

THE PINK PULSE

Updates & Impact from Nancy Owens Foundation" ✦



A YEAR OF IMPACT

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Foundation Spotlight

Celebrating the Impact of Our Fundraising Partnerships

The Nancy Owens Breast Cancer Foundation (NOBCF) is thrilled to celebrate a year filled with exceptional support from our incredible community partners. Their unwavering generosity and dedication have been vital in pushing forward the frontiers of breast cancer research while increasing public awareness about this critical cause. Each year, we are proud to unite with businesses, organizations, and individuals who share our mission of funding cutting-edge research and providing hope and support to those affected by breast cancer. These partnerships are the lifeblood of our efforts, allowing us to make a lasting impact in the fight against this disease.

Our partners have gone above and beyond, organizing events, making generous donations, and rallying their networks to support our cause. Their collective efforts have not only

We want to extend special recognition to:

Tootsies, Bernstein Realty Spring Market, The Moving Houston Team - Keller Williams Memorial, the **Tickled Pink Tea Party** sponsored by Tammy McCall, Stacie Spangler Thierheimer, Angie Blacklock, and Sharon Guzowski, **The Honor Roll School-Sugar Land, Jentry Kelley Cosmetics, The Tea House, H-E-B and Decker Hat Company.**

These partnerships show the impact we can make together. With continued support, NOBCF is more committed than ever to funding research and working toward a breast cancer-free future.

To everyone who stands with us: your support truly makes a difference. Here's to another year of progress, hope, and partnership!



Hope, Strength, and Inspiration Shine Bright at NOBCF Luncheon, Fueling the Fight Against Breast Cancer!

On October 25, over 500 supporters gathered at the Omni Houston for the Nancy Owens Breast Cancer Foundation (NOBCF) Luncheon, celebrating resilience and advancing breast cancer research. The event highlighted NOBCF's ongoing support for three groundbreaking research projects at Baylor College of Medicine, MD Anderson Cancer Center, and Houston Methodist Research Institute.

Chairperson Terri Guerra thanked attendees for their unwavering support and shared exciting plans for the upcoming Fashion for the Cure event in Spring 2025.

The luncheon honored Diamond Sponsors Peggie Kohnert, Richard Yount, and Jennifer Hernandez/Legacy Mutual Mortgage, along with all sponsors and donors.

The spirited silent auction raised significant funds, demonstrating the community's commitment to the cause.

Keynote speaker Mark Willis, a CEO who lost his wife to breast cancer, shared an emotional story and announced a surprise \$10,000 donation, inspiring even greater generosity. Diamond Sponsor Peggie Kohnert matched donations up to \$10,000, doubling the impact.

The event also featured the presentation of the "Nancy Owens Spirit of Courage Award" to cancer survivor Jennifer Bowlin, a powerful reminder of the strength and hope that defines NOBCF's mission.

This unforgettable luncheon was made possible by the unwavering dedication of the NOBCF's volunteer committee and board members, including Terri Guerra, Chairman, Amy Bernstein, David Gugino, Gloria Moorman, Jennifer Hernandez, Mariella Massa, Mary Piper and Peggie Kohnert, committee members include Christina Sacco, Elizabeth Rankin Rice, Modie Piperi, Randee Kaplan, Tamara Mannen, Vicki Fullerton, and Ellie Riney the event coordinator. Their commitment fuels the hope that NOBCF brings to breast cancer patients and survivors throughout the region. "I love this committee more than anything," shared Chairman Terri Guerra. "Their tireless dedication and hard work reflect the passion they share. They are truly the best group of people I have ever had the pleasure to work with."

As one of Houston's largest Realtor-organized charities, the Nancy Owens Breast Cancer Foundation remains committed to finding a cure.

Together, we are creating a world without breast cancer—one step, one event, and one breakthrough at a time.



2024 Spirit of Courage Award Spotlight



Jennifer Bowlin Honored with 2024 Spirit of Courage Award for Inspiring Strength and Resilience

Jennifer Bowlin is a native Houstonian and has called Sugar Land, Texas, her home for the past decade, where she lives with her wonderful family, husband, Wade, and their two children, Abby (16) and Dax (13). A Texas native through and through, Jennifer is known for her boundless energy and dedication to her family. As a full-time sports mom, she can often be found cheering at football and baseball games or supporting Abby at cheer competitions. Despite her busy schedule, Jennifer also finds time to work as a real estate agent, bringing her commitment and enthusiasm to every client she serves.

Additionally, she serves on the PTA and Booster Clubs at both of her children's schools. She volunteers her time as the Vice Chairman for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Rabbit Committee and has been on that committee for 12 years.

In February 2020, Jennifer's life took an unexpected turn at 42 years old, when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She underwent six rounds of chemotherapy and a double mastectomy. This was at the beginning of Covid so she had to endure the chemotherapy treatments alone, as the hospital would not even allow Wade to accompany her. Following her remission, she needed 5 additional surgeries to deal with the reconstruction. Doctors gave her hope that the cancer had only a 1-3% chance of returning, but in June 2024, Jennifer discovered that it had come back. True to her nature, she found both instances herself, discovering lumps that prompted further investigation.

Throughout her journey, Jennifer has leaned heavily on her faith and the incredible support of her family and friends. Her determination and positive spirit have been a beacon of hope, not only to her loved ones, but to the wider community. Jennifer continues to fight this battle with the same courage and resilience that has defined her life.

She is deeply honored to be the recipient of the Nancy Owens Breast Cancer Foundation's Spirit of Courage Award for 2024. This recognition is a testament to her commitment to living life to the fullest, no matter the challenges she faces.



Save the Date!



Mark your calendars for the 2025 Fashion for the Cure event at Tootsies on May 8th! Join us for an unforgettable evening filled with fashion, music, incredible bites, and, of course, the most stylish cocktail party of the year. Stay tuned for more details – this is an event you won't want to miss!





Stories of impact: Baylor College of Medicine the Lester and Sue Smith Breast Center

Nancy Owens' friends describe her as having been beautiful, with mischievous hazel eyes and an infectious laugh.

"She had this grace and presence and just was everyone's friend," said Terri Guerra, chairman and president of the Nancy Owens Breast Cancer Foundation. "She never had an unkind word, and she always had a smile on her face." Ms. Owens, a pillar of the real estate community in Houston, Texas, survived two bouts of breast cancer over a span of 20 years. Her group of friends, many of them also realtors, remember how Nancy did everything "right"—she ate well, she exercised, she took vitamins and did everything within her power to keep the cancer from coming back.

"She did her regular checkups, everything, and then it came back a third time, and it came back with a vengeance," said Ms. Guerra. Ms. Owens died on September 7, 2001.

Soon after, a luncheon was planned to honor Ms. Owens and raise money to fight cancer in her memory. It was intended to be a one-time event, but 23 years later, through the establishment of the Foundation, her friends have raised and donated millions of dollars to this cause, with nearly \$850,000 given to support breast cancer research at Baylor College of Medicine for over close to two decades.

Xiang "Shawn" Zhang, Ph.D., director of the Lester & Sue Smith Breast Center at Baylor, studies how to prevent cancer recurrence with support from the Foundation.

"I study how breast cancer moves to other organs such as the bones, lungs and liver—a process we call metastasis," he said. "This is the most fatal process of breast cancer progression because 90% of breast cancer patients who die, die of metastasis, not the primary tumor." Dr. Zhang and his team are thankful for the Foundation's contribution of \$40,000, which helped secure state-of-the-art imaging equipment for their research.

Exciting new things are on the horizon at Baylor, and Dr. Zhang's team is leading the way. "I foresee that we will also become leaders in helping to identify the driving course of each patient's cancer—or so-called precision medicine," Dr. Zhang said.

"I also predict that in five to 10 years we'll establish several new lines of basic research and also translational research that will lead to a paradigm shift in practice and patient care." This will all be possible with the continued support of The Nancy Owens Breast Cancer Foundation.

Ms. Owens' friends wish she was still at her beloved farm in the country near Round Top, Texas, gazing out at her horses and mules in a field of wildflowers.

"But each time that we meet with the doctors and get an update from the lab, it is so inspiring because they are making progress and we can see the light at the end of the tunnel," Ms. Guerra said. "And it amazes me. The doctors that are doing this research and the things that they are doing are just miraculous."

Foundation Spotlight

Built on Friendship: United in the Fight Against Breast Cancer

Amid an unforgettable September in 2001, a group of friends found themselves united by both grief and a shared determination. They had lost a cherished friend, Nancy Owens, to her third battle with breast cancer. Little did they know that this loss would become the catalyst for a movement that would continue to touch countless lives. It was the spark that ignited Amy Bernstein and Nancy's circle of friends into action. What began as a heartfelt attempt to honor Nancy with a single event became the foundation of a mission-driven organization.



“At the start, we truly had no idea what we were getting into, but we were resolute, in carrying the torch toward cancer research in Nancy's memory” recalls Amy Bernstein, who spearheaded the effort along with Gloria Moorman. With her characteristic tenacity, Amy picked up the phone, gathering donations, securing sponsors, and rallying support for what would become a memorable luncheon held at the JW Marriott. Hundreds gathered, all bound by a shared cause: raising funds for breast cancer research in Nancy's memory.

Turning Grief into Purpose

Amy's approach to building the Nancy Owens Breast Cancer Foundation was much like her approach to her real estate business, Bernstein Realty. She never accepted "no" as an answer. If someone couldn't contribute a large sum, she would encourage them to give whatever they could—and then a bit more. It was this relentless drive that propelled the Foundation forward. Under her leadership, the Foundation quickly gained momentum, earning significant accolades, including the prestigious Susan G. Komen Hope Award for Ambassadorship in 2007 and the Houston Association of Realtors® John E. Wolf Citizenship Cup Award in 2006. Amy herself won the award in 2002 for her work on the Foundation.

What truly sets the Foundation apart is its unwavering commitment to ensuring every dollar raised directly funds breast cancer research. The Nancy Owens Breast Cancer Foundation (NOBCF) stands out for being entirely volunteer-driven, which means every donation goes directly to supporting crucial research projects. Unlike many other organizations, NOBCF guarantees that 100% of its funds remain right here in Houston, focused on local initiatives that propel medical research forward. The Foundation maintains regular communication with leading local doctors to ensure that donations are making a tangible impact in advancing the progress toward a cure.

Early on, the Foundation forged a partnership with the Lester & Sue Smith Breast Center at Baylor College of Medicine. The funds were specifically allocated to research projects, carefully tracking their progress to maximize impact. Over time, their contributions expanded to include research at the Methodist Hospital's Department of Nanotechnology and MD Anderson Cancer Center. This hands-on approach, ensuring that contributions directly support innovative projects, is a testament to the Foundation's dedication to finding a cure for breast cancer.

A New Era of Leadership

The Foundation grew not just from the friendship shared with Nancy but also from the powerful bond of admiration, respect and motivation towards a common goal between Amy Bernstein and Terri Guerra. After nearly two decades of dedicated service, Amy decided to pass the leadership baton in 2018 to Terri, a long-time friend and Foundation member who had been with the organization from its inception. Terri, who first met Amy through her friendship with Nancy, brought fresh energy and a renewed vision to the Foundation's mission.

Under Terri's stewardship, the Foundation achieved new milestones, including earning accreditation from the Better Business Bureau and being recognized as one of the largest Realtor-driven charitable organizations in Houston. Her emphasis on remembering the Foundation's roots—never forgetting why it was created—keeps Nancy Owens' legacy alive.

A Community United for a Cure

Terri's leadership has not gone unnoticed. In 2021, Houston Agent Magazine awarded her the Charitable Service Award for her relentless efforts in the community. In 2022, she was honored with the John E. Wolf Community Service Award by the Houston Association of Realtors for her unwavering dedication to NOBCF and her profound impact on the Houston community.

“When you contribute to NOBCF, you are supporting crucial research projects and becoming part of a community committed to making a real difference in the fight against breast cancer,” says Terri. The Foundation's focus on local impact ensures that each donation contributes directly to advancing research initiatives within Houston, accelerating progress in breast cancer treatment, and ultimately, moving closer to a cure.

As the Foundation moves forward, it continues to be a testament to the power of friendship, perseverance, and purpose. What began as a one-time event in memory of a beloved friend has grown into a powerful force for good, united by the unwavering hope of a future free from breast cancer.