Looking Forward to 2019

As 2018 was coming to a close, we again called upon you to help us match a $100,000 gift from the Joyce and Irving Goldman Family Foundation, through the Joyce Goldman Matching Fund. Your generosity was unwavering and particularly meaningful. And we are grateful.

We are excited to welcome the new year and encourage you to make NBCC one of your New Year’s resolutions. Our focus in 2019 will be to continue asking and answering important life-saving questions, leading change in science, research and policy, and empowering women and men to be those leaders through outstanding trainings, as well as working to transition NBCC beyond 2020.

What will YOU do this year to end breast cancer? How about signing up for NBCC’s National Action Network; sharing our YouTube videos; following and promoting NBCC on social media; urging your representatives and leaders to stand behind knowing how to end breast cancer; registering for the Advocate Leadership Summit; signing up to receive our monthly Call to Action; or sharing your story with us?

Whatever it is you will do... we thank you for continuing to partner with us. We look forward to all that we will accomplish together in 2019.

2019 PROJECT LEAD® INSTITUTE Applications

Spread the word! Applications are pouring in and spaces are filling up!

Don’t miss out on an opportunity to attend this renowned advocate training program.

The Project LEAD® workshop is a six-day training program for advocates interested in the science of breast cancer, and will cover the basics of cancer biology, genetics, epidemiology, research design, and advocacy. Taught by distinguished scientific faculty, the workshop will be held Sunday, July 14 - Friday, July 19 at the Estancia La Jolla Hotel in La Jolla, California.

With our new rolling admissions process, early applicants will learn about the status of their application monthly basis. The second round of notifications will be made in February 2019, and monthly thereafter. If you are interested in participating, don’t wait to submit your application!

- **Final Deadline for Applications**: April 19th, 2019, 5pm EST

For more information on the Project LEAD Institute and how to apply, visit our website.

For questions? Please email ProjectLEAD@BreastCancerDeadline2020.org.

PROJECT LEAD® Continuing Education

Thank you to all Project LEAD Grads who contributed to our recent survey regarding your current interests and needs for ongoing training. We had a tremendous response and are now working on a number of exciting training activities. We anticipate several series of trainings that will cover the breadth of varied needs and roles of Project LEAD Grads in breast cancer research and advocacy.

Stay tuned for a list of upcoming training activities.
2019 SUMMIT Countdown

The countdown to NBCC’s 2019 Advocate Leadership Summit begins! Just 3-months remain. This year’s summit will include well-organized Plenary presentations, scientific sessions on notable research, panel discussions, interactive skill-building workshops, speaker meet-ups, and numerous networking opportunities. Visit our website to preview the agenda. We hope to see you there.

- **WHEN:** Saturday April 27 – Monday April 29, 2019
- **LOBBY DAY on Capitol Hill:** Tuesday April 30
- **WHERE:** Renaissance Capital View Hotel in Arlington, VA

Register today or set up a Deadline Champions fundraising page to support NBCC’s mission to end breast cancer, and earn benefits as you progress—such as free Summit registration and/or hotel stay!

For those of you who participating in our Deadline Champions fundraising activity, we have prepared a useful Fundraising Guide to help you make the most of your activities. This resource provides a wealth of tips and helpful strategies for reaching your fundraising goal!

**SCIENCE SPOTLIGHT**

*Recent cancer mortality buzz – Good news But what does it mean in breast cancer?*

You have probably heard in the recent news that the cancer mortality rate in the United States has declined by 27 percent over the last 25 years. The data come from the widely-cited annual report on cancer rates and trends published by the American Cancer Society (ACS) – Cancer Statistics, 2019.

Annual cancer death rates (i.e., mortality) are considered to be the most important measure of progress against the disease (Siegel et al. 2018). The primary reason for this is that other metrics, such as the number of new cases each year (i.e., the incidence rate) and survival measures are confounded by earlier detection via screening and the consequent lead-time, length, and overdiagnosis biases defined in the box below. That means with early detection we are able to find many cancers that would have never become life threatening. It makes the statistics look good, but in reality, it is not what it seems.

**Cancer Statistics Data Sources**

Data for this report derive from several sources. Incidence data (through 2015) are collected by the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program (SEER), the National Program of Cancer Registries, and the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries. Data related to mortality (through 2016) are available from the National Center for Health Statistics.

- **Lead-time bias:** Overestimation of how long individuals survive with screening-detected tumors (relative to tumors detected by signs and symptoms) when survival time is measured from diagnosis.
- **Length bias:** Overestimation of how long individuals with screening-detected tumors survive caused by the relative excess of cases that progress slowly.
- **Overdiagnosis bias:** Overestimation of how long individuals survive with screen-detected subclinical disease that would not become a problem before the patient dies of other causes.
According to the recent ACS report, the cancer death rate has declined 27 percent since 1991. According to ACS, the primary reasons cited for these steady improvements are declines in smoking rates, improvements in early detection, and advances in treatment.

**But what is the current picture for breast cancer?**

**New Cases of Breast Cancer in 2019.** In terms of the anticipated incidence (i.e., number of new cases in a specific period of time), according to the ACS report, in 2019 there will be 271,270 new cases of invasive breast cancer (2,670 in males and 268,600 in females), and an additional 62,930 cases of carcinoma in situ. As reported in previous years, a female’s probability of developing invasive breast cancer in her lifetime continues to be 12.4 percent or 1 in 8 women.

In addition, a number of reports suggest that with the introduction of mammography, approximately 132 of screen-detected breast cancers per 100,000 women are overdiagnosed—that is, they would never have progressed during an individual’s lifetime (Welch et al., 2016). This has been explored by looking at trends in both the stage of incident breast cancer (Bleyer et al., 2012) and the size of tumors at identification (Welch et al., 2016). Screening should theoretically identify more early stage cancers at a smaller size. One would expect that for every earlier and smaller tumor identified there would be a corresponding reduction in the number of late stage and larger tumors identified by screening. And while the number of early stage and small tumors diagnosed has substantially increased, there has been only a modest reduction in the number of larger and later stage tumors, specifically regional disease (e.g., cancer that has spread to nearby lymph nodes). Unfortunately, there has been almost NO CHANGE in the incidence of lethal, late-stage disease (i.e., stage 4) at diagnosis over time. And late-stage disease is what kills the majority (90%) of individuals with breast cancer.

**Deaths from Breast Cancer in 2019.** In 2019, an estimated 42,260 individuals will die from breast cancer (ACS, 2019). Additionally, a woman’s lifetime risk of dying from breast cancer continues to be approximately 1 in 38 (ACS, 2018).

According to the 2019 ACS report, breast cancer deaths per 100,000 people in the United States have declined from a high of 33.2 in 1989 to about 20.0 in 2016, with a rate of decline each year being approximately 1.6-to-1.8 percent. There continues to be debate about how much of the decline is related to screening and/or treatment improvements, however studies suggest that at least two thirds of the improvements demonstrated in breast cancer mortality are the result of improvements in treatments (Welch et al., 2016).

While there has been incremental progress in breast cancer mortality over the past three decades, the sad truth is that there is still no cure for stage 4 metastatic disease. We do not know how to prevent metastasis or recurrence. And, an estimated 20% to 30% of women diagnosed and treated for local or regional invasive breast cancer (i.e., early disease)—and declared free of disease—will have a recurrence sometime in her lifetime, and may eventually die of their disease (Saphner et al., 1996; Harris et al., 2000; Colleoni et al., 2016).

Lastly, disparities in the prevention and treatment of breast cancer continue unabated (Siegel et al., 2018). In the United States, there is considerable variation in breast cancer mortality rates by race/ethnicity. While mortality rates among black women are on the decline, for black women, mortality from breast cancer is 28.7 per 100,000 women compared with 20.3 per 100,000 white women, about 40 percent higher in absolute terms (National Cancer Institute, SEER 2011-2015).
To summarize, while there have been some gains in mortality reduction overall, reduced mortality is small and not at all reflective of the billions of dollars invested in the issue. There have been no gains in the rates of lethal, late-stage breast cancer, for which there is still no cure. The rate of overdiagnosis is high, with many women likely being overtreated. And there has been no obvious improvement in the blindingly-apparent disparities that exist in mortality from breast cancer. There is still substantial work to be done, and this work must involve dedicated and educated breast cancer advocates.

References


Women with Balls New York City

Join NBCC for the Women with Balls fundraising event in NYC! Strike! Breast Cancer on Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at Bowlmor Lanes, Times Square, New York, NY.

5:30 PM – Registration
6:00 PM – Champagne Reception
6:30 PM to 8:30 PM – Bowl! Strike! Compete! Win!

Enjoy food and drinks, prizes will be awarded to the top individual and team fundraisers. Register and create your fundraising page today in 4 easy steps. If you know a company that would like to sponsor Woman with Balls contact Sharnita Goins for more details at sgoins@breastcancerdeadline2020.org.
Making an Impact Together

Through the generosity of our supporters, the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) is able to invest in our mission to end breast cancer. Below are some easy ways you can make a direct impact on our work toward that mission:

Recurring donations are the backbone of NBCC’s work. These donations allow NBCC to plan strategic public policy initiatives and innovative research projects all with a goal of ending breast cancer.

Workplace Giving is an easy way to support NBCC. Donating at work through payroll deductions is simple and there are many convenient ways to contribute.

Remember to always check in with your employer to see if they’ll match your contribution to NBCC. More than 7,500 U.S. corporations match gifts made by employees. By taking advantage of a company’s Matching Gift Program, you can generate an additional gift that may automatically double or triple your own contribution.

In 2019, you can become a member of NBCC’s the President’s Council! A gift of $1,000 or more entitles you to membership in this group with special benefits. Members receive regular communications directly from NBCC’s President, Fran Visco, on current breast cancer issues, recognition in publications, and invitations to special webinars and events.

When you support NBCC, you ensure the National Breast Cancer Coalition continues to bring experts and visionaries together to reframe the approach to science and research and develop policies to focus on ending breast cancer and saving lives.

For more information or to pledge your support, visit www.breastcancerdeadline2020.org or contact Judy Taylor, Chief Advancement Officer, jtaylor@BreastCancerDeadline2020.org or 202.973.0594.