



Volunteer Newsletter

Volunteer Luncheon, November 12, 2015

On November 12, 2015 the West Virginia Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program (WVBCCSP) held its Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Month Volunteer Appreciation Event. The conference room at Days Inn in Flatwoods was packed with volunteers from around the state. The room was very festive, filled with wonderful decorations and many people wearing pink for the celebration. We heard all about the Breast Cancer Awareness Month activities, with the Health Information Specialists highlighting new events that happened in their regions and we saw a wonderful slide show of pictures taken at events.

Dr. Cimmie Shahan joined us and explained the differences in screening and diagnostic mammography and described the types of mammography: screen shot, digital and 3-D. She also touched on the various mammography recommendations and research behind them. This knowledge will serve our volunteers well both in their own lives and as they advocate for breast cancer screening .

Fun and games this year included a breast cancer awareness networking activity where participants moved about the room meeting each other and collecting initials on their game board. They had to find someone who had participated in an awareness/educational activity pictured and have them sign their card. Twenty-five unique signatures were needed on the card to be successful. Breast cancer bingo was also played and participants had a great time filling up their cards and collecting prizes. The photo booth gave groups a great opportunity to get their picture taken together and the pink props made this activity even more fabulous. These fun activities resulted in a great deal of movement, interaction and smiles.

Of course, the most moving part of the day was hearing about the people who have been touched by breast cancer. This year we had a video from WV Senator Shelley Moore Capito, who lost her mother to breast cancer, thanking our volunteers for their efforts in the fight. Personal reflections from Debbie Boggs, a survivor who benefited from WVBCCSP directly, and Beth Minear brought both tears and smiles to the eyes of the volunteers. Both speakers emphasized the importance of volunteers and the work they do, allowing those present to see the impact of their work in a very personal way. Those hundreds of activities and the countless hours add up to many lives saved. As always, we thank and honor those volunteers who make it possible; we could not do it without you!



Volunteers had fun dressing in pink!



Stephenie Kennedy, Director of Cancer Prevention and Control at WVU, accepts a check from Debbie Viands & Joann Viands, Jefferson County CEOs.



Volunteers had fun dressing in pink!

## Steps to Organizing a Breast Cancer Survivor Fashion Show

Once your group has determined that you want to host a Breast Cancer Survivor Fashion Show, give yourselves plenty of time to prepare. Creating SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) goals and an event timeline are great ways to keep organized.

1. Examine your resources. Give yourself longer to plan and secure donations and partnerships if you are starting without a budget.
2. Secure a venue. Once you have a time, date and location, you can move forward with other plans.
3. Partner with a local clothing store. This gives a local business a chance to advertise and provide your models with an amazing body positive experience.
4. Recruit survivors to be models. Your local WVBCCS Health Information Specialist (HIS), Breast Care Navigator or the American Cancer Society may be able to help with this.
5. Decide if you will have vendors, special speakers, musical guests, refreshments, etc.
6. Assign each volunteer to complete a specific task by a certain date.
7. Promote your event. Check with local media outlets about community calendars and use social media to promote your event for little to no cost. Give yourself plenty of time to promote your event once you have all the details in place.
8. Decorate. Your decorations set the mood from fun and playful to artsy and refined. Create a wonderful, glamorous environment where your models will feel beautiful.
9. Complete set up at least an hour before the event begins, just in case you need some last minute fixes.
10. Acknowledge everyone's contribution on the day of the event. Post and share pictures from your event!
11. Always leave your venue in better condition than you found it.
12. Send thank you cards. Include the number of people reached, amount of money raised and a heart-felt thank you in each one.



## Cervical Health Awareness Month

January is Cervical Health Awareness Month (CHAM) and now is the time to prepare for CHAM events. West Virginia has the highest incidence rate of cervical cancer in the nation. With effective prevention and early detection systems in place, there is no reason that this number can't change. Up to 93% of cervical cancers are preventable. That is why it is so important that we take advantage of this opportunity to educate our population about cervical cancer.

January is always an interesting time to try to host an event because the weather is so cold and unpredictable. Often volunteers help with CHAM by recognizing and participating in Wear Teal Day (January 8, 2016), attending proclamation readings at local WVBCCS clinics and sharing information about cervical cancer screening with family and friends.

Remember the power of social media! Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are great ways to reach people at home. Include links in your posts to the WVBCCS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society, to direct people to reliable resources for cervical cancer information.