

LACC Team Spotlight – Mia's Angels

By Topiltzin Sanchez, Team Captain

When asked to write this brief explanation as to why I participate in the LA Cancer Challenge I was dumbfounded. Didn't know what to do or say; except yes, sure I'll do it. Then memories of my mother, Maria E. Sanchez, flooded my mind and tears instantaneously flooded my eyes falling down my face. My mother fought this battle from 2004-2010, beating pancreatic cancer with the help of Dr. Isacoff. She lived for her family and was ecstatic to have beaten this disease. She would later develop leukemia and succumbed to it on March 8, 2013. I participate in this great event for people like my mother, so that they can have the resources available to them that will ensure a better treatment to a disease that is unforgiving.

I participate in the LA Cancer Challenge because I have to give back to an organization that continues to help families and their loved ones deal with this disease. I do my small part to honor my mother by forming a team every year.

LACC Team Spotlight – Milstein Adelman

By Antherine Perkins, Team Captain

The law offices of Milstein Adelman began working with The

Hirshberg Foundation to raise money and awareness for pancreatic cancer due to our common goals. Milstein Adelman pursues litigation against pharmaceutical products that increase the risk of pancreatic cancer. When informed of The Hirshberg Foundation's LA Cancer Challenge, the office leapt at the chance to be involved, with 42 employees signing up to run or walk to support survivors and patients with pancreatic cancer.

Our team had personal, as well as professional connections to the cause. One of our legal assistants lost his father in 2007 and our team coordinator lost her aunt to pancreatic cancer.

These experiences, as well as our drive to protect and support our clients, brought Milstein Adelman together to join the L.A. Cancer Challenge this year. Many of our participants were able to recruit donors and even family outside of the office to participate, creating a diverse team of attorneys, assistants, family and friends.

Milstein Adelman is grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in this year's challenge to help contribute to the fight against pancreatic cancer!

LACC Team Spotlight – Ohana Means Family

By Jayme Heyl, Team Captain

Participating in the LA Cancer Challenge has quickly become an annual tradition for our family. Ohana Means Family was formed in the fall of 2012 just before the passing of my grandmother, Kay Shimizu. She was active in the community throughout her

life and was probably the most selfless person I know. She volunteered at the Senior Nutrition Program at the Venice Japanese Community Center for over 25 years. She also participated in ikebana (flower arrangement), craft class, and much more. Most of all she will always be remembered for her cooking. Whether it was a full spread of Japanese cuisine on New Year's Day or a quesadilla after school, grandma showed her love through her cooking.

When our team started out we weren't sure how many people would join or donate. But we were pleasantly surprised when we recruited 25 team members and raised over \$4600 in our first year. This year we had 27 members and raised over \$5800. We walk/run to remember our loved one, to show support for people who are currently struggling with this disease, and to raise pancreatic cancer awareness in our community. Most importantly the LA Cancer Challenge is a time each year that our family can get together, reconnect and remind ourselves the true meaning of ohana. Now we can also call the Hirshberg Foundation part of our ohana. I cannot say how appreciative we are of all of the encouragement we get from the staff and volunteers on the day of the event as well as throughout the year.

LACC Team Spotlight – Team LANA

By Christina Santoro, Team Captain

On August 18, 2010 at 7:34 am, our Mother Lana took her last breath after a short two-month battle with pancreatic cancer.

She passed peacefully in her own home surrounded by her family and a mountain of love. It was the most profound experience of all of our lives and we all felt incredibly blessed to be a part of her passing, as we were her life. Her diagnosis was completely unexpected and as indescribably difficult as those two months were, we were so moved by the enormous outreach of love and support we all received from family, friends and even strangers. Our mother received countless cards, letters, emails and phone calls during that time from people whose lives she had touched and she was incredibly moved by each of them. We learned during this time that not only does it take a village to live and thrive; it takes a village of love and support to transition.

Upon her passing, we knew that we wanted to find a special way to keep her memory alive and at the same time support cancer research and the countless others riddled with the horrible disease. We were very happy to cross paths with the Hirshberg Foundation and we immediately signed up for the 2010 L.A. Cancer Challenge. The love and support we had felt during this dark, difficult time continued with an outpouring of support for this beautiful walk and it has now become an annual tradition that we all look forward to participating in. This Foundation and walk have been instrumental in helping our family grieve and give back the love we received during this difficult time. We know that it is LOVE that got us through and it is love that will bring a cure to this epidemic. We thank the Hirshberg Foundation for all of their beautiful work and we feel blessed to be a part of something so important. Today, we are 60 members strong and when we walk, we honor our mother and her beautiful memory, her funny spirit and her love for all people.

LACC Team Spotlight – TAZ (Team Adam Zauder)

By Julia Clarke, Team Captain

After a long, courageous and exhausting battle with pancreatic cancer, Adam Zauder passed away on December 23, 2009. He was only 51. Adam was one of those rare and special individuals who walk into your life and change it forever. I was fortunate enough to have eighteen years with him.

When I first attempted to write down my thoughts about Adam's illness, my experiences with pancreatic cancer and my relationship with the Hirshberg Foundation, it was extremely difficult because, the one person that I would have shown this too – to correct all of my mistakes, run on sentences, poor grammar and bad punctuation – Adam – is no longer here. But, let me try...

The Hirshberg Foundation first came on to my radar screen very late into Adam's diagnosis. I was looking for some entity that could help me with new ideas or treatments for Adam's ailment as we were running out of options and time. Unfortunately, by then, it was too late for him. But, the Foundation also gave me comfort, a new purpose, and an added bonus – a way to channel my passion for running.

In October 2009, I ran my first LA Cancer Challenge run in support of Adam, and then I signed up to run the 2010 LA Marathon on the Hirshberg Team. This run was meant to be a support run, but training turned bittersweet, and I instead ran this marathon in Adam's memory.

Since then, Team Adam Zauder has run every LA Cancer Challenge –

2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 – and has consisted of people running locally or virtually in places such as South Carolina, Colorado, and the British Virgin Islands. From the beginning of this journey, my team and I have raised close to \$10,000 for pancreatic cancer research. It is our hope that we are doing some part (even if small) in the fight against this devastating disease.

Adam never gave up – on people, ideas, life and himself. In fact, he never gave up hope during the two year battle he fought against pancreatic cancer. Flying back and forth between LA and New York for treatment, he never complained about how hard it was, or how tired and sick the chemo and radiation made him. So, in his spirit, I too will never give up hope that this disease can be beat. I know the Hirshberg Foundation shares this sentiment and will continue to be relentless in their battle against pancreatic cancer. My teammates and I will continue to support them any way we can.

LACC Team Spotlight – Team Guayas

By Melissa Machuca, Team Captain

I am the granddaughter of Holanda Soriano, who is the inspiration and driving force behind Team Guaya. In the spring of 2007, Holanda was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. She was the gentle, soft spoken, loving and spiritual matriarch of our growing family: which at the time consisted of her 9 children, 32 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great

grandchildren and an ever-loving spouse of 66 years. She fought a tough battle and succumbed to this horrible decease in the fall of 2007. She was 88 years young. She was the first loss to our close-knit family who is still grieving her departure. Undoubtedly, she was the leader of our pack.

Shortly after her passing, a co-worker told me about the Hirshberg Foundation, their LA Cancer Challenge walk/run and dedication to pancreatic cancer research and awareness. I immediately felt drawn to the Hirshberg Foundation's mission and knew this was our avenue to honor my grandmother and take part in the fight against pancreatic cancer. We have participated in the LA Cancer Challenge since 2007, initially participating as individuals and later as Team Guayas.