
The Oregon Breast and Cervical Cancer Program:

These five Oregonian women are proof that this program saves lives.



Heather– Portland, Oregon

As a 26-year old graduate student at Portland State University, Heather never imagined that the lump she detected would be cancer. But it was. With no job, no insurance, and no family in town, she says, “Komen saved my life. I was scared and alone, not exactly sure where to start, literally, to fight for my life. I had heard of Komen before and decided to pick up the phone and call the local Komen

office.” Heather qualified for Komen’s free screening program, a partnership with the the Oregon Breast and Cervical Cancer Program, and because she was diagnosed through the program, she qualified for the Oregon Health Plan and all of her treatment, surgery, chemotherapy and radiation were covered.

Nearly three years later, Heather is proud to call herself a survivor, and recently gave birth to her first child. Reflecting upon her survivorship, Heather says, “I am forever thankful to Komen for connecting me to lifesaving resources. I won the fight of my life.”

Vet– Salem, Oregon

“Without this program, I wouldn’t be here today!” Vet Smith says about the Oregon Breast and Cervical Cancer Program. In 2003, without health insurance and unable to afford a mammogram, Vet visited a health fair where she picked up a brochure about the program. Her free mammogram detected a lump, and her cancer was detected early. Because the OBCCP made her eligible for the Oregon Health Plan, Vet was able to receive treatment. Vet now advocates for women over 40 years of age to have an annual mammogram, because her mammogram saved her life!

Cathy– Astoria, Oregon

In early 2007, Cathy heard about the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program on the radio. “Finding out about the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program took a huge load off my mind,” Cathy says. Due to her family history, the chance of developing breast cancer had always been a worry. But without health insurance, Cathy had been unable to afford a mammogram for five years. With the help of the Breast and

Cervical Cancer Program, Cathy was able to schedule an appointment for a mammogram at the Columbia Memorial Hospital. Thankfully her results were normal, but her peace of mind was priceless.

Helen– Astoria, Oregon

In June of 2006, Helen scheduled a mammogram after discovering a lump, but was told it was only a fibrous cyst. Over the following year, the lump continued to grow. After making a phone call to the Oregon and SW Washington Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure® in Portland, Oregon, she was led to the North Coast Breast Health Resources Program in Astoria; a new program made possible through the grant partnership between Susan G. Komen for the Cure® and Columbia Memorial Hospital.

Helen’s care coordinator helped her to enroll in the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program and she had a mammogram and ultrasound the next day. She was diagnosed with Inflammatory Breast Cancer.

Because of her enrollment in the OBCCP, Helen qualified for the Oregon Health Plan and her treatment was covered by insurance. Helen has since gone on to be an advocate for early detection. Additionally, she has been interviewed by the Marketing Manager at Columbia Memorial Hospital to advertise for early detection and promote the services of the North Coast Breast Health Resources Program.



Machell– Portland, Oregon

When her biopsy indicated breast cancer, Machell was not sure how she was going to pay for her treatment as her insurance had expired. She made nineteen phone calls on a Monday morning, and one of those calls was to Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Komen helped pay for her biopsy and enrolled Machell in the Oregon

Breast and Cervical Cancer program. Machell says that because she was enrolled in the OBCCP, she had access to the best surgeons, oncologists, and radiologists and her cancer experience “was as good as it could be.” Machell now shares her story so that other people might be given the same opportunity to receive screening and treatment that they might not otherwise be afforded.

Komen needs your support to keep saving lives through the Oregon Breast and Cervical Cancer Program.



There are two bills being considered during the current legislative session that are crucial to the funding of this program. To find out how you can help, contact:

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