

A Never Give Up Attitude on Life

A 15-year survivor, Robert is a warrior and survivor who remains very determined and never quits! He is a family man who tries to be the best, husband, father, and pop-pop to his grandkids.

A Humble 11-Year Journey Beyond Pancreatic Cancer

I am very humbled as an 11-year pancreatic cancer survivor. I am not the one who deserves this honor. It is all those who cared and supported me throughout my journey (and continue to do so), who are the heroes. I do not say that lightly.

My Son's Persistence Encouraged Me to Never Give Up

I was diagnosed March, 2017 with Stage 4 pancreatic cancer. My son's perseverance and insistence is why I am here today. I am also alive to say to others, never, never ignore your symptoms, press the doctors for tests and exams, have your tumor biopsied so they know what kind of cancer you have, as not every PC is the same and the treatments are different.

Finding a New Perspective on Life

Pancreatic Awareness Month means everything to me. I have a different perspective on life. God has given me another chance to care for others as I was doing prior to being diagnosed.

I am a SURVIVOR

My symptoms started back in 2008 when I felt tired all the time. I thought it was because I was working a lot of hours. It hit me when I was driving home one day, and it took me 3 hours to get home. That's because I had pulled over and fell asleep. It took me weeks before I told my wife and that's when I went to the doctor.

Once I saw the doctor and tests were run, I was told I have cancer. However, my doctor doesn't specialize in cancer, so I was referred to another doctor who ran more tests and discovered I have Neuroendocrine Tumors (Carcinoid Cancer). That doctor didn't have a clue of what to do. As far as I was concerned the clock was ticking. With a lot of prayers and our own research we found a doctor who was a specialist in Carcinoid Cancer. He told me that I have the same cancer that Steve Jobs had, where it started on the tip of the pancreas and the tumors moved to my liver.

It was never said to me I was high risk because of my race but I was told many people are misdiagnosed. I think shining a light on this topic only once a month is not enough to help people no matter what their ethnicity. I look at all of us as God's children and iron sharpens iron. I'm also blessed to have a family who cares and pushes me to continue the fight.

I've met many people since my journey began. I've heard their stories and most people don't do any research for themselves and you know the results. There is a lot of information out there and people need to do their research and then reach out to organizations for help. I realize that health care is a major factor for cancer. I didn't do any research on genetics or ethnicity specifically because that really didn't matter after I was told I have cancer.

I've been to many meetings about pancreatic cancer and how it can branch out to other physical problems. I've felt like a raisin in a bowl of rice and I truly don't understand. I know someone who had pancreatic cancer and they invited me to a luncheon for survivors and caregivers. It was very informative, so I've told others about Hirshberg Foundation. I've been to 2 affairs and just to hear other people talk about living with cancer is support to me. There is a lot of help and support out there and you have to drop your color barrier because cancer is like a bullet it has no name on it. We're all in this together.

Patient Spotlight – My New

Normal

By Jeff Ross

I was diagnosed April 11, 2014; Adenosarcoma was the diagnosis with mets to the liver. My wife, Shareen, found out about Agi's great work so we attended a 'Game Day' event in Brentwood where I first met both Agi and Allison. I can't speak highly enough about them both. They've been extremely helpful in getting me into UCLA.

Dr. Schwartz at Kaiser Woodland Hills has been my oncologist. He believes in me being active and doing things that I enjoy in life – things to keep me looking forward! I also see Dr. Lucy Postolov, an acupuncturist, and have had second opinions with great doctors like Dr. Lee Rosen at UCLA. Combined they have all given me hope, inspiration, and great treatments.

My "new normal" is to do something good for myself as often as I can. This includes using a trainer to get stronger, or taking yoga classes with my wife to help improve balance and get more meditative. My wife Shareen inspires me with her positive attitude. The ups are the weeks off from chemo and going out to see concerts and friends. The downs are the side effects of chemo, having neuropathy in my fingers and toes are bothersome and the G.I. side effects as well.

The new normal is to accept the diagnosis, and to fight every day against the disease but to also appreciate that life is truly a gift and to have gratitude for things each day. My wife and I are foodies, so we have a few special places we like to go to celebrate the little victories. We plan on doing a lot of traveling which we enjoy. I bought a new camera, as photography is a hobby and it gives me a lot of pleasure to get out and take pictures. I still maintain my literary management business, and

reading clients' new material helps motivate me in addition to getting them where they want to go.

My wife Shareen, my family and friends are my biggest supporters. This October my wife organized 13 people to join Team Jeff for the 17th Annual LA Cancer Challenge. Our nephew Justin designed the t-shirts with the baseball motif "we're going to knock cancer out of the ballpark!" We raised over \$2,300, my sister and her boyfriend came out from New Jersey, and we all finished the 3.1 miles!