

Volunteer Spotlight – Maggie Mahoney

By Maggie Mahoney, LACC Team Captain of Ellen's Angels

As I sit down to reflect on my time working with the Hirshberg Foundation I am overwhelmed with many emotions. First and foremost I think of my beautiful, amazing, and inspiring, mother Ellen Mahoney, who passed away in June 2006. Her short five month battle is the reason I got involved in the fight against pancreatic cancer. I found out about the Hirshberg Foundation on the internet. In October of 2006, I created Team "Ellen's Angels" for the LA Cancer Challenge. I thought I would fly down from San Francisco for the weekend to run it myself, but little did I know, my whole family flew out from Washington D.C. to cross the finish line with me. **My mom is the reason my family, friends, and I will continue to run with Team "Ellen's Angels" at the LA Cancer Challenge every October.** I am a part of the Hirshberg Foundation to honor her memory.

"You Can Hope, Or You Can Help" is the Foundation's motto. And it represents how my mother lived her life. She was one to take action and make the lives of the people around her, better. Even after her death, people still tell me how my mother changed their lives. This is how I hope to live my life.

The work we are doing to find a cure cannot bring my mother back but I believe our efforts can help the lives of others. This is the reason I will continue to fight. In many ways the Foundation has become my extended family. I'm working to cure this disease in honor of my mother and for all of loved ones we have lost. **I will work hand and hand with you until we have a cure.**

Event Spotlight – Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament

By Michael Meister

My father, Larry Meister, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in March of 2005 and passed away just three short months later. My father was a great man who stood out within the community and always found a way to be involved. I was raised with the notion that it is important to make a difference in the world no matter how big or small. It was with great joy that I could do whatever I could to help spread awareness, raise money and fight pancreatic cancer.

In memory of my father, I began an online search for a Foundation that I could join in the fight with and help to support. I decided on the Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research for their cutting edge research being conducted at UCLA and around the US and because of their heartfelt commitment that money raised would go directly to finding a cure. On June 26, 2009 I held the First Annual Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament, benefiting the Hirshberg Foundation, in memory of my father Larry. This spectacular night was filled with Texas Hold'em Poker, food, a great raffle and terrific prize packages for the over 100 people who participated. The event raised over \$10,000 for the Foundation. It was such a successful night that we held our Second Annual Texas Hold'em event on March 12, 2010. We are also looking forward to coming up to LA for our fourth LA Cancer Challenge in October.

My wife and I have felt a warm connection to the Hirshberg

Foundation. We ask that everyone please consider making a donation to the Foundation in memory of your loved one this year!

You Can H.E.L.P. Fund Spotlight – Kim Pietro's Ironman Fund: In Honor of John Van Decker

By Kim Pietro

When my father John was diagnosed with Stage III pancreatic cancer in August 2008, his world did not stop. He continues to rise to the top of his class with a will to live for his family, for the Jets, the Yankees, his home and for his work as a mason contractor. Two years since symptoms were evident, this is a man who provides and relies on love to carry him through the best and worst of times.

Right now, pancreatic cancer is essentially an unsolvable problem. If staying power is any sign of victory, we are very blessed to have it. We realize not every person can be healed, but we believe that any disease can be cured. We live by high expectations of ourselves, our friends and family, of our society and now of the Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research.

I became personally involved with the Hirshberg Foundation when I was looking to utilize my 2009 Lake Placid Ironman triathlon

as a platform to raise awareness and money for pancreatic cancer research. The Ironman is the ultimate one day endurance event that is propelled by the human body and driven by the mind. 2009 was a victory- John is still with us and I finished the Ironman in a very respectable fashion. We share the same goal in 2010: to each get stronger and tougher mentally, physically and spiritually.

Under the great guidance of my parents, I feel a responsibility to be part of something much bigger than myself. To promote a more just society, to serve others and to stand up for things that I believe in. Together, we are committed to helping the Hirshberg Foundation find a cure.

We Will Never Give Up for Barry & Rochelle!

Barry generously gifted nearly \$140,000 over 15 years through the Rochelle Lazar Memorial Research Fund. He remained a dedicated member of the Hirshberg Foundation family and we will continue to honor his legacy of compassion, generosity and commitment to never give up!

Event Spotlight – The Wedding of Lindsey Wilder & John McRobbie

By Lindsey Wilder

Since I was a little girl, my mother, Elizabeth Wilder, and I had shared dreams of my wedding day. From the invitations and flower arrangements, to the wedding dress and cake, she and I had preplanned all of the wedding details. By the time I got engaged at the age of 25, my mother had already been battling pancreatic cancer for over a year. I was faced with the devastating reality that my mother would not live to see me get married. Sadly, my mother lost her battle with pancreatic cancer on February 15, 2008, and like everyone else who had known and loved her, I was heart-broken.

Over the next nine months, my fiancé and I considered various options that would allow us to incorporate my mom's spirit into our wedding. After reading about a few organizations, we stumbled upon the Hirshberg Foundation's website and learned that their main focus is on raising funds for laboratory research in hopes of developing a cure for the cancer. Shortly after sending our contribution, we received purple ribbons for our wedding guests, as well as place cards explaining the purpose of our donation.

On the evening of November 8, 2008, I walked happily down the aisle with a bit of lace from my mother's wedding dress sewn into mine, and one of her brooches pinned to my bouquet. With the color purple (also my mom's favorite color) integrated into our clothing, flowers, and decorations, we each proudly donned our purple ribbons throughout the night in honor and loving

remembrance of her life.

This past February 15th, on the one year anniversary of her passing, my whole family got together again to commemorate my mother's life. People brought flowers and memories to share, and still others made additional donations to the Hirshberg Foundation to try and help fight this horrific disease. Though my mother was not able to attend my wedding in person, her spirit and her love was all around us that night.

You Can H.E.L.P. Fund Spotlight – Deborah Roe and the C. Carl Roe Memorial Fund

Carl Roe passed away September 5, 2008 from complications caused by pancreatic cancer. Our goal with this fund is to raise awareness of the severity of pancreatic cancer by describing our personal experience. Our focus is to spread information about this silent but deadly disease. We want to honor this person who was so important in our lives by trying to give hope to others who will have to travel his same path. We hope to raise awareness about this disease and help raise the funds necessary to develop a better means of detection and eventually a cure. Carl was taken away too soon by a disease that does not have a symptom until well after the disease has developed. We thank everyone for your support in this fight. We will continue to support this wonderful cause until a cure has been found.

To view Carl's story, visit:

<https://pancreatic.org/memorial/carlroe>