The Life and Legacy of Beverly Wolman
A Tribute to Concern’s Founder

Beverly Wolman was 35 when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. In the 1960s, nobody survived breast cancer and social stigma meant patients suffered in secret. This was a tragic reality she was all too familiar with, as her own mother had passed away from the disease at only 32; Beverly was 18.

Cancer was such a taboo topic that Beverly shielded her own young daughters, Andrea, Cheryl, and Karen, from her sickness for two years, an experience the sisters vividly remember.

“We found out by going through her drawers and finding a bra with padding, and it forced her to be honest with us,” recall the Wolman sisters.

After learning of her diagnosis and understanding her limited time and options, Beverly decided to take action. She called on her doctor, Bill Schwartz, and her network to create what would become Concern Foundation: a group of friends dedicated to raising money for a new, underfunded field of study called immunology.

The beginnings of Concern Foundation were revolutionary because nobody else was creating grassroots organizations for cancer at the time; the only alternative was to align with the American Cancer Society, whose overhead was too high for the Concern founding members.

Forty seven years after Beverly embarked on her mission to conquer cancer, Concern continues to focus on innovative immunology research—an area that has since yielded significant breakthroughs and is now widely acknowledged as the key to understanding and curing cancer.

Genetic testing now allows women like the Wolman sisters, who all inherited the BRCA gene mutation from their mother, to make informed decisions about their care, and advancements in treatment means that a breast cancer diagnosis is no longer a death sentence for so many young women.

Not to mention that it no longer means keeping a dark secret and suffering in silence.

“She have come out and banded together; there is a movement and empowerment and demand for health care...there was nothing then,” notes Andrea.

We are so grateful for the contributions of Beverly Wolman and her family; without her, the incredible community that makes up Concern Foundation would not exist, and many important discoveries may have been missed.

“She turned tragedy into a dream by organizing and leading a group of friends to better understand, treat, and potentially find a cure for cancer” says Cheryl.

“I can’t believe the fight she had and how much she accomplished in such a short amount of time,” agrees Andrea. “She is my hero.”
It is hard to believe that 2015 is almost gone. So many wonderful things have happened this year, and as we get ready to give thanks with family and friends, it's a great time to reflect and express my gratitude for the many successes Concern has seen over the year.

We began 2015 by receiving $15,000 through the United for a Cause soccer tournament at Beverly Hills High School, an event we have been a part of for several years. Before we knew it, we were getting ready for the Los Angeles Marathon, which I am proud to say raised over $130,000. Not only did we have lots of people running and walking in the marathon, many also came to our cheer zone in Beverly Hills to cheer on Team Concern.

Of course the Block Party was another major success for the organization, and this year we honored the researchers. This was our 41st party and "An evening in Paradise" did not disappoint the over 3,000 people in attendance. What could be more moving than seeing our scientists standing on stage representing the research they have been tirelessly dedicated to? These people are our heroes.

Once again we were fortunate to be the recipients of the NSBN Charity Golf Tournament, and we spun through a class at SoulCycle, raising $18,000. Nothing is better than spending a day at Universal Studios with pediatric cancer patients and their families, and now we are getting prepared for yet another wonderful holiday party. None of this could have happened without the help of our board, volunteers and donors.

As I write my last letter as board chair, I have so many people to be thankful for who have helped me navigate the last two years. I have not only had the help of our board and supporters, but I feel lucky to have worked with Derek, our president, and wonderful team of Megan, Jena, Linda and Jillian. They made my job so much easier and I know that I would not have been able to get by without them.

I am fortunate to have also had the support of active board members and my parents, Joyce and Larry Powell, and my brother and sister-in-law, Rick and Debbie Powell. They were my “rocks” and were always there encouraging me. A special thanks also to my husband Mike, and children Tori and Bryan for their support!

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I know that Concern will continue to be in great hands with our incoming board chair Ilyse Teller, who has been involved with Concern for over 25 years. I have known Lisi my entire life and I know she will take this organization to new heights.

It has been my delight and pleasure to have served the last two years as board chair and I thank all of you for your support. Please continue to support one of the best cancer organizations in Los Angeles.

Nancy Eisenstadt

Second Annual Cycle With Soul Raises $18K

On Sunday, October 4, Concern Foundation held its second annual Cycle With Soul charity ride at SoulCycle Santa Monica.

The event raised more than $18,000 for cancer research through ticket sales, sponsorships and our participants’ wonderful fundraising efforts! These funds will support the most talented scientists conducting innovative research around the world.

Courtney Teller led the event for the second year in a row, and worked tirelessly so that all 50 participants had a great time sweating it out for cancer research. After the ride, guests enjoyed snacks and refreshments with specialty pressed juices provided by Juice Crafters in Brentwood.

Our instructor Molly said it best: “How amazing is it to be in a room full of people fighting for the same cause!”
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The numbers are staggering. Cancer is now the world's leading cause of mortality, taking over 8 million lives annually, and that number continues to rise. With nearly 15 million Americans with a history of cancer today, and 1.7 million new cancer cases diagnosed this year alone, everyone is affected by cancer.

You can help. By joining Team Concern for the 2016 Los Angeles Marathon, you can be part of a movement that will find a cure and conquer cancer.

Join us for the 2016 Skechers Performance Los Angeles Marathon on Sunday, February 14 and the Big 5K on Saturday, February 13. This year's event will be a historic one as the 2016 Olympic Trials Marathon will be held the same weekend in downtown Los Angeles.

Through the promotion of active and healthy lifestyles and participation in endurance races and athletic events, Team Concern was formed to raise funds and awareness for Concern Foundation. In seven years, Team Concern has raised more than $730,000 that has gone directly to cancer research and treatment programs in Los Angeles and around the world.

**Universal Day for the Kids**

On Sunday, October 25, Concern Foundation staff, volunteers and over 300 special guests took over Universal Studios Hollywood at our 27th annual Day for the Kids. Hundreds of pediatric cancer patients and their guests got the VIP treatment at Universal Studios, including a delicious lunch, face painting, balloon animals and best of all, front-of-the-line passes! We couldn't have asked for a better event—everyone had tons of fun and enjoyed the Halloween-decked theme park on a beautiful fall day.

We are so very grateful to all of Concern Foundation's wonderful volunteers who make the event such a memorable one for these kids. And of course, the biggest thank you to Universal Studios and the incredible Discover A Star Foundation for being the perfect hosts. We already can't wait until next year!

Don't forget to save the date for our annual Holiday Party for pediatric cancer patients and their families on December 13, 2016.

To learn more and run with Team Concern, visit https://www.concernfoundation.org/lamarathon. If you have any questions, please contact Jena Brown at jena@concernfoundation.org.
On Saturday, July 11, 2015, Concern Foundation for cancer research successfully produced its 41st Annual Block Party, An Evening in Paradise, on the backlot of Paramount Pictures Studios in Hollywood and raised over $1.5 million for cancer research. This year, the Block Party paid tribute to more than 750 cancer researchers, all of whom have demonstrated their achievements as leaders committed to finding innovative treatments and ultimately, cures for cancer.

For 4,000 party-goers, both locals and out of town visitors alike, the event proved to be a great way to spend a summer evening. The island themed event, designed by John Ferdenzi of Town & Country Event Rentals, was filled with gourmet foods, specialty cocktails, and interactive experiences. More than 60 food and beverage vendors showcased delectable delights from their menus including notable classics such as Fogo de Chao, The Grill on the Alley, Lawry’s Catering, Pink’s Hot Dogs and Slater’s 50/50.

Four stages of music and performances, casino style gaming, interactive lounges and spa and beauty services all provided hours of fun and entertainment. Los Angeles magazine brought their “Best of L.A.®” experience which featured the Infiniti Lounge and special giveaways, treats from Clif Bar and wine tasting.

On the main stage, Frank Mottek, award winning journalist and member of the board of directors for Concern Foundation, was emcee throughout the evening. He was later accompanied by Derek Alpert, president of Concern Foundation who states:

“We are all here tonight because cancer has affected every single one of our lives, and will continue to affect the lives of our loved ones until a solution is found. Concern Foundation works every day to conquer cancer by funding the most innovative and promising research in the field of cancer immunology.”

During the program, cancer researchers took the stage for a powerful demonstration of the work they have accomplished and the various types of cancer they are working against. It was a powerful moment and a wonderful privilege to honor our true heroes.

Save the date for the 42nd annual Block Party on Saturday, July 9, 2016.
Dr. Damien Reynaud Links Obesity and Blood Cancer

During a recent lab visit to the Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Dr. Damien Reynaud shared the progress of his research that focuses on a link between obesity as a significant risk factor for blood cancers.

Obese individuals have a much higher risk of spontaneously developing leukemia and they are also more difficult to treat, yet little is known about the molecular mechanisms linking obesity and leukemia. We do know the impacts of obesity include added stress on the whole body, which can cause drastic effects like accelerated aging of cells. Stem cells last a long time and don’t regenerate, so if they’re exposed to the stresses of an obese environment they have to work much harder to adapt and maintain themselves.

Dr. Reynaud specifically looks at the stem cells that are responsible for the life-long production of blood cells. He has found that as these stem cells compensate for their obese surroundings, and this burden essentially causes premature aging, which in turn accelerates the potential for initiation and development of blood cancer.

Since Dr. Reynaud has validated this obesity/leukemia link, he will dedicate the remainder of his Concern Foundation grant exploring and understanding the mechanisms that affect this system. His hope is that once the mechanism for obesity affecting the blood stem cells is determined, they can then move towards controlling its effects.

“Our findings on this project are extremely promising and an abstract featuring our results has been accepted for presentation in December at the annual meeting of the American Society of Hematology, a key international event dedicated to the treatment of blood diseases,” says Dr. Reynaud. “I am grateful that the support of the Concern Foundation has allowed us to create a firm foundation for this exciting project.”
Concern Grant to Support Prostate Cancer Research at UCLA

This summer, Concern Foundation announced a special funding opportunity at the UCLA Eli and Edythe Broad Center of Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research. Concern, along with long-time supporters and board members Stanley and Myrna Zimmerman, will co-fund a project run by Dr. Owen Witte that will enable him and his team to uncover a primary cause of metastasis in prostate cancer and identify new treatment combinations to attack the disease.

Owen Witte, MD, pursues high-impact research with the greatest potential to improve survival and reduce side effects for men with metastatic prostate cancer. Through the development of new experimental models, Dr. Witte and his team study tissue regeneration and the progression of disease while introducing different combinations of genes into prostate epithelial cells in order to observe transformation. Ultimately, his research goal is to develop the most effective targeted therapies for the treatment of prostate cancer.

Resources provided by this grant will allow the team to further investigate the mechanisms of kinase activity in metastatic prostate cancer by:
1. Identifying the key kinases that promote metastatic prostate cancer.
2. Determining which kinases contribute to prostate cancer growth in the bone.
3. Performing drug screening to identify small molecules that can target these metastasis-promoting kinases.

Results from this entire body of work have the potential to identify new therapeutic targets for metastatic prostate cancer which can either eradicate or slow the progression of this devastating disease. Dr. Witte and colleagues predict that kinases identified through their studies may be readily targeted by FDA-approved clinical inhibitors or may provide an impetus for the accelerated evaluation of other pre-clinical kinase inhibitors.

We’re very excited about what this groundbreaking research may yield and look forward to reporting on the project results.
Upcoming Events:

Sunday, December 13
Annual Holiday Party at Paramount Pictures

Saturday, February 13, 2016
LA Big 5K at Dodger Stadium
Olympic Trials Marathon in downtown Los Angeles

Sunday, February 14, 2016
Los Angeles Marathon & Charity Relay at Dodger Stadium
Concern Foundation Cheer Zone in Beverly Hills

Saturday, April 30, 2016
Scientific Review meeting at Hillcrest Country Club

Saturday, July 9, 2016
42nd Annual Block Party at Paramount Pictures

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