year as her first year, and to be surrounded by the love and support of the community.

"As I began this journey, the important part of this was not me losing my hair, but living and having the ability to share my story with other women who may be going through the same situation," she said.

Spivey has three classes left at YSU and is using her new life as an advocate of regular breast exams. She believes that early detection is a cure.

"I realized that I am here for a reason."



Goldie
Tillman

By Rachel Gobep, Story330

Goldie Tillman said she is fighting breast cancer for her three children because she wants to make sure she sees them grow up, graduate and start their own lives.

"I don't want what I'm going through right now to have their minds not really on 'kid things' because you only get to be a kid once," she said.

She wants her children to still be kids and tries not to put too much pressure on them with her diagnosis.

Tillman, from Warren, was diagnosed with cancer at 29 after she found an abnormal lump in August 2018.

She said she originally put it off and went to the doctor after the new year. But feels lucky that she found it when she did because it did not spread.

Tillman said she this experience has been an eye-opener and that tomorrow is not really promised. She learned that she needs to stop putting things off and procrastinating.

She always did breast exams at home because she has larger breasts, and her biggest fear was needing to have a mastectomy because she is so young.

"(Breasts) for me is the biggest part of being a woman, especially a young woman," she said.

Tillman's OBGYN recommended her to the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center after a positive biopsy. From Day 1, she said her experience at the center was beautiful – from the kindness of the staff to the environment.

She began her first round of chemotherapy in April.

She was scared at first because she was the youngest person there and felt out of place at times because she was the only black woman in the room, but she was made to feel at home.

"This is a great place. I would most definitely recommend this place to any and everybody ... I have a decent team of people. I love them, and I know they love me."

Tillman said she is trying to explain to her 9-year-old daughter that cancer is not something a person can just "catch." It's not contagious and the treatment is not something that she can be scared of.

"I know my body, and that's something [my daughter] needs to learn too ... because nobody can tell you about your body but you," she said.

She said this experience has changed her life because she was going through a lot before her diagnosis and thought everything was going to be back on track, but then she found the lump.

Her hopes for the future are to be cancer-free, to move on, be healthy and live in the now.

Tillman plans on attending the Panerathon, a 10K/2-mile walk or run in downtown Youngstown that benefits JACBCC, with her family and friends on Aug. 25.

*Dr. Rashid
Abdu*



By Story330

It was a tragic event in his own life that allowed Dr. Rashid Abdu, who treated people for decades, to see what his patients were going through. In 1993, Dr. Abdu's wife, Joanie, was diagnosed with breast cancer. She, too, was a medical professional as a registered nurse.

The husband-wife medical professionals became everyday, pedestrian patients:

Multiple appointments, tests, traveling between facilities, long delays etc. They even traveled out of town for treatments not yet available locally – Cleveland, Pittsburgh and more.

They were hopeful Joanie would get the correct course of treatment, recover, and they would resume their happy lives.

It was not to be. It became evident that the aggressive cancer Joanie had would soon take her life.

"Joanie was the kind of person who saw only the good in people. She was the love of my life," said Dr. Abdu. And cancer came and stole her away from me."

Dr. Abdu promised her as she died:

Youngstown would have a comprehensive breast care center in her name so that others would not suffer as she did.

It was to be yet another test of wills in the fascinating, unimaginable life of Dr. Abdu.

Born in Yemen in 1932, he was a part of a large, poor farm family that lived off the land. His cousin lived in a big city that had "lights without kerosene," cars and all these other amazing things. As a 12-year-old, Dr. Abdu traveled three days on a camel to get there and visit. A relative became sick and a doctor saved him.

That moment was seared in his memory. He, too, would be a doctor some day.

In that city, an American counselor took a shine to Dr. Abdu and enrolled him in a school for half a day while he worked the rest of the day to earn his way.

That counselor eventually moved back to America, and they invited Dr. Abdu to make his way over if he wanted. He did, arriving in 1948, and went to high school in the U.S. The king of Yemen learned of Dr. Abdu's improbable story and paid for his college. In the letter, the king left Dr. Abdu with one vital prompt:

"Do what has to be done as it should be done."

The Joanie Abdu Center did not happen fast. It would take 18 years. Dr. Abdu had been planning and researching and donating his own funds to create the Center before his dream came true. In 2011, he was able to open the \$8 million Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center at St. Elizabeth Health Center in Youngstown.

Pieces of its last funding came from the new Panerathon race program that was just getting started. The two programs have been joined ever since.

"We have a beautiful community," said Dr. Abdu. "They understood our mission. They embraced it. It has become a community project. For me, I am so grateful."



THANK YOU!

For more information, visit Panerathon.org/media-kit

A Dropbox link will be available in the Digital Media Kit where event photos and race results will be posted after the event for your use.

Reach out to with any additional questions:

Ashlee Mauti, Covelli Enterprises

412-445-1884

Ashlee.Mauti@covelli.com