



# hope

**FRIENDS OF THE  
FOUNDATION  
RESOURCE BOOK**  
VOLUME 30



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# progress OVER THE YEARS

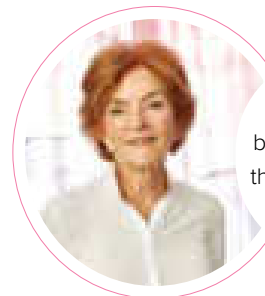
## THREE DECADES OF DIFFERENCE

**Time flies when you're having fun!** It seems like just yesterday when Vera Bradley co-founders, Barbara Bradley Baekgaard and Patricia R. Miller, committed to begin funding breast cancer research. When their dear friend, Mary Sloan, passed away from breast cancer in the early 1990s, they knew they had to act.

What started as a local golf fundraiser 30 years ago, has grown into a globally respected non-profit organization—one that has contributed over \$38 million to breast cancer research. While it's exciting to reflect on progress made, the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer is focused on the future—a future free from breast cancer!



Patricia R. Miller and  
Barbara Bradley Baekgaard



"I'm so proud of the advancements and discoveries that have been made because of our partnership with Indiana University and will continue to support this cause until a day without breast cancer exists!"

—Barbara Bradley Baekgaard, Vera Bradley and Vera Bradley Foundation co-founder

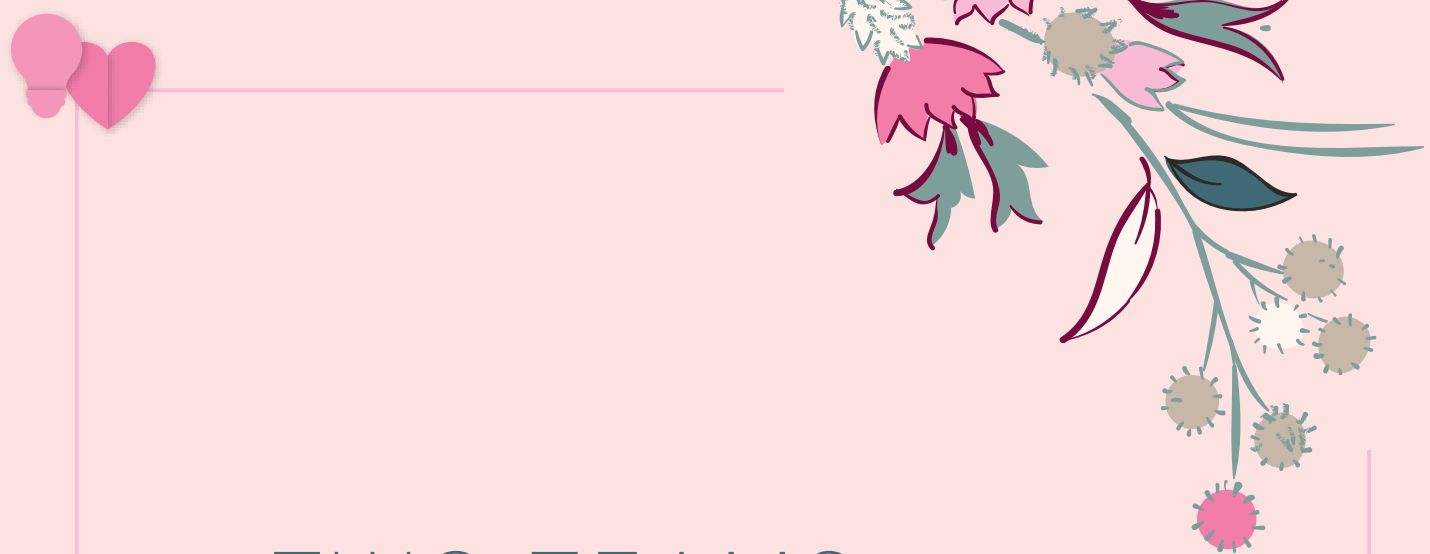
"Thanks to the dedicated research team at the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research and 21st-century innovation, results that were once impossible are now possible. Your support is saving lives!"

—Patricia R. Miller, Vera Bradley and Vera Bradley Foundation co-founder



"For the past 30 years, the Foundation has focused on raising funds for breast cancer research. Our partnership with IU has led to amazing discoveries. Hope lives here and will remain here until we find a cure!"

—Stephanie Scheele, Foundation Executive Director



# TWO TEAMS *one dream*

## HOPE LIVES IN THIS POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP

Indiana University School of Medicine Dean, Jay Hess, speaks enthusiastically about his school’s longtime partnership and deep personal connections with the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer. He knows that every year volunteers and staff work together to grow the impact and reach of the Foundation.

In the same way, Hess has built a formidable group of breast cancer researchers and physicians at IU who have a passion for confronting breast cancer and whose talents complement one another in pursuit of a common goal—to eradicate what he describes as the scourge of breast cancer.

In the words of Barbara Bradley Baekgaard, “Our association, our friendship, and our love of IU goes way beyond what we do philanthropically.

**IT'S A TRUE LOVE STORY!”**



### RESEARCH TEAM

#### OUR RESEARCHERS

Over 35 members of the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research team at Indiana University work collaboratively with laboratory, clinical, translational, and population/prevention researchers in a multi-disciplinary approach.

#### NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

The NCI leads the nation’s research efforts to improve cancer prevention, detection, diagnosis, and survivorship—providing critical grant funding.

#### CONSORTIUM

Research no longer takes place in silos. Our research team networks with regional, national, and international peers to share data and ideas.

### FOUNDATION TEAM

#### STAFF

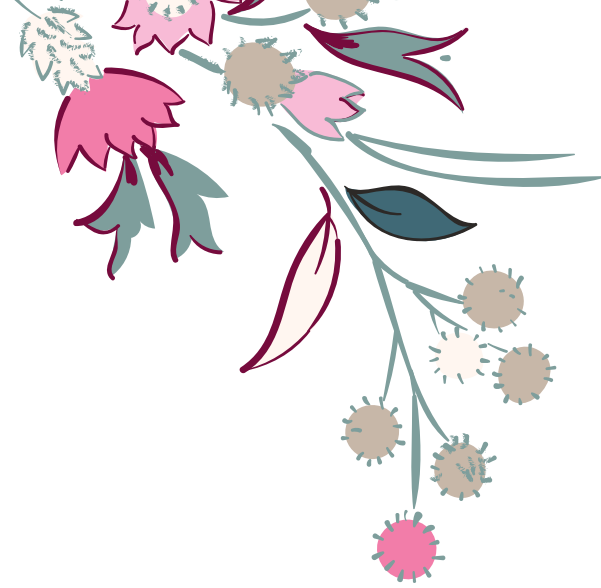
With a goal of being great stewards of the trust placed in us, our passionate team stands ready to partner with you.

#### VOLUNTEERS

Partnering with hundreds of volunteers, the exceptional donation of time and talent allows us to donate over 80 cents of every dollar raised.

#### SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

Our dream of a future free from breast cancer has created an undeniable ripple effect. Everyone we touch through this work becomes a member of this circle of friends who share our passion.



# OUR researchers

Researchers at the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research work together to prevent breast cancer and improve cancer treatments and care. Research is conducted in four ways—laboratory, clinical, translational, and population/prevention sciences. Scientists work collaboratively across disciplines to tackle breast cancer from each uniquely skilled perspective.

**Laboratory researchers** study cancer cells, tissue surrounding tumors, and immense data sets to understand how cancers work. They test their discoveries with human cells in petri dishes and in vivo models. Laboratory scientists are microbiologists, chemists, bio-informaticians, immunologists, molecular geneticists, and pharmacologists—among other scientific specializations.

**Clinical researchers** focus on testing new ways to manage cancer with patients—new approaches, treatments, or drug combinations. They are surgeons, oncologists, hematologists, pharmacologists, radiation oncologists, radiologists, nurses, psychologists, physical therapists, and more.

**Translational researchers** take what is learned in the lab to patients and what is learned from patients back to the lab. Translational scientists are typically MDs and PhDs who work both in the clinic and in the lab.

**Population/Prevention researchers** focus on reducing cancer incidence and improving cancer outcomes. These scientists identify cancer risks and develop ways to reduce them. Teams include scientists from medicine, public health policy, community engagement, health communication, psychology, and epidemiology.



## National Cancer Institute

Academic Cancer Centers are evaluated by the National Cancer Institute, which is the federal government’s principal agency for cancer research and training of cancer physicians and researchers. It’s the cancer-focused institute of the National Institute of Health. The NCI provides the center’s core grant to fund the administrative component and shared research facilities.

- Nationally, there are 72 NCI-designated cancer centers. Only 53 are comprehensive, which means they meet rigorous criteria for research and education efforts focused on preventing cancer. They also demonstrate substantial transdisciplinary research that bridges basic science, clinical science, cancer control, and population science.
- Indiana University’s Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center is the only cancer center in Indiana with the rigorously maintained NCI designation.
- The IUSCCC, home of the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research, holds the same designation as Memorial Sloan Kettering, MD Anderson, and Mayo Clinic.

## Consortium

The Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research networks with regional, national, and international peers to share data and ideas, and to collaborate on clinical trials. Key partnerships include:

- Membership in the Translational Breast Cancer Research Consortium—a partnership of the 18 largest breast cancer programs in the country.
- Leadership of NCI-funded national collaborative research groups (ECOG-ACRIN).
- Leadership of the NCI’s Breast Cancer Steering Committee, the body responsible for setting national research priorities.
- Leadership of four universities specifically focused on improving outcomes for Black patients.

## VERA BRADLEY FOUNDATION CENTER FOR BREAST CANCER RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS

### Our Leaders

**Jay L. Hess, MD, PhD, MHSA** Dean of Indiana University School of Medicine and Executive Vice President for University Clinical Affairs

**Kelvin Lee, MD** Director of Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center and Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research

**Xiongbin Lu, PhD** Vera Bradley Foundation Chair in Breast Cancer Innovation

**Bryan P. Schneider, MD** Vera Bradley Chair in Oncology

**Tarah Ballinger, MD** Vera Bradley Foundation Scholar in Breast Cancer Research

**Mateusz Opyrchal, MD, PhD** Vera Bradley Foundation Scholar in Breast Cancer Discovery

Steven Angus, PhD  
 Melissa Bear, MD  
 Richard Carpenter, PhD  
 Victoria Champion, PhD, RN  
 Andrea Cohee, PhD  
 Michele Coté, PhD  
 Emma Doud, PhD  
 Michael Feldman, MD, PhD  
 Carla Fisher, MD  
 Chunhai “Charlie” Hao, MD, PhD  
 Folasade O. Imeokparia, MD  
 Steven M. Johnson, PhD  
 Mark H. Kaplan, PhD  
 Pravin Kaumaya, PhD  
 Jaeyeon Kim, PhD  
 Yunlong Liu, PhD  
 Kandice Ludwig, MD  
 Brenna McDonald, PsyD, MBA  
 Samy Meroueh, PhD

**Kathy D. Miller, MD**  
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 Alo Ray, PhD  
 Andrew Sayken, PsyD  
 Todd C. Skaar, PhD  
 Susan Storey, PhD  
 Anna Maria Storniolo, MD  
 Hiromi Tanaka, PhD  
 Claire E. Walczak, PhD  
 Reggie Wang, PhD  
 Steven Westphal, MD  
 Elizabeth Yeh, PhD  
 Hiroki Yokota, PhD  
 Richard Zellars, MD  
 Xinna Zhang, PhD





“WE TRULY HAVE A POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP with the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer.”

— Dean Jay Hess, MD, PhD, MHSA,  
Indiana University School of Medicine



The research team at the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research includes 37 breast cancer researchers who have a diverse array of skills. The lineup includes physicians and scientists who are capable of dissecting cancer at the cellular level, taking findings from the lab and turning them into potential treatments, and, eventually, bringing them to patients in the form of clinical trials.

Researchers are now working to identify trace fragments in the bloodstream that can point to cancers that otherwise would remain hidden. They are looking at why Black women tend to have more aggressive breast cancers. They are studying why some women are more likely to see their cancer recur after initial treatments. And, with the support of the Vera Bradley Foundation, Indiana University is tailoring treatments to each patient.

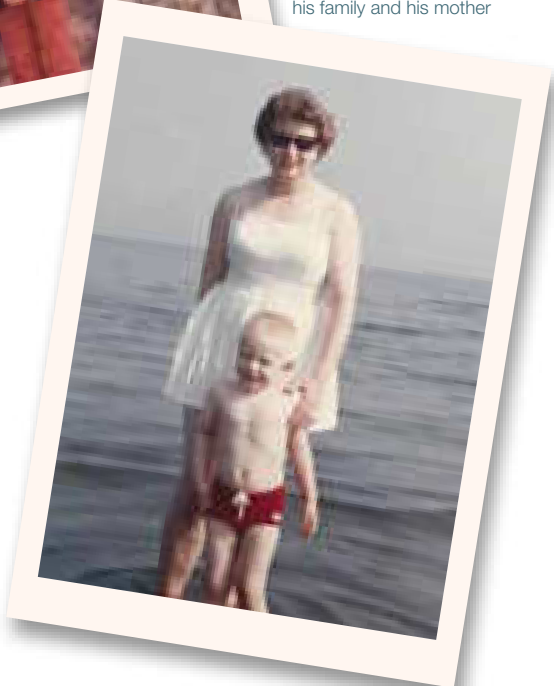
“We have built an interdisciplinary team and created good laboratory space so our people can work together. We’ve also built a broad portfolio of research,” Hess said.

As part of the larger Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center, breast cancer researchers benefit from collaborations with many other scientists. This includes those who are working to enhance the immune system’s ability to help fight cancer, a field known as immunotherapy.

IU’s team also includes collaborators from other medical schools around the country. It includes researchers in Africa who are part of the AMPATH consortium that has brought cancer treatment to the people of western Kenya and has the added benefit of diversifying the base of subjects for research. Additionally, IU’s Precision Health Initiative means patients with triple negative breast cancer can have their tumor genetically sequenced.



A young Jay Hess with his family and his mother



With crucial support from the Vera Bradley Foundation, IU has been able to recruit key people such as Matt Opyrchal, MD, PhD, the Vera Bradley Foundation Scholar in Breast Cancer Discovery. Opyrchal is helping take discoveries from the lab to patients, and he’s working to bring immunotherapy to breast cancer patients.

For Hess, who lost his mother to breast cancer, this fight is personal. He knows the same is true of the Vera Bradley Foundation and their army of supporters.

“This genuine and longstanding relationship is ultimately about addressing a big health problem.” — Jay Hess

Hess, who is completing his 10th year as Dean of the medical school, has developed friendships with Vera Bradley co-founders, Pat Miller and Barb Baekgaard. He’s hiked mountains in Arizona with Pat, and shares a common interest in the arts and aesthetics with Barb.

Hess recalls his first trip to the Foundation to meet members of the Vera Bradley Foundation board. He was touched by their warmth and kindness. When the Foundation made a new \$15 million pledge, he was determined to be a hands-on steward of the gift to ensure it was used wisely. “We have a clear focus and plan for the people we need to recruit to strengthen the science and our impact,” he said.

The Foundation’s pledge to breast cancer research at IU now totals \$50 million. Beyond the financial support, Hess smiles when he remembers a visit to Fort Wayne with a busload of his department chairs. Barb was there and greeted them with hugs. “We all got back on the bus feeling even more energized about the work we are doing,” he said. “I haven’t really worked with many people like that. I’m fond of all of them and want to make sure we deliver results.”



## PARTNERSHIP IS THE POWER

# THAT IGNITES *discovery*

The skills of our 37 researchers are amplified by a 280-member team at Indiana University's Comprehensive Cancer Center, one of the most elite corps of cancer researchers in the country.

Scientists in the lab, the clinic, and those studying cancer populations work together to improve outcomes for patients. “We share ideas formally in our research programs, tumor boards, and national and international meetings, but the informal exchanges are just as powerful. We benefit from interactions with colleagues who approach the same problems from very different perspectives,” said Kathy Miller.

Miller is internationally renowned for developing and directing clinical trials, often collaborating with peers around the country. She also directs clinical research for all cancers at the IUSCCC.

Losing patients to breast cancer is not okay. “The desire to help patients is at the center of everything we do,” Miller said. “Breast cancer continues to account for 40,000 deaths in the United States every year. Research—both laboratory and clinical—simply has to continue.”

The desire to do better for patients is the passion that drives research. Yet, comprehensive cancer centers do more than develop new treatments. Researchers at the Vera Bradley Foundation Center are at the forefront of discovering how breast cancers develop. “We are discovering how cancer cells originate and how aggressive cancers begin, particularly in Black women. We are also conducting the first clinical trial to learn how to decrease deaths from breast cancer in the African American population, in partnership with colleagues at comprehensive cancer centers in New York, Alabama, and California,” Miller said.

Understanding risk and preventing disease is crucial. The need to increase access to and accept cancer screenings, particularly in rural areas, has become evident.

Support from the Vera Bradley Foundation created the critical mass of expertise at IU. “We rely on philanthropic collaborations to expand research expertise and discovery,” Miller shared. “Vera Bradley generously provides products for us to thank those who donate healthy breast tissue, which is used by researchers around the world!”

### SEEKING TREATMENT FOR BREAST CANCER?

The single-most important question to ask is, “Does your institution participate in clinical trials?”

Data proves that when people seek cancer treatment where clinical trials take place, they have better outcomes. This speaks to the organization’s support of new treatments. It also says that the organization practices with the most up-to-date standard of care.

“No one wants cancer, but if you are diagnosed, you want **THE BEST TREATMENT AVAILABLE**. I feel like I was able to experience that.”

— Sandra, Breast Cancer Survivor and Clinical Trial Participant



“PARTNERSHIPS ARE THE ESSENCE OF EVERYTHING WE DO, but it’s the passion the Vera Bradley Foundation brings to the table that makes it all the more special!”

— Kathy Miller, MD

## CLINICAL TRIALS

### What are clinical trials?

Clinical trials are research studies in which real people participate as volunteers. Clinical research studies are a means of improving our understanding of disease, or developing new treatments and medications. Clinical trials evaluate the effects of a biomedical or behavioral intervention on health outcomes.

### Why should I participate?

The health of millions has improved because of advances in science and technology, and the willingness of thousands of individuals to participate in clinical research.

### Why are “healthy volunteers” critical?

Clinical research volunteers have always played a vital role in medical research. When developing a new technique, such as a blood test or imaging device, we need clinical research volunteers to help us define the limits of “normal”. These volunteers are recruited to serve as controls for patient groups. Investigators learn about the disease process by comparing the patient group to healthy volunteers.

### What are Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III studies?

Phase I clinical trials study the safety of a new treatment. Once researchers know a treatment is safe and understand the dose and schedule, they move to phase II. Phase II evaluates efficacy—how well a treatment works in certain patients. Phase III compares the new treatment to the best currently available treatment.

### What is a placebo and the placebo effect?

Placebos are harmless, inactive substances made to look like real medicine used in the clinical trial. Placebos allow investigators to learn whether the medicine being given works better or no better than ordinary treatment. Study of the placebo effect has helped discredit some previously accepted treatments and validate new ones.

### What is randomization?

Randomization is when two or more alternative treatments are selected by chance, not by choice. Analyses are done at intervals during a trial, which may last years. As soon as one treatment is found to be definitively superior, the trial stops.

### Are there risks involved in participating in clinical research?

Risks are involved in clinical research, as in routine medical care and activities of daily living. Although you may not receive any direct benefit as a result of participating in research, the knowledge developed may help others.

### Why are clinical trials important for the treatment of breast cancer?

Without clinical trials, we would have no new breast cancer therapies or treatments.

Sources: <https://www.cc.nih.gov/participate/faqaboutcs.html>, <https://www.cancer.iu.edu/patients/clinical-trials/4-things-to-know.html>



# PROMISING RESEARCH *discoveries*

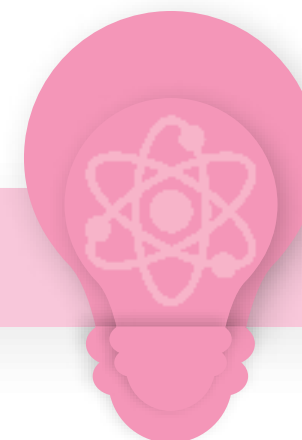
## TO CURE BREAST CANCER, WE MUST KNOW IT WELL

More than 35 physicians and scientists invest in the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center to reshape our understanding of breast cancer. This elite group makes the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research a place where science becomes solutions for women at risk, those fighting the disease, and those who have survived.

It starts with understanding the genetics of normal breast tissue, what goes wrong, and how it drives the disease. Insights lead to treatments tailored to a woman's disease and spare her lingering side effects. We also need to grasp how breast cancer impacts women at different stages of their lives.

### **This progress starts with supporters like you.**

Your gifts serve as vital funding for our talented researchers to strike out and pursue bold ideas. You enable them to gather data, launch clinical trials, and hopefully change how we prevent, detect, and treat breast cancer. Your generosity makes new discoveries possible.



# DISCOVERIES





## Tracing Cancer's Origins

### CHALLENGE

We know cancer arises from abnormal cells that divide uncontrollably. Yet, scientists don't know the names and jobs assigned to the roughly 37 trillion cells that make up the human body.

### DISCOVERIES

HARI NAKSHATRI, PhD, used sophisticated technology to compare normal and cancerous breast cells to determine the exact cells where cancer originates. He identified 23 cell types in the normal breast and pinpointed four cell types that give rise to most breast cancers. This finding upended previous assumptions about the origins of breast cancer. His work is now part of the Human Cell Atlas, a global reference map of all cell types in the human body. Having a catalog that profiles each cell type enables researchers to understand why some cells break down and cause breast cancer.

Now that these originator cells have been identified, prevention research can focus on disrupting the way breast cancer develops, and possibly develop tightly focused, non-invasive treatments.



## Prevention

### CHALLENGE

One slight change to a single gene can radically change the odds some women have for developing breast cancer. Usually, BRCA1 is a gene that helps prevent breast cancer, however, women who have a BRCA1 mutation are at far greater risk of developing the disease.

### DISCOVERIES

At IU, a pair of scientists may have found a promising way to prevent that from happening. JAEYEON KIM, PhD, and Vera Bradley Scholar OLGA KIM, PhD, discovered that the hormone progesterone can contribute to the development of triple negative breast cancer in women with the BRCA1 mutation.

TARAH BALLINGER, MD, will take this early work one step further in a clinical study. Women who carry the mutated gene—and hope to prevent the disease by having a mastectomy—will receive a dose of an anti-progesterone drug before surgery. Breast tissue will be sampled from these women before and after surgery. The tissues will be compared to determine if the drug alters the steps critical to the development of triple negative breast cancer. Jaeyeon Kim's lab will perform a similar experiment.



From this, scientists can determine whether repressing the effect of the hormone changes the processes that lead to disease. These changes can be used to measure and predict an anti-progesterone drug's ability to prevent triple negative breast cancer.

Endoxifen is a purified form of the hormone therapy Tamoxifen, which is used to suppress estrogen production. It was developed as an alternative for women unable to tolerate Tamoxifen. The drug is more potent than Tamoxifen, allowing for smaller doses to be taken. The metabolite was discovered by TODD SKAAR, PhD, and his late mentor DAVID FLOCKHART, MD, in the early 2000s. Endoxifen, now moving into a Swedish phase II clinical trial, is used to reduce breast density.

## Improving Treatment

### CHALLENGE

IU researchers search for revolutionary therapies for all forms of the disease, but there's a particular urgency for triple negative breast cancer (TNBC). Unlike other types of breast cancer, TNBC doesn't respond to hormonal therapies or medicines that aim for common targets such as the HER2, progesterone, or estrogen receptors.

### DISCOVERIES

HARI NAKSHATRI, PHD, discovered a genetic factor present in nearly 40 percent of all breast cancers that helps cancer cells become immortal. He also identified a drug to block this gene, not only in TNBC patients, but also in patients with other forms of breast cancer. A clinical trial testing its effectiveness will begin soon.

KATHY MILLER, MD, manages a national phase II study of a drug for TNBC or estrogen sensitive tumors. It aims for a target on the surface of cancer cells, delivering chemotherapy right to the disease. If successful, the trial will expand internationally for phase III testing with Miller at the helm.

Miller is also preparing to oversee a phase II trial of patients who will receive a pair of drugs to treat TNBC—one aimed at their tumor's primary genetic driver and another focusing on the gene that helps the cancer survive. The team is first studying the safety of the combination as part of the "Stand Up to Cancer Dream Team." Miller and KEN NEPHEW, PhD, are among nearly 20 scientists at six institutions who will oversee the effort to improve epigenetic therapies for cancer.

## Preventing Cancer's Return

### CHALLENGE

Even when a woman learns she's in remission, anxiety remains. Will her breast cancer return? And if so, can it be found early?

### DISCOVERIES

Fortunately, BRYAN SCHNEIDER, MD, has identified a clue. Once a patient undergoes chemotherapy and surgery to treat TNBC, remnants of the disease called "circulating tumor DNA" are present in their blood. Schneider and his colleagues discovered that measuring its presence is a critical predictor of whether the disease will return—a finding published in the prestigious medical journal, JAMA Oncology.

Phase II of this project, now called the PERSEVERE study, is underway and focuses on women at the highest risk for recurrence. Schneider will lead this \$12 million trial at more than a dozen sites across the United States, with the goal of enrolling at least 200 women with early-stage TNBC. Participants will be assigned a targeted therapy to match their tumors' genetic makeup. The goal is to use personalized therapies to decrease the risk for relapse in these patients.



## Ending Disparities In Care

### CHALLENGE

No two breast cancers are the same, and the same is true of the effects of the treatment patients receive. Studies have found that the mortality rate is higher for Black women with breast cancer.

### DISCOVERIES

Nerve damage from chemotherapy is typical. Yet, Schneider discovered a genetic culprit that can make Black patients more likely to experience nerve damage. As a result, chemotherapy doses are lowered or even stopped because of this painful side effect, a contributor to why Black women are more likely than White women to die from breast cancer. He designed a clinical trial to confirm genetic risk for neuropathy and determine the most appropriate chemotherapy to treat women who carry the gene. This trial has made history as the first of its kind specifically focused on Black women with breast cancer.

One insight from TARAH BALLINGER, MD, found obesity among White women did not have the same consequences as obesity among Black women. Research suggests that obesity among Black women increases the odds their disease will return and increases mortality from the disease. Understanding this disparity is driving further research.



# ask ANNA MARIA

## DR. STORNILO ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

Breast cancer diagnoses bring about all kinds of questions. With so many changes and challenges, navigating a new normal can be overwhelming. Nothing calms anxiety quite like hearing answers directly from an oncologist. *Luckily, we know a great one!*

Anna Maria Storniolo, MD, a specialist in breast care and cancer treatment, now serves on the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer Board of Directors. An oncologist and clinical researcher for over 40 years, she was an active participant in bringing science to the bedside and clinical observations back to the laboratory. With over 140 publications, Dr. Storniolo's work has impacted women—and the research world—forever!

### **Are there any downsides to having reconstruction surgery?**

Reconstruction is a personal choice. There are different kinds of reconstruction, and some are better than others depending on the situation. I strongly advise that you ask a plastic surgeon to be involved in your initial care plan, so you know what options are best for you. Ask all kinds of questions—recovery time, number of surgeries, symmetry, etc.—and ask to see examples of their work. Finally, bear in mind any surgical procedure has inherent risks of bleeding and infection, among others, and you need to be prepared for these.

### **How important is it to get a second opinion?**

The breast cancer journey is as much a battle of medicine vs. cancer, as one of doubt vs. peace of mind. Your relationship with your oncologist is unlike most other patient/physician relationships. For most people, this is the toughest battle they've had to face. It's critical you TRUST the medical professionals on your team and feel comfortable talking to them. Though getting a second opinion isn't always necessary, it's never wrong. You need to feel like you're on the right path. A different set of eyes will either confirm the original recommendations or teach you—and your physicians—something new. And don't worry about your doctor's feelings...we're big girls and boys, we can take it!



### **Will I lose my libido or desire for sex?**

Some of the anti-estrogens used to treat breast cancer can cause lessening of your libido, or sex drive. The degree varies from person to person. It's important to remember that breast cancer most commonly affects women during their menopausal or perimenopausal years, times when libido is naturally waning. My advice is to talk with your partner about approaches to arousal and foreplay. This can be seen as an excuse to have some fun during a very trying time!

### **Why do my ribs hurt a year and a half after chemo and radiation?**

This is a very common complaint. The removal of breast tissue, especially in a mastectomy, involves the cutting of many tiny nerve endings. Most of these heal or reconnect, however, occasionally the discomfort persists for a long time. Radiation further irritates these nerve endings. If bothersome enough, taking an NSAID—ibuprofen or naproxen—can help. With pain often being localized, avoiding underwires or seams that overlie the area may help. If the pain is severe or new, please consult your surgeon or oncologist.

### **How important are breast self-exams? I've been told to do them but am not sure what to feel for!**

#### **Do annual mammograms suffice?**

Breast self-exams by themselves are poor screening tools. Women should adhere to mammogram guidelines, especially women with a strong family history of breast cancer or other risk factors. BUT, examining your breasts is FREE!! I counsel every woman, starting at about age 25, to know her breasts.

While you're in childbearing years, examine yourself at different times in your cycle, because the breast changes with normal hormonal fluxes. After menopause, examine yourself once a month. Though breast cancer usually forms a lump, this isn't always the case—there may be a thickness, a puckering, a change in color, or a new asymmetry. If you're worried about "how", just ask your primary care provider. Remember, it's never wrong to talk to your doctor about a change in how your breasts feel.

### **Can I continue taking vitamins, collagen, and using beauty products during treatment? Also, is there anything I can take to help prevent or manage hair loss?**

I recommend checking with your oncologist or the specialty pharmacist in their practice before using or taking any supplement/unusual beauty product. Even common vitamin supplements taken at unusual doses may have unexpected or even harmful consequences. Bring the bottle or label of the specific product with you to your appointment. Also, beware of accepting the recommendations of well-meaning friends, relatives, or even other breast cancer survivors. There are several different kinds of breast cancer. Make sure a product is safe for you!

Hair loss is certainly one of the most distressing side effects of some breast cancer therapies. This is because it's a sign to you and everyone else that you're "sick", even though you're likely to have many good days throughout your treatment. There's nothing that will guarantee your hair will not fall out. However, scalp hypothermia during chemotherapy, or "cooling caps", work to some degree in most patients. There are several approaches, including literally changing out a tight-fitting frozen cap several times during treatment or having ice-cold liquid flow through a tight cap. These can be costly, aren't always covered by insurance, and may include side effects. Your oncologist should have information regarding options available to you.

### **I've tried three different long-term medications, experiencing horrible side effects with each. Someone suggested I start drinking tart cherry juice to help with the side effects—and it's working! Why does tart cherry juice help, and is there anything else I can do to reduce negative side effects?**

Tart cherry juice hasn't been carefully studied as a means of decreasing side effects from any form of cancer therapy. There is some evidence in nutrition literature that it has anti-inflammatory and melatonin-like properties. I advise checking with your oncologist, and if you do decide to try it, avoid products with high sugar content.

### **How can I best support my wife during treatments or after surgery?**

My most sincere advice is twofold: BE THERE and LISTEN. No two cancer journeys are the same. It's important to not avoid the topic or pretend nothing's wrong. Often, a patient's loved ones are afraid themselves and don't know what to say. The answer is to listen! Ask your wife what she needs or wants from you. Cancer patients often feel an overwhelming loss of control over their lives, so allowing them to express their needs gives them some control back.

### **I'm having a hard time finding myself attractive with scar tissue and loss of feeling in my breasts. How can I become more confident in the new me?**

My heart goes out to you. You're still the same amazing person you were before this happened! Talk to your plastic surgeon about ways to minimize the scar, and if necessary, consult a wound specialist. The numbness may resolve or lessen over time. It's important to discuss your feelings with your partner and close friends. You will get affirmation and love in return.

### **Is there any way to know whether breast cancer is genetic or not besides genetic testing? I have no family history but want to know for my daughter's sake!**

You may be surprised to learn that only approximately 30% of breast cancer is familial and less than 10% are associated with a known genetic defect. It's important to know which diseases occur in your family, especially any types of cancer. It's also important to know the cancer history of the father's side of the family. Mutations are often inherited in an "autosomal dominant" fashion, meaning you only need one copy of the faulty gene to develop the problem. Since we have two copies of all our genes and inherit one copy from each parent, the "faulty" one may be inherited from the dad's side, even if he didn't have breast cancer.

Having said that, we are far from understanding all the genetic details of breast cancer, and new genes of clinical significance are being identified all the time. It's worth noting if you've had breast cancer, your daughter's lifetime risk increases by about 60%—from approximately 12% to 18-20%. Personal risk also increases with the number of family members that have had breast cancer.

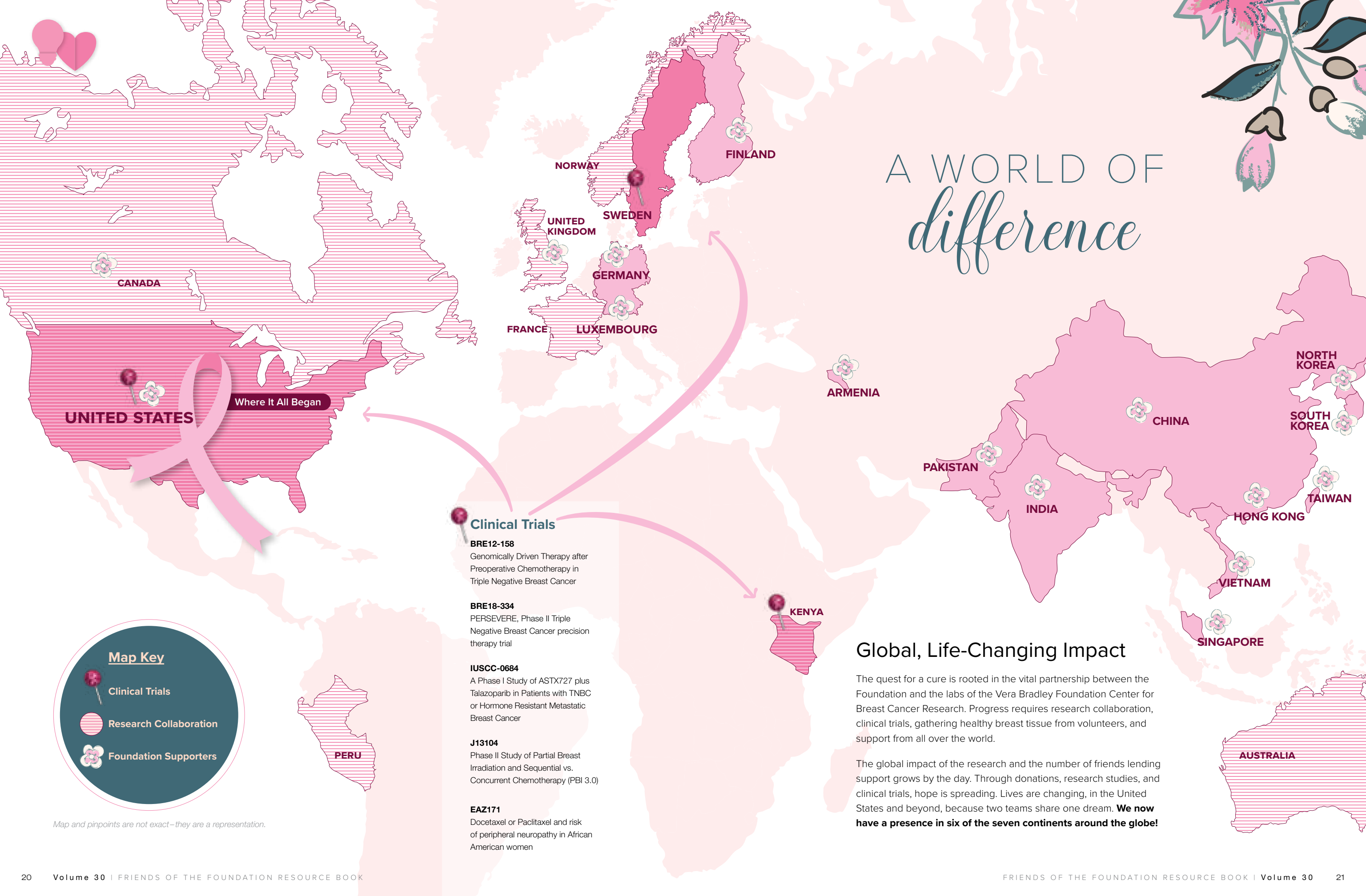


### **Do exercise and nutrition reduce your chances of getting breast cancer? If not, what does?**

As noted above, to date we have no clear cause for 70% of breast cancers. Women who learn they are at high or moderate risk may consider taking tamoxifen, which lowers lifetime risk by at least 50%. I encourage all women to adopt a healthy, balanced diet—nothing fancy—and moderate exercise. Getting your heart rate up for 30 minutes at least five times a week is ideal. These lifestyle changes have been shown to reduce breast cancer risk in several excellent, well-done studies.



# A WORLD OF difference



**UNITED STATES**

Where It All Began

## Clinical Trials

**BRE12-158**  
Genomically Driven Therapy after Preoperative Chemotherapy in Triple Negative Breast Cancer

**BRE18-334**  
PERSEVERE, Phase II Triple Negative Breast Cancer precision therapy trial

**IUSCC-0684**  
A Phase I Study of ASTX727 plus Talazoparib in Patients with TNBC or Hormone Resistant Metastatic Breast Cancer

**J13104**  
Phase II Study of Partial Breast Irradiation and Sequential vs. Concurrent Chemotherapy (PBI 3.0)

**EAZ171**  
Docetaxel or Paclitaxel and risk of peripheral neuropathy in African American women

## Global, Life-Changing Impact

The quest for a cure is rooted in the vital partnership between the Foundation and the labs of the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research. Progress requires research collaboration, clinical trials, gathering healthy breast tissue from volunteers, and support from all over the world.

The global impact of the research and the number of friends lending support grows by the day. Through donations, research studies, and clinical trials, hope is spreading. Lives are changing, in the United States and beyond, because two teams share one dream. **We now have a presence in six of the seven continents around the globe!**

### Map Key

-  Clinical Trials
-  Research Collaboration
-  Foundation Supporters

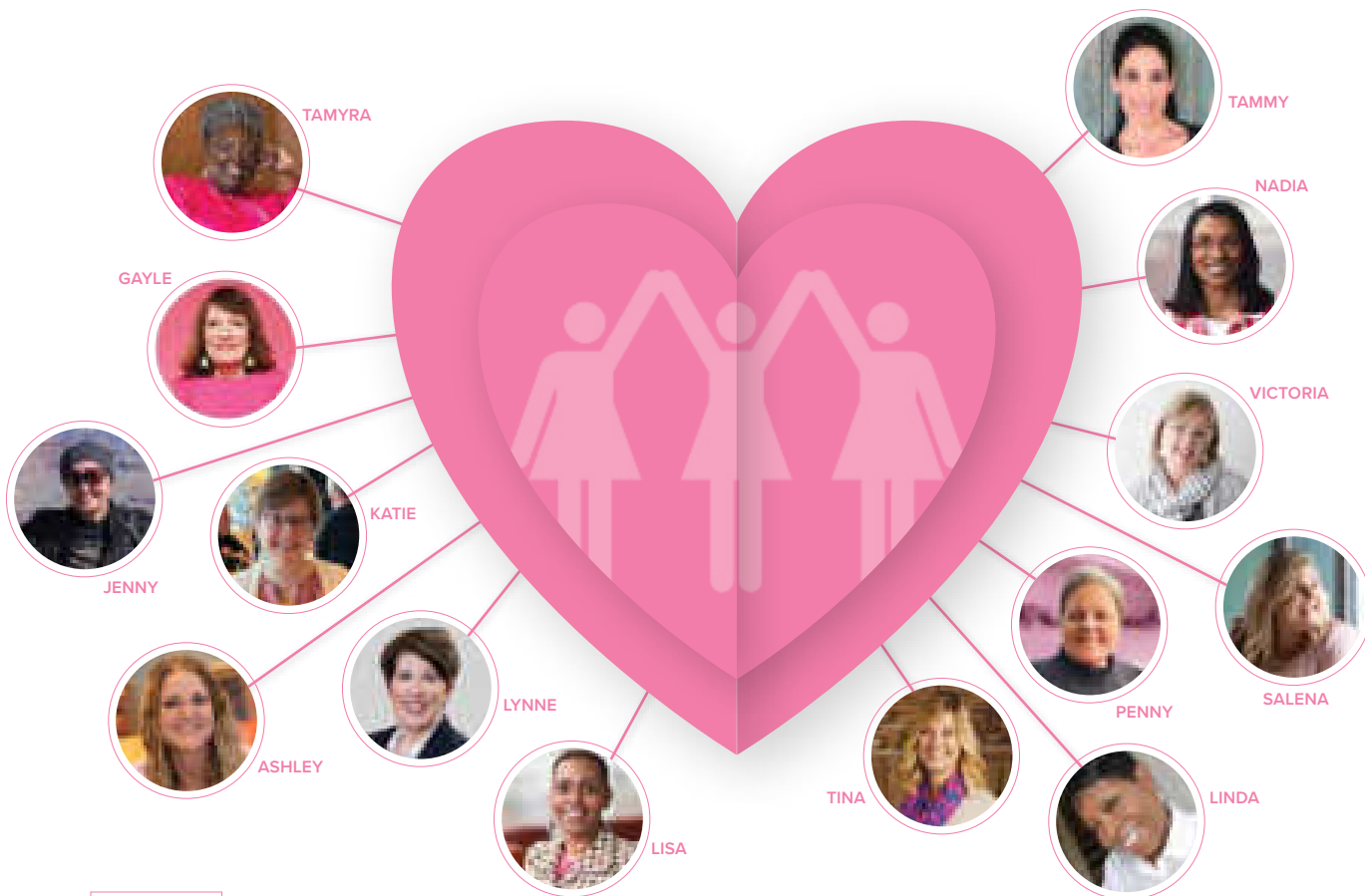
Map and pinpoints are not exact—they are a representation.



# STORIES OF *strength*

## HOPE LIVES IN SURVIVORSHIP

Women of all ages, ethnicities, and walks of life face breast cancer diagnoses that change their lives forever. While a diagnosis may bring temporary hardships, it can also bring hope! These women, and so many more, inspire us to keep raising funds for breast cancer research.



Interested in sharing your Story of Strength or reading survivor's stories? Scan the QR code or email us at [foundation@verabradley.com](mailto:foundation@verabradley.com)!

## *wise words* FROM SURVIVORS

### OBSTACLES ALONG THE WAY

While physical setbacks are common, the most surprising side effects of chemo were mental. I've always been a high performer, but chemo's effect on my ability to think quickly and clearly was intense.

One of the biggest obstacles I faced was losing my hair. I had to realize I "made" my hair, my hair didn't make me. That still stands true today!

My depressed immunity was my biggest enemy, having infection after infection in my hands and feet. A simple task like reaching for my keys was nearly impossible.



### LESSONS LEARNED

Every cancer diagnosis is different. Assumptions can be made, but there is not one medical book or manual that doctors refer to.

Breast cancer doesn't have to run in your family.

Don't put things off. I found a new lease on life and now do things that I enjoy, such as yoga and cooking classes.



### NEW PERSPECTIVE

I live with two new mantras: "Don't sweat the small stuff" and "Enjoy the little things in life." I intend to for a long, long time!

My diagnosis changed my mindset to love more, live free, laugh as much as I can, and treat people the way I want to be treated.

Breast cancer has been a truly clarifying experience for me! Now, I live each day to the fullest with no regrets and try not to worry about things I can't control.

### ADVICE FOR OTHERS

Take each day one day at a time. The beginning is overwhelming, but it does get better!

Be sure to ask for and allow others to help! It really does take a village.

Stay active and positive! Your attitude makes a BIG difference.

Practice self-checks regularly, regardless of how low you think your risk may be. Early detection saves lives!



### HOPE

I found hope because I had a strong support system that believed I could endure this journey.

Research and treatment options have come a long way. Never lose hope!

My kids were my hope and reason for living during this challenging time. There are unexplainable events that happened during my cancer journey, but with my faith in His Hands, I knew He was in control!

### BELIEVE

Cancer doesn't have to crush your goals.

Believe in your medical team and practice open communication. If you don't voice your concerns, your medical team can't help you.





**Elizabeth** is a member of the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer Board of Directors and a breast cancer survivor.

# HOW TO *care* FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS WITH BREAST CANCER

by Elizabeth Miller

## MY FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER has just been diagnosed with breast cancer... **HOW CAN I HELP?**

### I'VE just been diagnosed with breast cancer... **NOW WHAT?**

**Educate yourself** and find out as much as you can about your breast cancer – Estrogen, Progesterone, HER2, TNBC – but get the facts! The internet can be an overwhelming and even misleading place. Most physicians' offices have information available – and that's the stuff worth reading.

**Write down questions** you may have prior to your appointments.

**Have a loved one with you** at all your appointments to take notes. I promise you won't hear anything after hearing words like "double mastectomy", "chemotherapy", or "radiation".

**Understand that you may have a team of doctors**, not just one guiding your care.

**Start a notebook or binder** to keep the information you collect at appointments.

**Become familiar with your medical portal and log in** for checking on appointment times and test results. This will become an important tool.

**Use your assigned Nurse Navigator** for questions and support. Your Nurse Navigator is a gift!

**Join a support group** – whether in person or on social media. You can find general groups for breast cancer survivors or groups dedicated to specific types of breast cancer.

**Talk to others** who have walked through a similar breast cancer diagnosis, but know everyone's journey is very different.

**Begin to explore post-surgery options** for bras and prosthetics as there are many options. Two of my favorites are from Athleta and Handful.

**Be an advocate for yourself** and know it's okay to get a second opinion.

**Let friends and family help you** and try to maintain a normal lifestyle with work and activities.

**Develop your own coping strategies** – exercise, meditation, yoga, journaling, and seeking spiritual support are all terrific options.

**Useful gift ideas:** Gifts were an unexpected part of being diagnosed with breast cancer. So many people brought or sent thoughtful gifts that I treasure to this day. Here are a few ideas:

- Foundation "Gift of Hope"
- Button front pajamas
- Lightly scented candle
- Mastectomy pillow
- Soft blanket, robe, shawl, or fuzzy socks
- Lotions and lip balms
- Gift card for audio books
- Nice mug with tea bags

**Group gift ideas:** Organize meals for your friend using sites like Mealtrain, TakeThemAMeal, or SignupGenius.

- Organize and collect items to create a gift card bouquet of local restaurants. You'll find all sorts of cute ideas and examples on Pinterest!
- Encourage your friend to put a cooler on her porch for meal deliveries.
- Send a care package through a site like SpoonfulofComfort (soups and other goodies).

**Let her know you're thinking of her:** Notes, calls, texts, and emails – take a moment on a regular basis to check in on her and her family! Nothing brightens a day faster than a handwritten note or a card in the mail. I saved them all and look back at them from time to time. For me, these have become a gratitude journal of sorts.

**Take time to visit:** Cancer can be isolating. Always call first when you want to schedule a short visit, and understand if your friend is not up for it on that day. Also, never visit if you're feeling unwell.



**Know when you say, "Call me if you need something", your friend will not reach out and ask for help.**

**Instead, say:**

- "I'm headed to the store. Send me your list, and I can pick items up for you!"
- "When can I come walk your dog or pick up your prescriptions?"
- "Is there a day this week I can help you with the kids or errands?"
- "Is there a good day I could mow your lawn or water your plants?"
- "Is there a day I can drive you to radiation or chemotherapy?"



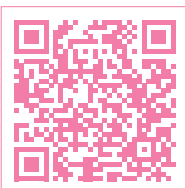
**Don't forget to check in on the caregivers as well. They need support and encouragement too!**

Vera Bradley Short-Sleeved Pajama Set in Sea Air Floral



### For Your Notebook

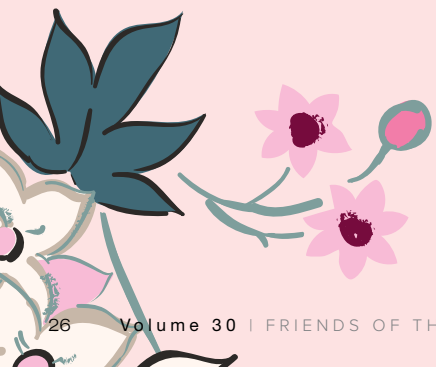
Scan this QR code for a helpful checklist created by Elizabeth and her dear friend, Maria Fisher, a TNBC metaplastic patient.





The next generation of Foundation supporters is focused on impact—giving not out of obligation, but from a place of passion!

# GENERATIONS OF *generosity*



## Q & A WITH A 2ND GENERATION FOUNDATION SUPPORTER



Jay Miller is the son of Patricia Miller, co-founder of both Vera Bradley and the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer. Jay is married to Elizabeth Miller, a breast cancer survivor. Together, they share three thriving children, two dogs, and a passion for travel and supporting breast cancer research.

**Q: What is your first memory of your mom co-founding the Vera Bradley Foundation?**

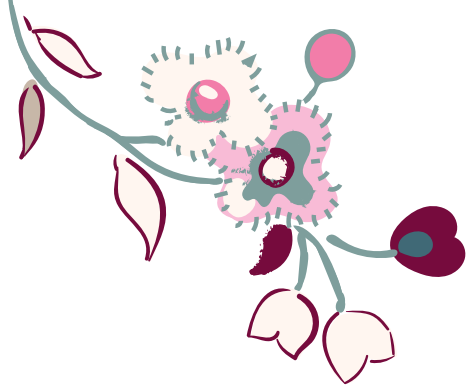
**A:** When the Foundation started, I was a student in Arizona just graduating from college. My involvement was limited to heading to my hometown for the Classic every year. In 1995, I brought my fiancé, Elizabeth, with me. She called out raffle winners' names from the stage. Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought she'd battle breast cancer one day. I also didn't connect the dots at the time that the creation of the Foundation was a life insurance policy of sorts for my future family!

**Q: What effect has your mom's example of being a generous visionary had on you and your family?**

**A:** My mom taught us from a young age that giving your time is just as important as donating money, and to give what you're able to give at any stage of life. I understand that every contribution, financial or otherwise, is critical. She also taught us the importance of giving as a family.







**Q: What were your thoughts when Elizabeth was diagnosed with breast cancer?**

**A:** I wanted to know as much as I could about the type of Elizabeth's breast cancer and her course of treatment, so I'd know what we were facing together. You hear the statistics of 1 in 8, but you never think it will happen to your wife. Now, I really understand how prevalent breast cancer is and how many families it touches.

I'd obviously been aware of the Foundation and its mission. However, until this moment, I didn't fully grasp the magnitude—the national and global impact—of the research we've all supported. In truth, I developed a much deeper care about this cause with Elizabeth's diagnosis.

**Q: What advice would you give to someone who is the primary caregiver for a loved one undergoing treatment for breast cancer?**

**A:** Accept help from others! Elizabeth has a huge support system of wonderful friends who were so helpful to both of us. Have open and honest conversations with your kids and keep them in the loop. Also, it's important to limit visitors and it's okay to say, "today she needs rest and no visitors." I had to do that a lot, which was hard for Elizabeth because she's such a social person!

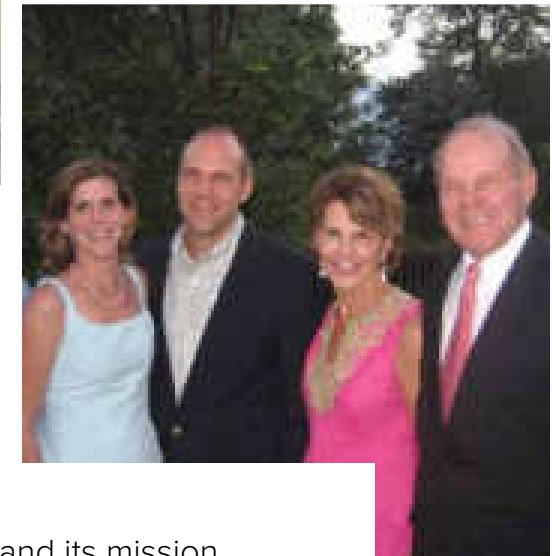
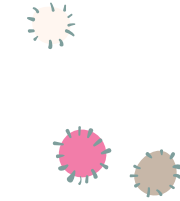
**Q: From a caregiver's perspective, what did YOU need most when Elizabeth was undergoing treatment?**

**A:** A flexible schedule to be available was highly important, especially with last minute surgeries and appointments. Our situation was unique because much of the time Elizabeth was going through breast cancer and surgeries, we were in the midst of a global pandemic. It was important for us to stay healthy, which meant we were a bit isolated. Meals were very helpful for both of us as I was doing all the cooking, but the showering of kind notes and gifts were a complete surprise and made us both feel very supported and loved.



We continued to celebrate milestones during cancer treatment —anniversaries, birthdays, etc.—and that was helpful. It was important for me to stay active and continue with hobbies and exercise. We love to travel and really couldn't during treatment due to covid, but when I could, I spent time building a boat for stress relief.

I tried to keep my mind focused on feeling gratitude even on the worst days. We remained so grateful throughout my wife's journey for all the good news we received, for all the acts of kindness, and for all the research that has led to the successful treatment of a horrible disease.

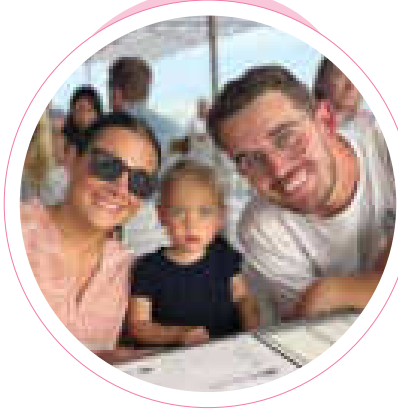


“I'd obviously been aware of the Foundation and its mission. However, until this moment, I didn't fully grasp the magnitude —THE NATIONAL AND GLOBAL IMPACT—OF THE RESEARCH WE'VE ALL SUPPORTED. In truth, I developed a much deeper care about this cause with Elizabeth's diagnosis.”

— Jay Miller



## Q&A WITH A 3RD (& 4TH) GENERATION FOUNDATION SUPPORTER



**Chris Ray is the oldest grandchild of Barbara “Birdie” Bradley Baekgaard, co-founder of both Vera Bradley and the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer. His parents, Amy and Mike Ray, have supported the Foundation for 30 years. Chris and his wife, Jordin, share one beautiful daughter named Charlotte Birdie, a pup named Sunny, and a passion for supporting the Vera Bradley Foundation.**

### **Q: Where did the name Birdie come from?**

**A:** Believe it or not, there was a time when grandmas didn’t get to pick their own nicknames! The story goes that I was old enough to talk, but not old enough to say grandma perfectly. I would visit my grandma, and just as you’d expect, her decorating style matched her unique, colorful personality. Her style was eclectic and warm, filled with pattern and color...and birds. There were birds in the curtain, couch, and pillow fabrics, in artwork, bird figurines, and even a bird cage chandelier. So I’d walk around pointing and saying, “Birdie, Birdie, Birdie!” The name stuck. My siblings, cousins, and countless others use that name to this day.

Our daughter is named Charlotte Birdie after my grandma, and we call her Charlie Bird. She was a micro-preemie, born weighing only 2.1 pounds at 26 weeks gestation. She’s proving to be just as colorful and strong as the icon she was named after! Our girl is growing up surrounded by the strongest, most inspiring women I know.

### **Q: What’s your first memory of the Vera Bradley Foundation?**

**A:** One of Birdie’s dearest friends passed away from breast cancer in the early ‘90s. Mary Sloan was a college roommate, a cherished friend, one of Vera Bradley’s first sales reps, and an amazing mom and wife. Her life was cut short by breast cancer. Birdie, with her signature “Ready, Fire, Aim” strategy – the same one she’d used when Vera Bradley was formed – was moved to do something with her business partner and friend, Pat Miller. That’s where the journey to find a cure for breast cancer began. Thirty years and over \$38 million later, she did something!

I’m 32 now, so the Foundation has been part of my life for the past 30 years. It’s hard to pick a first memory, because it’s part of the fabric of my life – an invisible thread woven in with all the other threads. I love the Foundation. It has shaped my story! How cool is it that we’re all part of something that’s literally changing and improving the lives of women and their families all over the globe?





**Q: What's the best lesson your Birdie taught you?**

**A:** I could write a book about all I've learned from her! She's a legend for many reasons, but to me she's my grandma first and foremost. Despite being insanely busy, she always makes time for family. Here are a couple of things that have made an impact on my life:

**Ask yourself what you can do today.** Ignore the instinct to think you need to wait until you can do something big. For as long as I can remember, Birdie would give each of us \$100 for our birthday—she still does that to this day. One requirement has always been that we give \$10 of the gift to a cause of our choice, and then write her a thank you note telling her who we gave to and why. One year I bought a brick for the playground at my elementary school. I was so proud when the playground was built knowing I'd personally contributed—and it was my choice.

**Believe in something.** What cause do you believe in? What moves you? How can you share your time, energy, or resources with the bigger causes you are moved by? You can always give or do something. Birdie taught us not to give our time and resources without feeling it's important to us. She'd say, "Don't donate just to donate—give by your morals and passions. Give to what you value." Jordin, Charlie Bird, and I contribute to the Foundation today because we believe in the mission. We also give time and resources to the NICU where Charlie spent the first 16 weeks of her life, because we are passionate about the importance of life-saving care for micro-preemies.

**Q: What effect has your mom's example of service and generosity had on you and your family?**

**A:** My mom, Amy Ray, is constantly thinking of ways to make a difference in the world, to make things better. She's the first to show up with a bouquet of flowers and a soft Vera Bradley blanket when she hears someone has been diagnosed with cancer. She was always the first to volunteer to be the team mom making dinners for my high school basketball team. She shows up quietly, behind the scenes, and no task is beneath her. She has been a volunteer for the Foundation for 30 years and has given time and sweat equity adding up to a value that far exceeds financial contributions made by our family. She has set the bar high for all of us!



**Q: How have you personally been involved?**

**A:** Part of our family contribution has always been volunteering our time. It was something we did thinking it was a normal part of everyone's life. It was a blast, and I've done it all over the years. I've been a ball-boy for tennis tournaments, tied pink ribbons, bussed tables at events, served food, and carried countless boxes in and out of venues. As a young volunteer, it never felt burdensome. I have a keen understanding that many women who face breast cancer are alive and thriving today because of the research supported by the Vera Bradley Foundation.

This year, for the first time in 30 years, I get to participate in the Vera Bradley Classic! I'll be playing mixed doubles and men's doubles in the Pink Pickleball tournament.

**Q: What is your "why" for supporting the Foundation?**

**A:** That's an easy one. My daughter, my wife, my mom, my mother-in-law, my Birdie, and my Grandma Sandy—they are my why!

**Q: What do you hope the future will hold for Charlie Bird?**

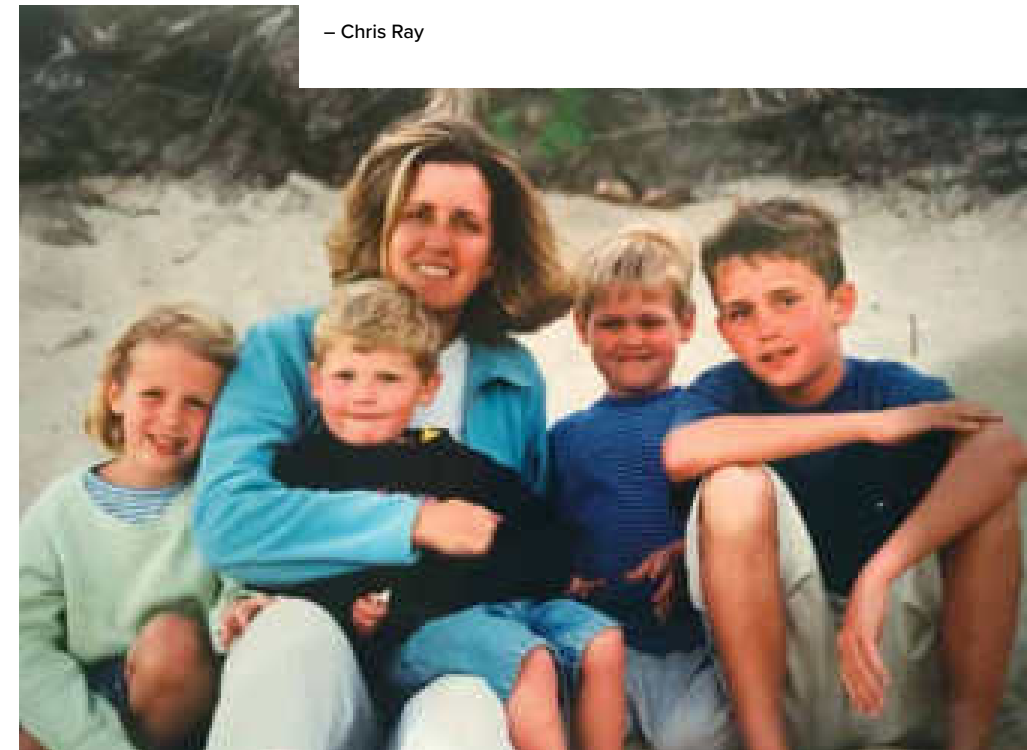
**A:** I'm a high school history teacher. Inevitably, when discussing FDR with my students, they ask why he was confined to a wheelchair. My answer is that he had Polio. That leads to the next question, "What is Polio?" I explain what it is, and then add, "it's a preventable disease today, and the cure was found through research."

I want my daughter to hear someone ask, "What is breast cancer?" in history class some day. And then I want her to be proud that she was part of making it a preventable, curable disease.

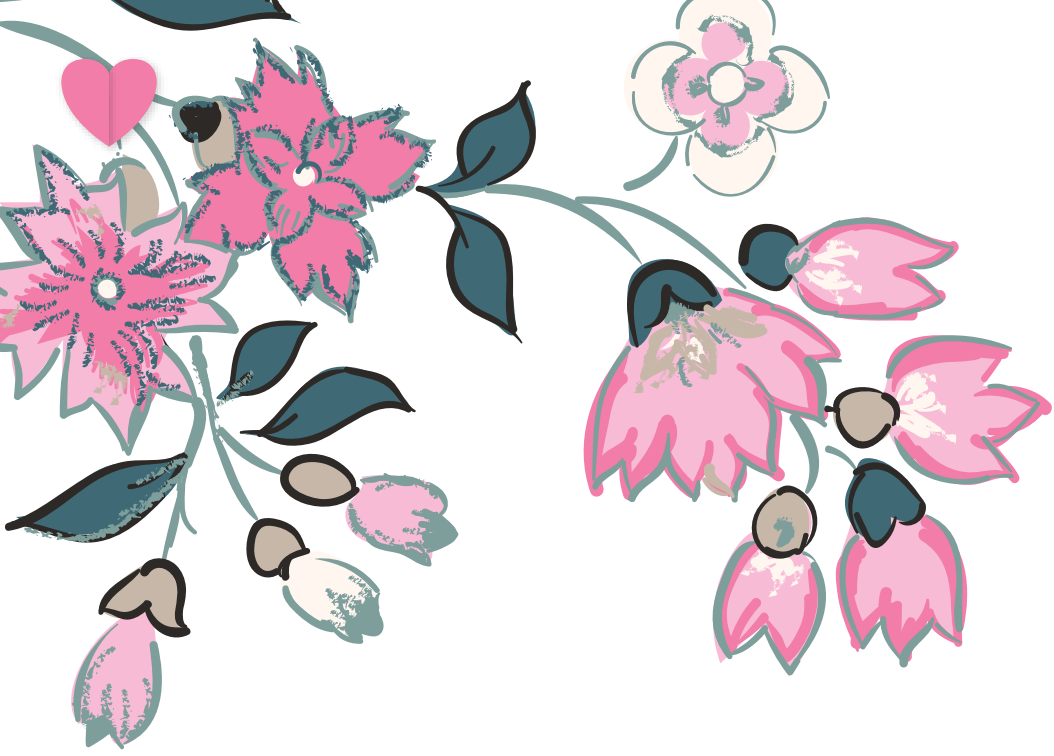


“How cool is it that we're all part of something that's literally changing and **IMPROVING THE LIVES OF WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES ALL OVER THE GLOBE?**”

– Chris Ray







## OUR *campaigns*

Supporting the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer is easier than you may think. Because monetary support is crucial to our cause, we strive to make giving fun and interactive—all year long. Whether you send a mastectomy pillow to a friend, purchase a Ribbons for Research kit, join us at our cornerstone fundraising event, donate for a chance to win a unique quilt, or surprise a loved one with a Gift of Hope—your support allows for our success!

**Together we make a difference.**



### MASTECTOMY PILLOW

When Elizabeth Miller, a Foundation supporter and board member, had a double mastectomy—she shared that she'd fallen in love with a hand-sewn pillow during her recovery. Thanks to our friends at Vera Bradley, Elizabeth's pillow can now be shared with a friend or loved one battling breast cancer to bring comfort and relief as they heal!

scan me





## RIBBONS FOR RESEARCH

Every October, the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer proudly shows our support in the fight against breast cancer by hanging beautiful pink ribbons in our hometown. Each ribbon represents a donation made in honor or memory of a loved one!

Neighborhoods, businesses, and individuals across the nation come together during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month to support breast cancer research. With a minimum donation of \$25, you too can join us in turning your town, neighborhood, or business pink! Who will you honor?



scan me



In Honor of  
My Mom  
verabradley.org



## GIFTS OF HOPE

Give the gift of hope all year long! With a \$100 Gifts of Hope donation, the Vera Bradley Foundation will send a beautifully packaged gift set to a special person in your life. Each set includes Vera Bradley products in patterns that support our cause. Visit [verabradley.org](http://verabradley.org) for more information and to view special add-ons.

### Gifts of Hope are perfect for:

- a breast cancer survivor or someone recently diagnosed with breast cancer
- a birthday gift, holiday gift, Mother's Day gift, or thank you gift
- a little "happy" for anyone going through a tough time
- a special treat for yourself

scan me







## QUILT WITH A CAUSE

Every year, a dedicated Foundation volunteer designs and crafts a one-of-a-kind quilt using Vera Bradley breast cancer awareness patterns. From February to June, Vera Bradley enthusiasts and Foundation supporters delight in entering for a chance to win. Donations can be made in Vera Bradley stores across the country or online at [verabradley.org](http://verabradley.org).

“Every stitch sewn and every dollar raised is one step closer to finding a cure!”  
— Erica Friend, the Foundation’s most recent quilter.



scan me



Interested in volunteering to create a future Quilt with a Cause?



## VERA BRADLEY FOUNDATION CLASSIC

The annual Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer Classic, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, brings guests, players, and volunteers from across the country together to raise funds for breast cancer research. This multi-day event features women’s golf tournaments, pickleball tournaments, a sponsor reception, and the Foundation Celebration. Through this hope-filled weekend guests are investing in a team of the best, the brightest, and the most passionate researchers in the world.

With exciting updates from our research team, a silent auction, cocktails, fabulous food, and more—the annual Foundation Celebration is a gathering of good friends who support us in our mission to raise funds for research to find a cure and to improve the lives of the many affected by breast cancer!

scan me





# partner WITH US!

## WONDERING HOW YOU CAN HELP RAISE FUNDS AND AWARENESS FOR THE FOUNDATION?

Whether you want to go solo or collaborate with a circle of friends, our customizable *Event in a Box* is available at no cost to you. We'll provide a pretty pink box filled with items to help you host a partner event to benefit the Foundation. Tips, guidance, and a customizable suite of digital assets are also available.

scan me



*event* IN A BOX



*\*Contents shown are subject to change, as patterns and event needs vary.*







# 1 in 8

With breast cancer affecting 1 in 8 women, chances are you already know, or can anticipate knowing someone who will be diagnosed with breast cancer. Your support not only funds research, it funds results!

**Whether you're planning an intimate gathering or a corporate event for hundreds, here are the first steps to take.**



-  **Set a Goal**  
How much would you like to raise for the Foundation? Write your goal in a place where you'll see it every day for inspiration.
-  **Choose Your Style of Event**  
Pick something you'd be excited to attend and your event will be fabulous!
-  **Involve Your Circle of Influence**  
Invite friends, family, and co-workers to join you by sharing their time, talent, and treasure.
-  **Stay in Touch**  
We have great resources to help you plan a perfect partner event, and we're here to help. We love to make new friends across the country!

# 5 WAYS YOUR COMPANY can partner with us to benefit the Foundation:

**With your help, we're accelerating the pace of life saving research. Someone you work with has likely been affected by breast cancer. Give your company an important cause to rally around!**

- 1. Turn YOUR business pink with our Ribbons for Research kits!** Recruit an employee who is a breast cancer survivor, a team member, or your Chief Talent Officer to organize an internal campaign. Order pink ribbon packets from us, and sell them to employees to promote awareness for the Foundation. We'll send you all you need to festively decorate a table and pink up your offices for National Breast Cancer Awareness Month—or any month of the year!
- 2. Offer employees Direct Payroll Deduction** as an easy means of giving. Make a presentation at a Town Hall or through your preferred method of communication. We're happy to assist you with presentation format. In certain situations, a Foundation Brand Ambassador can travel to your location to make a presentation to your company. Digital presentation options are also available.
- 3. Display or distribute a QR code** for direct giving. Set up a pretty pink display in your cafeteria or break room, and let the signage do the talking!
- 4. Host a Lunch & Learn.** Gather your employees, treat them to lunch, and introduce them to the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer. They'll leave lunch smiling, having learned ways they can join the fight against breast cancer!
- 5. Host a Party with a Purpose!** Turn your company picnic or holiday party pink.

...because it's personal even when there's a business involved!







# 3 WAYS YOU, YOUR CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, OR YOUR CLUB can partner with us to benefit the Foundation:

We'll get the party started by sending you an *Event in a Box* after you commit to raising awareness and funds for the Foundation. Our team is ready to guide you in your efforts!

- 1. Host a Pink Party with a Purpose.** Whether your group is small or large, gathering with friends is always a good thing! Introduce the Foundation to your book club, sorority, fraternity, key club, life group, family reunion, or neighborhood association. The party can be sweet and simple, or you can go all out. Either way, you'll be funding breast cancer research.
- 2. Turn YOUR campus, YOUR club, or YOUR neighborhood pink!** Pre-sell Ribbons for Research kits. Let us know how many you need, and then distribute them to your "community". Set up a display at your sorority house, school, country club, community center, or church. We'll send you all you need to decorate a table from our *Event in a Box* and you'll draw a crowd to pink up your community! Your circle of support can hang the ribbons, and you'll make a world of difference in raising awareness for breast cancer research.
- 3. Create a digital campaign.** Use social media to create a digital "Giving Tree" on Giving Tuesday or any other day of the year. Invite friends and family to donate to the Foundation in lieu of birthday gifts or in honor of someone battling breast cancer. Easiest of all, we can partner with you to set up a digital fundraising platform where friends can easily join you in raising funds.

### Need a little inspo?

- *Cupcakes for a Cure*  
– host a bake sale
- *Sips & Sweets Soirée*  
– offer pink drinks & dessert
- *Party on the Patio*  
– wine & cheese
- *Mimosas for Moms*
- *Hope Sweet Hope*  
– all sorts of pink sweets
- *Pink Picnic*  
– in your backyard, on campus, or at a park
- *GNO for the "Girls"*
- *Cornhole Tournament*  
– turn those bean bags shades of pink!
- *Brunching for Breast Cancer*
- *Painting with a Purpose*
- *Hope for the Holidays*
- *Breast Weekend Ever*  
– wellness retreat
- *Big Man on Campus*  
– bachelor pagaent
- *Bouquets for Breast Cancer*  
– make your own flower bar



“WHO DOESN'T LOVE A PINK PARTY? Whether you raise \$500 or \$5,000 dollars—let us help you throw the partner event of your dreams!”

– Kathy Ray, Partner Specialist





# 4 WAYS

**YOUR CLUB, SPORTS TEAM, OR ASSOCIATION** can partner with us to to raise funds for breast cancer research:

- 1. Host a pink out.** You pick the sport—we've got the theme. And remember...real men (and women) wear pink!
- 2. Donate a portion of the entry fees.** Every dollar makes a difference.
- 3. Wear special jerseys and auction them to the highest bidder!** You'd be surprised how much a PINK jersey with a special name or number on it can raise.
- 4. Have teams or players compete to see who can raise the most money.** Who doesn't love a little extra competition? Especially when bragging rights are involved!

### Need a little inspo?

- Pink Ribbon Run/Walk
- Pickleball in the Park
- Pink the Rink
- Stick it to Cancer
- Dig Pink
- Turn the Ballpark Pink
- Golf Fore a Cure
- Pink-A-Palooza  
—Badminton, Croquet, Bocce, Corn Hole, Capture the Flag
- Yoga on the Lawn
- Shoot for a Cure







# 4 WAYS

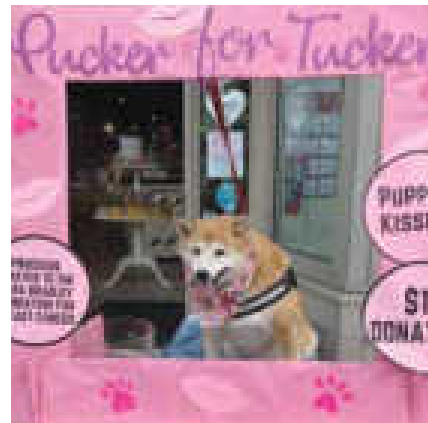
## YOUR RETAIL LOCATION

can partner with us to benefit the Foundation:

With your commitment to participate, we'll send you a customized *Event in a Box*. Our Foundation team is ready to guide you in your efforts and provide a bounty of digital assets to save you time and resources.

- 1. Ask customers to donate a small amount or round up at the register.** Point of sale signage and a smiling face go a long way when it comes to encouraging others to give. In fact, the experience of countless businesses show cause marketing often has positive results for both the acting business and the non-profit taking part in the campaign. We call that a win/win!
- 2. Host a Girls' Night Out shopping event.** Charge a small ticket price for admission or donate a portion of the evening's sales to the Foundation. Serve pink sips and sweets!
- 3. Display a QR code for direct giving.** Set up a pretty pink display in your store and let the signage do the talking! Leave it up for a day, a weekend, a week, or a month. Breast cancer affects women and their families year round.
- 4. Set up a pink photo backdrop in your store.** You'll help promote awareness of the Foundation as you ask them to post pics on social media and tag the Foundation.

We welcome friends old and new. You are the cornerstone of our success!



We're grateful for all our partners, with special thanks to our Vera Bradley retail partners who have already stepped up and said "YES" to hosting an event!

“When you LIKE, SHARE, TAG, AND COMMENT ON FOUNDATION POSTS, you're making a difference. It may seem insignificant, but one click is all it takes to expand our reach!”

– Anna Shelton, Communication Specialist



# party TIPS

## FOR PARTNER EVENTS

### Tip #1

Start with a color palette. Oh wait! You already have that covered – pink, pink, and more pink!

### Tip #2

Spray paint is your new bestie. It's a favorite of ours. Hunting for pink elements may not be in your budget, but you can spray paint just about anything you have on hand: branches, fruits and veggies, vases, jars, baskets, old toys or props – the list goes on and on. Barbie isn't the only one raiding the spray paint section! See our current faves.

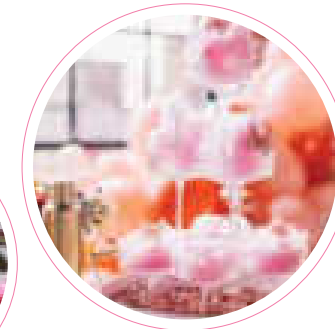
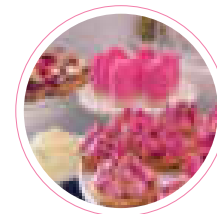


### Tip #3

Make your flowers fuss-free. If your budget is limited, you can still achieve a striking effect by sticking to one color palette or type of flower. Bunch supermarket flowers low and tight in spray painted jars or containers, or use single bud vases.

### Tip #4

Scour your supermarket for pink food and beverages. You'll find a huge assortment of cute pink cans and bottles of sparkling water, lemonade, and rosé wine, along with pink cotton candy and pink ready-to-serve bakery treats.





# sponsor THE FOUNDATION

## WITH DIRECT GIVING

Through donated products and services, enthusiastic and generous event participants, and over \$150,000 worth of volunteer hours logged each year, we keep our expenses low and our contributions toward research high. Scan the QR code below or donate online at [verabradley.org](http://verabradley.org) with a click of a button!

“TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE FOUNDATION! Word of mouth marketing is the best unpaid promotion and often brings more support and sponsors.”

—Amelia McArdle, Development Coordinator



# PARTNER WITH US as a volunteer



Partnering with hundreds of volunteers, the exceptional donation of time and talent enables us to donate over **80 CENTS OF EVERY DOLLAR** we raise.

Now that's commitment.



With a combined total of almost **300 years of volunteer service** on behalf of the Vera Bradley Foundation, this dynamic group of campaign and event volunteers is changing lives through their incredible commitment.



### Committed Volunteers

Left to right: Maria Krach, Kris Robertson, Maureen Catalogna, Debbie Peterson, Jane DeHaven, Mary Ellen Elizondo, Kathleen Cox, Katie Law, Amy Ray, Stacie Zurawski, Jennifer Bojrab, Shelly Meyer, Angela Level, Lisa Bragg, Ruth Cook, and Jen Yack.



# OUR BOARD & staff

HERE TO PARTNER WITH YOU

## Vera Bradley Foundation Staff



**Kris Reese**  
Brand Manager, kreeese@verabradley.com

**Amelia McArdle**  
Development Coordinator, amcardle@verabradley.com

**Andrew Suci**  
CPA, asuci@verabradley.com

**Stephanie Scheele**  
Executive Director, sscheele@verabradley.com

**Kathy Ray**  
Event Specialist, kray@verabradley.com

**Anna Shelton**  
Communication Specialist, ashelton@verabradley.com

## From Our Executive Director

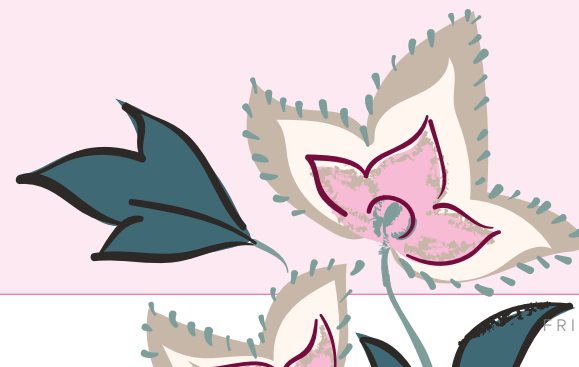
What a year it's been! I feel so privileged to serve as the Executive Director of this incredible Foundation. The support, love, and encouragement during this past year has been tremendous. Having worked at Vera Bradley for more than 20 years, I knew the Foundation was special – I just didn't realize how special it was! The pride I feel for our accomplishments over the past year surpasses any professional pride I've ever felt. It's a different kind of satisfaction, knowing our work literally saves lives.

For the last 30 years, the Foundation has focused on raising funds for research to find a cure for breast cancer. Our mission has not changed as we continue to passionately pursue a cure. We continue to work with loyal supporters, while ambitiously building new partnerships. You are the cornerstone of our success.

Our goals are ambitious, as they should be. I'm so blessed to be surrounded by a dedicated and passionate staff, a selfless Board of Directors, and countless committed volunteers. The quality and depth of our volunteer network is simply remarkable. Please accept my deepest and most sincere thanks for all your efforts.

Hope lives here and will remain here until we find a cure!

*Stephanie Scheele*



## Vera Bradley Foundation Board of Directors



**Barbara Bradley Baekgaard**  
Co-Founder / Vice Chair



**Patricia R. Miller**  
Co-Founder



**Stephanie Scheele**  
Executive Director



**Ruth Cook**  
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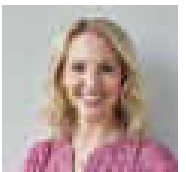
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**Sue Britton**



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# thank you TO OUR SPONSORS FOR BELIEVING WITH US



Something special happens when we come together – we get one step closer to achieving our dream of finding a cure and improving the lives of those affected by breast cancer. With your sponsorship, we'll accelerate the pace of meeting our fundraising goals and finding a cure!

## CROWN JEWEL

### \$75,000 and Above

- Barbara Bradley Baekgaard Family Foundation
- Master Spas, Inc.
- Vera Bradley Customers and Associates

## PINK DIAMOND

### \$50,000 and Above

- Patricia and P. Michael Miller & Family
- The McGee Group

## DOUBLE DIAMOND

### \$25,000 and Above

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- Linda and Wayne Boyd

## CHAMPAGNE DIAMOND

### \$15,000 and Above

- Jackie Ardrey and Mike Moyle
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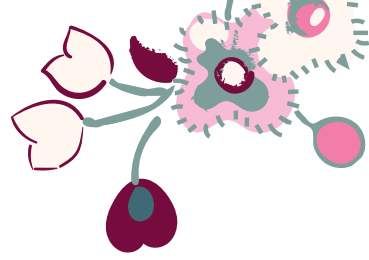
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- LC Nature Park
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- The Vann Family Foundation and Rea Magnet Wire Inc.







### RUBY \$5,000 and Above

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		TBS Group	

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Barbara Bradley Baekgaard's Sisters and Brother — Joan, Susan, Kathy, and Ed Bradley	Dongguan Yida Textile Co., Ltd.	Dr. and Mrs. Andy and Kathy O'Shaughnessy	Dr. Anna Maria Storniolo and Joel C. Scherer
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	Lake City Bank	RW Robrock Design-Build Inc.	
		Stephanie and Jason Scheele	

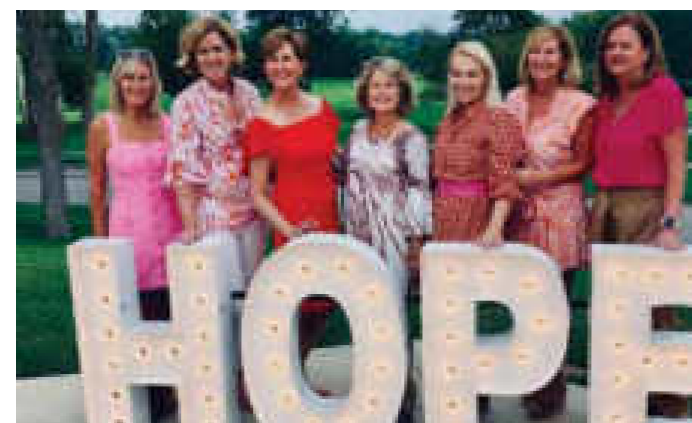
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When cancer touches your own, it gets personal.

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*with you*

In loving memory of our dear Owen and Aunt Cindy.  
The Scheele Family



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*The Meadows*  
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“  
we have a *responsibility*  
to help those around us  
and help others in need  
”

Virginia Williams

It is a privilege to help support  
the beautiful foundation created  
by Barb & Pat...

Lisa Strubel

*Our business is more than insurance – it  
is built on supporting and empowering  
the members of our community.*

AssuredPartners is proud  
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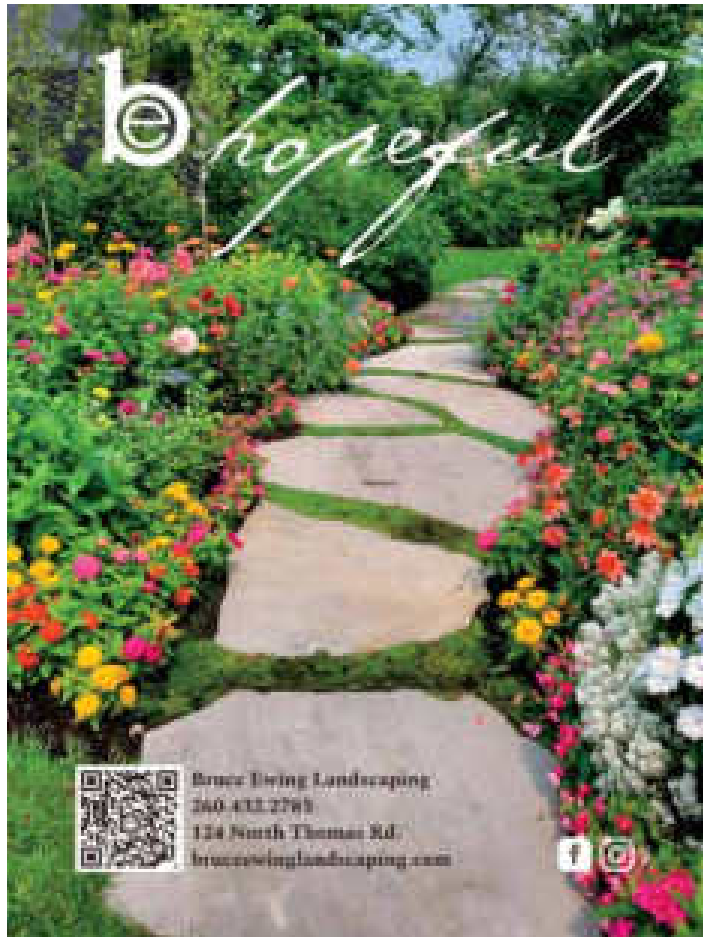



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*“We rise by lifting others”*  
Robert Ingersoll

*With thanks and gratitude to the Foundation*

The Dely Family

**Supporting those who keep breast cancer research moving forward.**

We all have a stake in the work to end breast cancer. At PNC, we are proud to stand with the Vera Bradley Foundation and we applaud your progress.

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IN THE WORLD IS DONE  
BY

*hope*

MARTIN LUTHER

GRANT & JILL GOEGLIN AND FAMILY

HELPING *build*  
THE FOUNDATION OF *hope*

Our Hope is a future without breast cancer... without having to make impossible decisions, without having to say goodbye far too soon, without having to fight for our lives.

Thank you for giving us hope for a brighter future.

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*wish to thank*

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**Your support and passion  
is the fuel for**

*lifesaving research.*

*hope, strength, love*

**IN LOVING MEMORY  
OF FRANK CHEEK**  
*an avid car collector with  
an infectious personality*

The friends and family of Frank Cheek are proud to support the Vera Bradley Foundation



# Owen & Jean Pritchard

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Rothberg Law Firm is delighted to support the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer

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FOR BREAST CANCER



granddaughters  
are a gift from above  
ones to cherish and to love

mary ann and dave gray



# Community.

LAKE CITY BANK SALUTES THE INSPIRING WORK OF THE VERA BRADLEY FOUNDATION FOR BREAST CANCER.



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“Once you choose *hope*, anything’s possible...”

Christopher Reeve

Grant and Julie North & Family proudly support the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer

In memory of  
*Margaret Trabel*  
and her generous  
spirit of giving.

September 18, 2010

☞ Mary Trabel ☞

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*"Hope is the thing  
with feathers  
That perches in the soul,  
And sings the tune  
without the words,  
And never stops at all"*

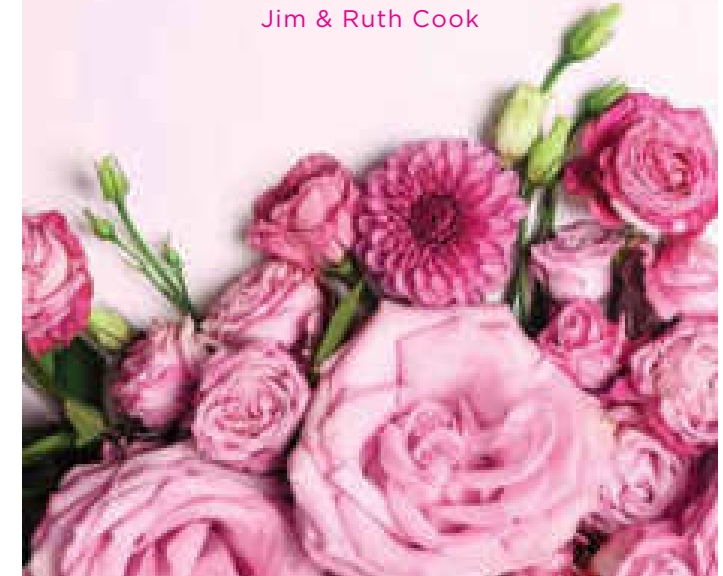
—EMILY DICKINSON

Proud to support the Vera Bradley  
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**JOHN, SHERRI,  
KENZI AND IAN ENWRIGHT**

**HOPE**

for a future without breast cancer

Jim & Ruth Cook



Vera Bradley  
Leadership Team  
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Proud to support the life saving  
research made possible by the  
**Vera Bradley  
Foundation For  
Breast Cancer**

Dedicated to my mother,  
a breast cancer survivor,  
and future generations.

Carlye Baenen





# Chapman Charitable Trust

The Chapman Charitable Trust is proud to support the Vera Bradley Foundation.



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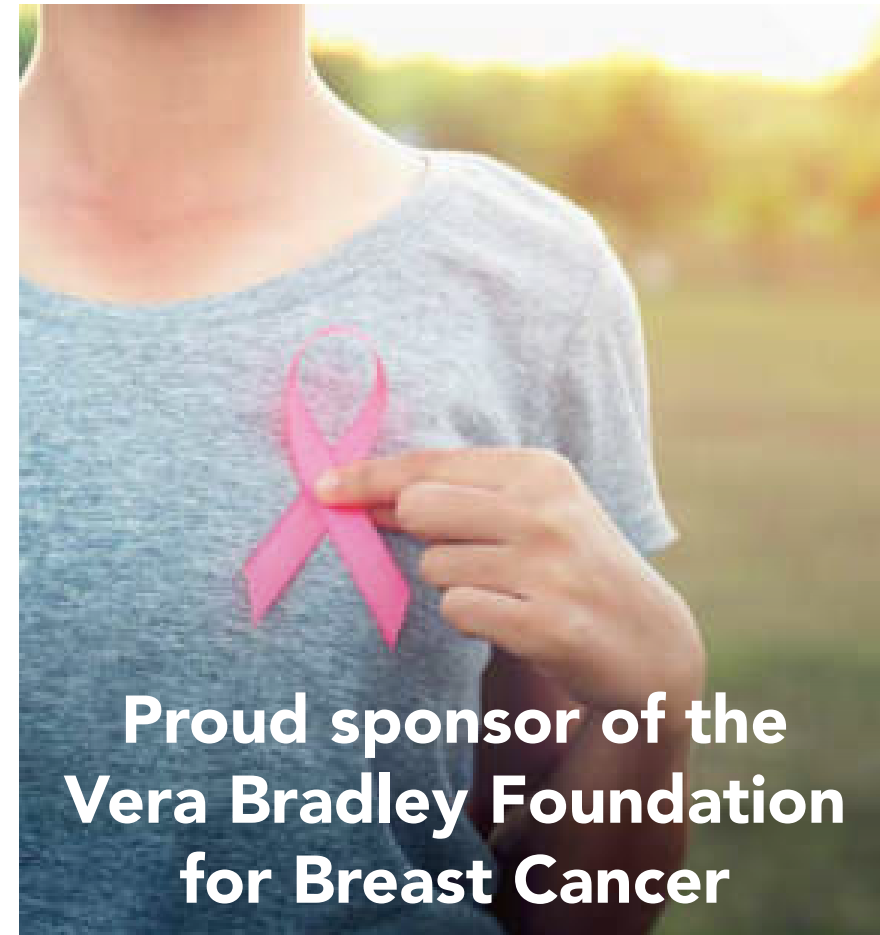


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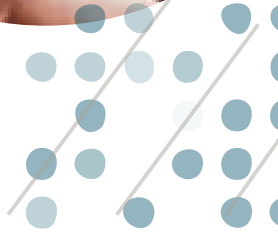


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## Alison Hiatt & Family

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*thank you*

## Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer

For a survivor, a cure is not a wish.  
It is a passion.  
—Mrs. Donnor Long



*Thanks for bringing hope  
by turning the town pink.*

Brotherhood Mutual is honored to support the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer Classic®.

We thank the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer for its deep commitment to funding research in pursuit of life-changing treatments.



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## Together — Fighting Breast Cancer

We are a proud supporter of the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer and its mission to fund critical research.

With 1,200 attorneys and consulting professionals licensed in nearly every state in the U.S., and with strategic offices in London and Shanghai, Faegre Drinker is committed to our communities and to building a diverse and inclusive firm that reflects those communities and our clients.

Breast cancer impacts 2.1 million women each year. Like the Vera Bradley Foundation, **Faegre Drinker is dedicated to helping more women survive and thrive.**

[faegredrinker.com](http://faegredrinker.com)

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Never fear shadows. They simply mean there is a light **shining** nearby.

- Ruth E. Renkel



Kelley Automotive Group is proud to be united with the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer.



## Providing Hope

Ice Miller is proud to support the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer Classic. Our law firm supports more than 100 nonprofit organizations throughout our region. We are proud to work together with the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer to build dreams in our community.

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We are grateful to the Vera Bradley Foundation for making it possible to dream of a future filled with thriving survivors, and the HOPE you inspire in all of us! We are truly blessed!

*The Cooper Family*



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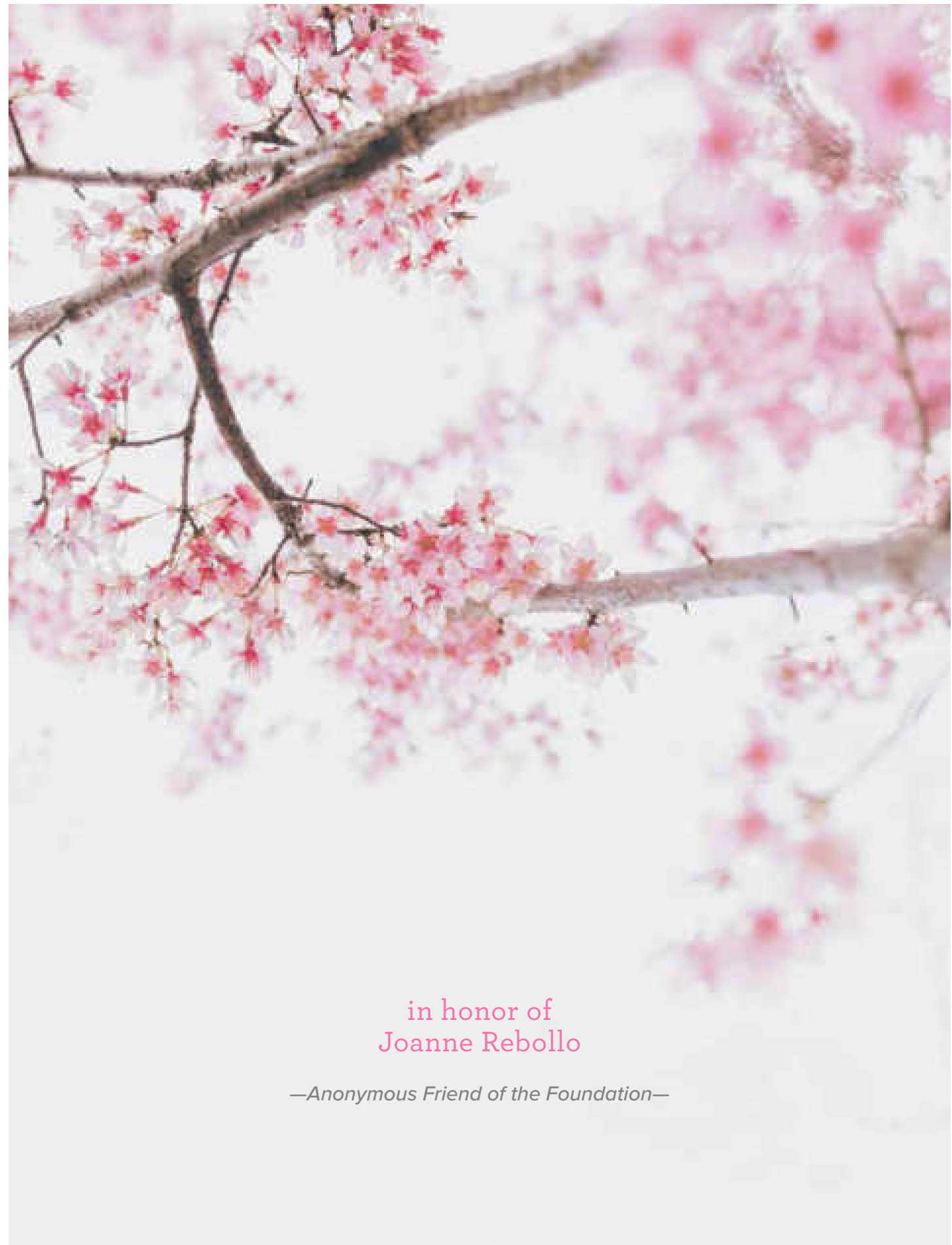


Kanaan, Co. LTD is  
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Vera Bradley Foundation  
for Breast Cancer.



in honor of  
Joanne Rebollo

—Anonymous Friend of the Foundation—





Because

hope

Lives in Research

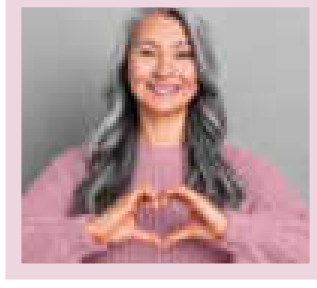
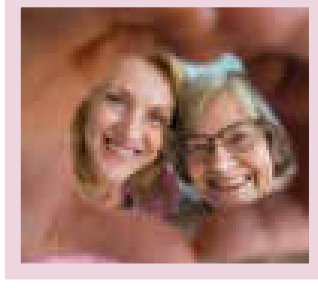
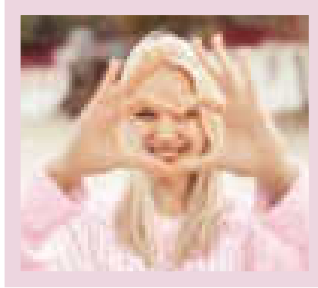


IS A PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE  
VERA BRADLEY FOUNDATION

*A dream you dream alone  
is only a dream.  
A dream you dream together  
becomes reality.*

— John Lennon

John & Gale Mann  
FOUNDATION



**TOGETHER**  
WE CAN CURE  
BREAST CANCER

**BRITTON**  
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A truly happy person is one who can  
enjoy the scenery on a detour.

—unknown



Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer and DeHaven Chevrolet—a Classic pair!

[dehavenchevrolet.com](http://dehavenchevrolet.com)



# Vera Bradley



“  
This new day is too dear,  
with its hopes and invitations,  
to waste a moment  
on the yesterdays.

“  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

*With vision and purpose, anything is possible.  
With hope, we work toward a new day  
free of breast cancer.*



The proud associates and loyal customers of  
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# Vera Bradley

Foundation for Breast Cancer

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“Believe you can,  
and you are halfway there.”

THEODORE ROOSEVELT



The Miller Family is proud to support the  
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Jay, Elizabeth, Campbell, Carter and Emma

# PROUD to REPORT the GOOD NEWS

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## IU, Vera Bradley join vs. cancer

Research center to be established in Indianapolis

### THE JOURNAL GAZETTE

The IU School of Medicine is creating a center for breast cancer research with significant support from the Vera Bradley Foundation, officials announced Monday night.

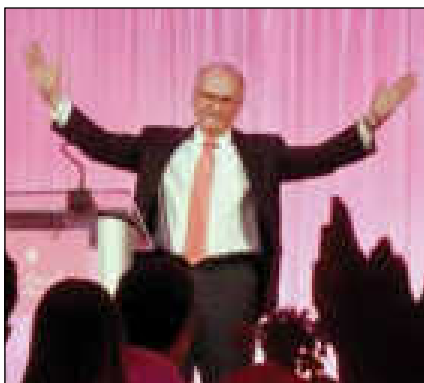
Indiana University is launching the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for

Breast Cancer Research, which will focus on finding a cure for triple negative breast cancer, some of the most difficult-to-treat forms of the disease.

Dr. Jay L. Hess, dean of IU's medical school, said "far too many women still die from this disease" despite medical advances.

The foundation, which has committed \$35 million to support IU's breast cancer research since 1999, is

Cancer, Page 4A



Staff photo

A crowd at Sycamore Hills Golf Club cheers Dr. Jay Hess as he announces Monday that Indiana University and Vera Bradley Foundation are teaming up to create a breast cancer research center in Indianapolis.

## Classic raises \$1 million Vera Bradley event benefits cancer research

### THE JOURNAL GAZETTE

The Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer Classic eclipsed \$1 million in earnings for the eighth time, and organizers believe

they showed just how relevant the events will be for years to come - not just because breast cancer remains a formidable foe, but also because the Classic is mobilizing new and younger

participants.

"It's wonderful anytime you can capture a young person and get them involved early," said Lynda Houk, executive director of the Vera Bradley Foundation for

Breast Cancer. "And then, maybe, you can get them involved further with their time or talents or their treasures. We have an opportunity to get their attention with what we're doing and why



## Commitment to a cure

At JPMorgan Chase, we know that the battle against cancer is not a sprint but a marathon. We applaud your leadership, strength and commitment to excellence in the battle against breast cancer.

We are proud to sponsor the Vera Bradley Foundation.

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The McGee Group®

*Seeing a Future Free  
from Breast Cancer*

The McGee Group stands proud in the pursuit of finding a cure. Our heartfelt hope is that a bright future awaits all mothers, sisters, and daughters, living a life free from breast cancer.

In loving memory of Jenny Lynn McGee  
Wife. Mother. Friend. Warrior. Angel.  
March 31, 1948 - January 24, 2008



*In Loving Memory of Weezie Doermer*

We are so very grateful for Vera Bradley Foundation's support of the work of Indiana University School of Medicine to find a cure for breast cancer.

Since my Mom's passing in 2000, so much has been learned  
and so many advances have been made ...  
and so many survivors are living longer happier lives.

*Thank you.*



Kathy Doermer Callen, John Powell and Family



LC Nature Park was created to honor the life and legacy of Carol Brooks, whose warm and engaging spirit is reflected in the park's wildflowers, majestic animals, and in the smiles of the children, families and individuals who visit this unique nature preserve.



LC Nature Park is proud to support the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer and the pursuit of life-changing treatments.

[lnaturepark.org](http://lnaturepark.org)

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**PTR PROUDLY SUPPORTS THE EFFORTS OF THE VERA BRADLY FOUNDATION FOR BREAST CANCER AND THE WORK BEING DONE TO DRIVE TOWARDS A CURE.**



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**Lutheran Health Network  
is proud to support the  
Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer  
and provide cancer care to patients  
throughout northeastern Indiana.**



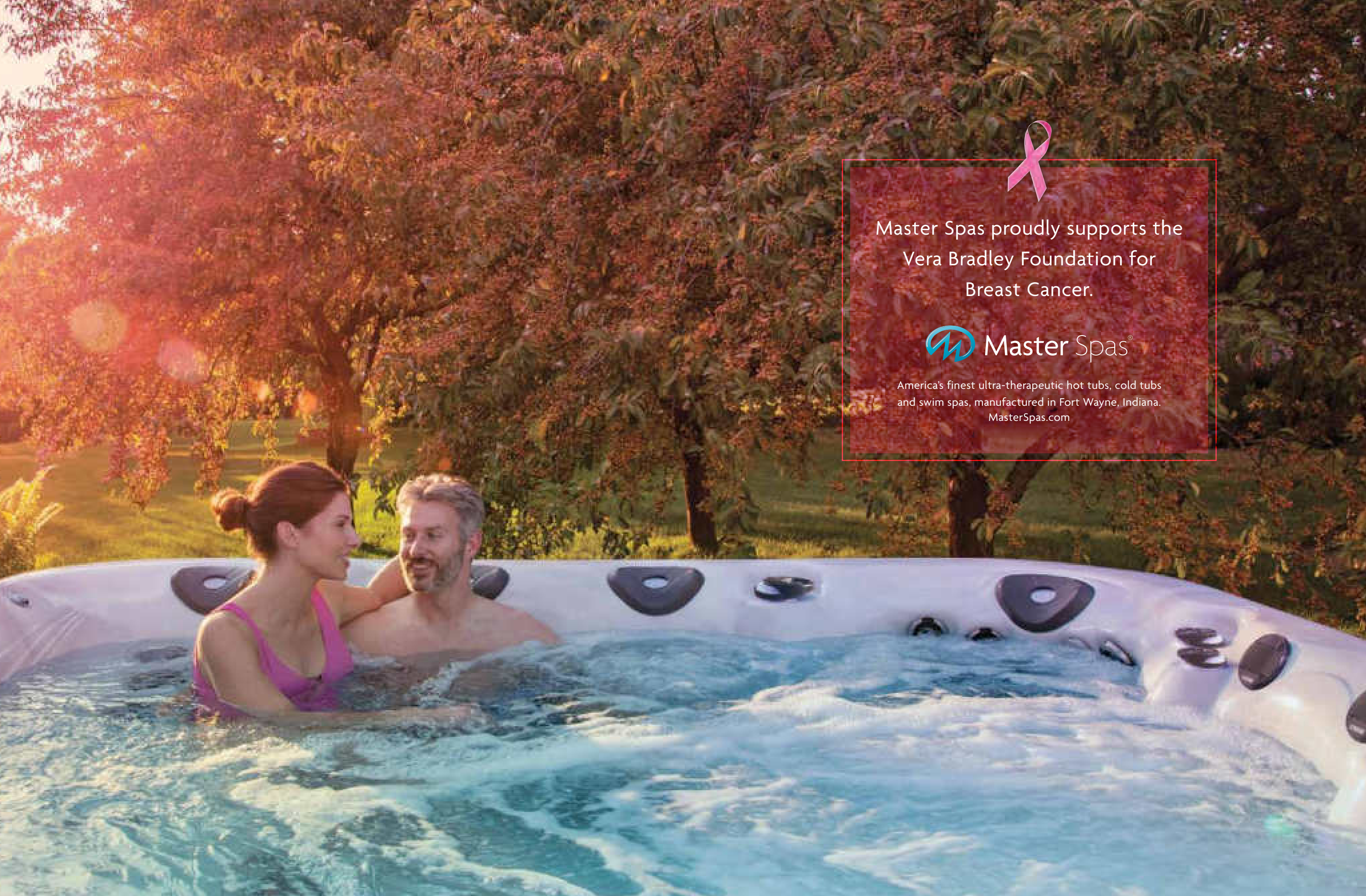
**For more about how we're caring for you  
and the place we all call home:  
[LutheranHealth.net/community-benefits](https://LutheranHealth.net/community-benefits).**



Master Spas proudly supports the  
Vera Bradley Foundation for  
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Ruoff Mortgage is proud to support our communities beyond the homebuying process. Through life's challenges and triumphs, we are here to walk with you.

Proud Partner of the Vera Bradley Foundation



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Hope lies in dreams, in imagination,  
and in the courage of those who  
dare to make dreams into reality.

Jonas Salk

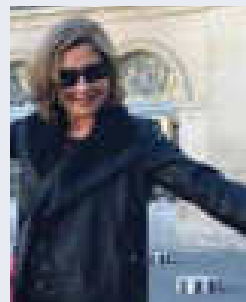
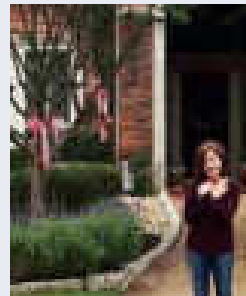
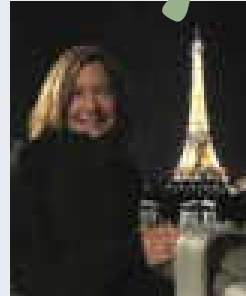


Proud sponsors of the Vera Bradley Foundation

*John and Kristy Simon*



*In memory of a dear friend, Sharon Demarest.*  
While many of us are survivors, Sharon's story reminds us that the fight isn't over yet and that is why we continue to support the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer.



“My mission in life is not to merely survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some humor, some style.”

– Maya Angelou

The Sue & Jeff Miller Family Foundation



## Building a strong neighborhood.

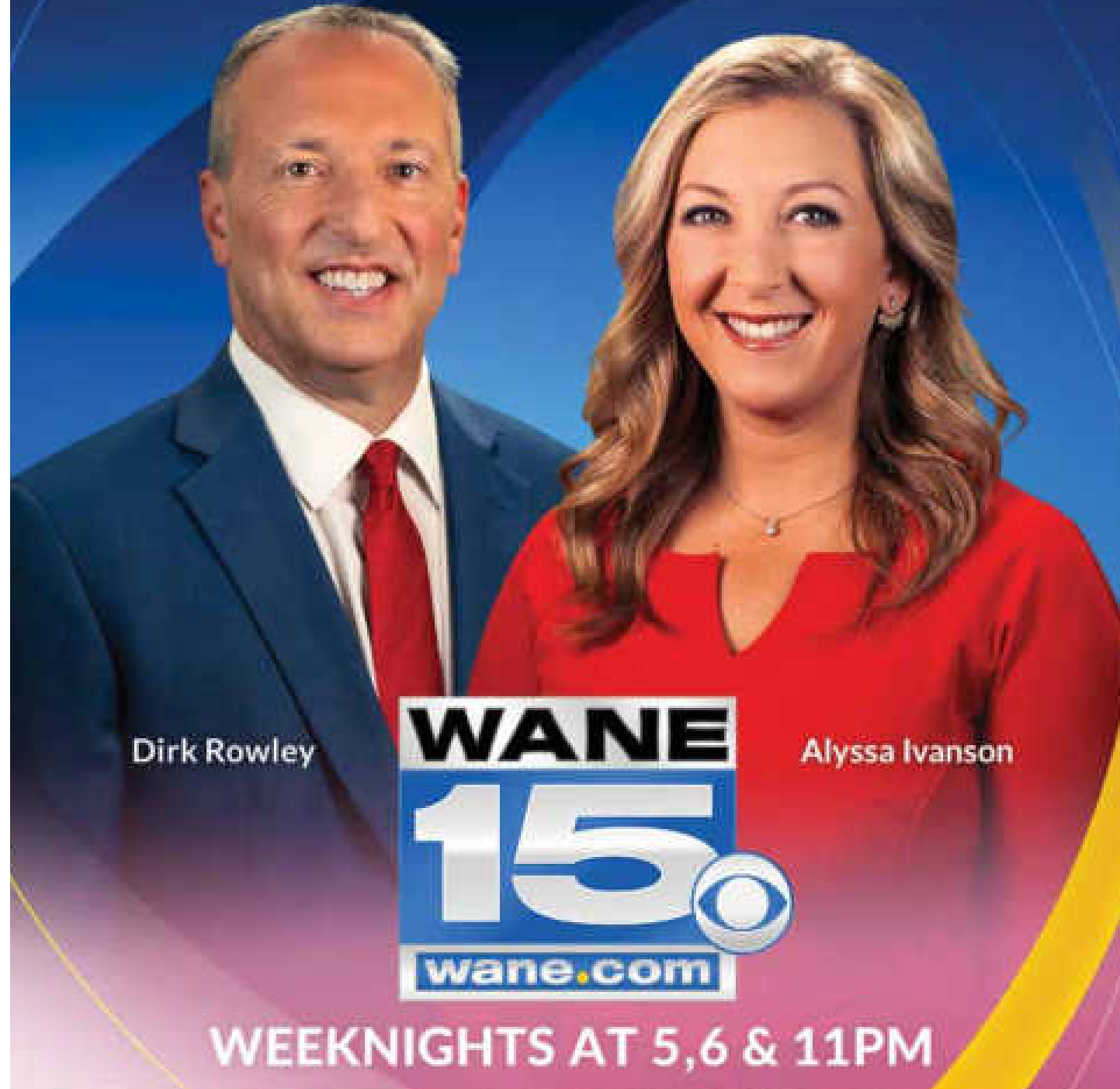
Steel Dynamics is pleased to support the Vera Bradley Foundation in its mission to eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease by providing financial support for research and research-related projects.



**Corporate Office**  
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# A Proud Supporter of the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer Classic.



Dirk Rowley



Alyssa Ivanson

WEEKNIGHTS AT 5,6 & 11PM

**LOCAL COVERAGE YOU CAN COUNT ON**

## The Vann Family Foundation & Rea Magnet Wire

Salute the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer  
for their valiant commitment to supporting  
breast cancer research. We honor their dedication to  
our community and enthusiastically support their efforts!





Go into the world  
and do *well*. But more  
importantly, go into the  
world and do *good*

Minor Myers, Jr

The Children, Grandchildren and Great Granddaughter  
of Barbara Bradley Baekgaard  
are proud supporters of

**VERA BRADLEY FOUNDATION FOR BREAST CANCER**



Molly & Joe Hanger, John Ray,  
Jordin, Chris and Charlotte Birdie Ray  
and Teddy Ray  
(Mike & Amy Ray not pictured)



Jim, Gavin, Laura, Bradley  
and Audrey Byrne



Marlo & Tom Byrne, Eddie & Maggie  
Byrne and Cassidy & Ben Hutton



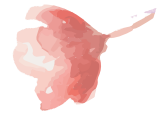
Stepper, Henry, Frannie,  
Joanie and Bob Hall



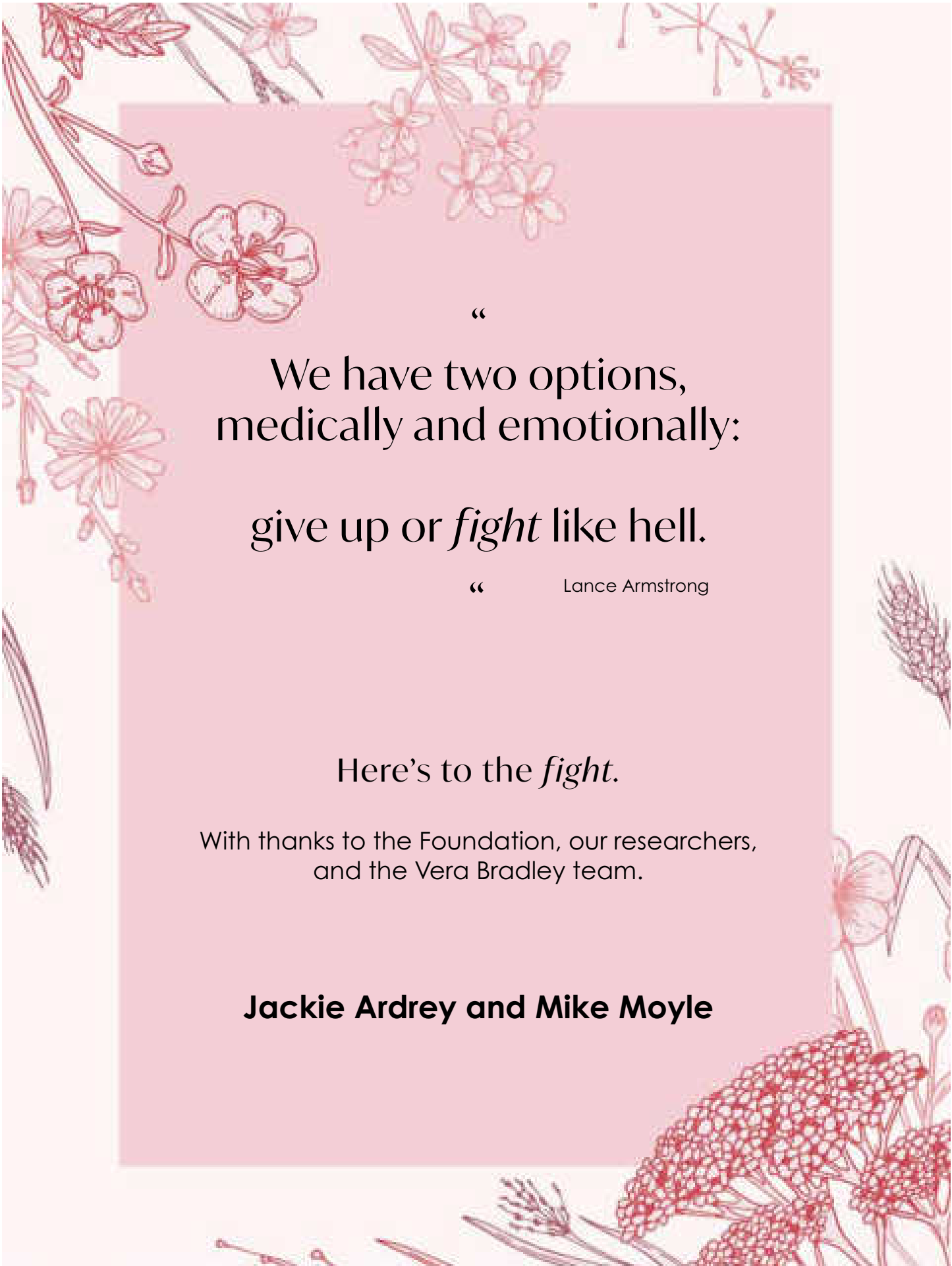
We believe that everyone in the world loves someone  
and is loved by someone.

It is because of this belief, that we choose to support  
the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer.

No one wants their time cut short with loved ones  
because of breast cancer.



Wayne and Linda Boyd  
and  
Michael Devine and Victoria Boyd-Devine



“  
We have two options,  
medically and emotionally:  
give up or *fight* like hell.

“ Lance Armstrong

Here's to the *fight*.

With thanks to the Foundation, our researchers,  
and the Vera Bradley team.

**Jackie Ardrey and Mike Moyle**

# where HOPE lives

The Indiana University School of Medicine's  
new education and research building opening in 2024



Patricia and Michael Miller  
Maggie Sin and Mark Miller  
Sanders and Matthew Miller, Kate and Jackson  
Elizabeth and Jay Miller, Campbell, Carter and Emma

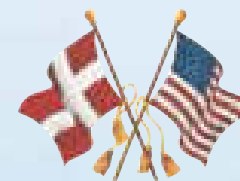




*Our hope for a cure lives on.*

The Barbara Bradley Baekgaard Family Foundation  
shares the commitment to  
finding a cure for breast cancer.

In Memory of Peer Baekgaard





Vera Bradley

FOUNDATION FOR BREAST CANCER

