2019 ANNUAL REPORT

MapleTreeCancerAlliance.org

CHANGING THE FACE OF CANCER REHABILITATION
Dear Friends of Maple Tree Cancer Alliance,

I will always look back on 2019 as the year that Maple Tree became a family.

Let’s face it, 2019 was a year of trials and pain, celebration, and growth. On the plus side, we doubled in size and had the opportunity to serve more patients than ever before. Yet, we walked through a horrific tragedy, losing one of our very own.

Through all of these ups and downs, one thing remained constant... the support and love we felt from all of you. Walking into one of our centers truly feels like being a part of a very special family. Without your prayers and encouragement, I don’t know how we would have made it through those tough days. As an organization, we strive to walk alongside people in the darkest time of their life. What a blessing it was for these very people to do the same for us!

We are thankful to present you our 2019 Annual Report to highlight the impact we are making in the fight against cancer.

Our mission is to improve the quality of lives of individuals who battle cancer. To accomplish this, we strive to treat each patient with compassion and encouragement, offering them a hope beyond their circumstances.

As an organization, we are committed to stand with cancer survivors in their fight against cancer. Our research-based programs are safe and effective, and we are recognized as the national leaders in exercise oncology. Best of all, these life changing services are offered for free to our patients! This is thanks to the support we receive from people like you.

Thank you for all you do!

Sincerely,

Karen Wonders
Executive Director, Ph.D., FACSM
Dan is a 71 year old Green Bay Packer fan who has celebrated 51 years of marriage to his wife Sharon. In 2018 Dan complained of something on his tongue that prevented him from swallowing and his wife urged him to get it seen by a doctor. Dan states that he resisted but his wife was quite persistent. Dan made an appointment where he said “my GP (Dr Shelli Ridge) took one look at me and in a very kind and thoughtful way told me she thought it was cancer. In July of 2018, Dan was diagnosed with tongue and throat cancer. After absorbing the initial shock, the diagnosis was confirmed by my ENT guy, Doctor Michaelson. I had one biopsy to confirm it.”

Next, Dan began treatment at Kettering Hospital under the care of Dr. Higgins for chemotherapy and Dr. Paravati for radiation. On August 1st, 2018 Dan began treatment. In total Dan would endure 35 radiation treatments and 7 chemo treatments. Dan commends the skills of his medical experts along with his wife and God’s will for still being around.

Eventually, Dan finished his treatment and started up at Maple Tree. Dan was referred by a specialist at Kettering hospital who suggested that he look into Maple Tree. “When he first walked in the door, he was on a feeding tube and had an excessive amount of lymphedema that had developed around his throat and jaw” said Derik his trainer. “All Dan wanted was to be able to eat normal food again, and to be relieved of the discomfort that his lymphedema had brought him. Dan also was wanting to gain weight and become stronger as he was extremely underweight for someone of his size” said Dan’s trainer Derik. Dan commented on how the decision to start was by no means an easy one, “during this period, I was really in no shape to make any real decisions on anything.” Chemo brain was doing a number on me, and the radiation messed up the back of my tongue and throat to the point I wasn’t eating... I consequently lost 43 pounds... I remember doctors Higgins and Paravati stressing the fact that I needed to eat. My wife was relentless in her efforts to get me to eat more. But it was quite painful and nothing had much taste. So it was a struggle.”

To date, Dan has been a part of the Maple Tree family for over a year! He says that his trainer Derik, is the reason for him continuing on with the program. “He has me doing exercises mostly I have not tried before. He is working on everything. His positive attitude is refreshing and contagious. And he has become a good friend. I look forward to our sessions very much” says Dan!

Since diagnosis, exercise has really helped Dan improve his quality-of-life! Dan has experienced a 27.91% increase in muscular strength on his right side, 32.26% increase in muscular strength on his left side, 26.19% increase in cardiovascular fitness, 57.14% increase in muscular endurance and a 25% increase in flexibility. Dan works hard with his trainer, “Derik has me gaining strength and flexibility and I see that exercise is wonderful for what ails you. He is showing me different ways of approaching health issues through exercise. I feel much better since we started the program. I am very grateful…”. Derik had this to say about Dan and his progress; “Over the course of working with this life long Green Bay Packer fan, Dan not only has overcome his lymphedema, which is almost completely gone, but he can now eat without a feeding tube and has gained incredible strength and even gained a few pounds in the process. His spirit is higher than ever and he looks forward to his exercise sessions every week, not only to still try to become stronger but because he enjoys seeing everyone here at Maple Tree as much as we enjoy seeing him.”

When we asked Dan if there was anything he would like to say to the medical community or prospective patients he said this:

“The folks at Maple Tree have worked with me to the point that I am very close as far as strength and flexibility to what I was before the cancer diagnosis. The facilities are top notch. All of the people that I have met through this program have been exceptional in their efforts to improve my quality of life. Special kudos go to Derik, “cause if I didn’t have him I would probably not be very motivated to do any exercises and I would be in lousy shape because of it.”
Expanding Our Reach

This year, we were so honored to receive our biggest donation EVER through the Faster Way to Fat Loss organization! Thanks to their generous gift of $200,000, we were able to open a Maple Tree center in Tampa, Florida!

Our ribbon cutting ceremony on October 1 was one of the major highlights of our year! We believe that we will have a major impact in this city, and are so excited to serve patients here!

Did Someone Say Brazil?

It all started with an Instagram post, which turned into a phone call, then a meeting at a professional conference, followed by a visit, and before we knew it, Maple Tree became an international organization!

Imagine having to wait 6 months before beginning treatment. Having to get that treatment while sitting on the floor. Not having much hope for a successful outcome.

This is the reality many cancer patients face in Brazil. Yet, Dr. Alice Francisco is leading a team of dedicated professionals to change the way cancer is cared for in Brazil. We are honored to partner with them through our exercise oncology programs. Maple Tree Brazil is offering patients much needed hope and encouragement!

Evidenced-Based Practice

2019 Publications:


Research At A Glance:

Randomized clinical trials are considered the gold standard in the world of research because they eliminate bias and deliver the highest level of evidence inherent with other study designs.

Thanks to a grant we received from the Gala of Hope Foundation, we were able to begin collecting data for our first ever randomized clinical control trial – Randomized, Controlled Trial of an Individualized Exercise Oncology Program.

Results from this investigation will be used to drive conversations with insurance providers and new potential hospital partners.

Exercise should be a part of the standard of care in oncology, and we are committed to building a solid research program that will make this happen!
Our vision is to advocate for exercise to be a part of the standard of care in cancer. Achieving this will require a vast workforce. After all, there are 17 million cancer survivors in the US! To help adequately prepare new graduates in the field of exercise science to work with the unique needs of a cancer survivor, we developed an undergraduate course in exercise oncology. This class meets the standards required through accrediting bodies for college credit, and has been made available to universities across the country. Students who complete this class have the opportunity to sit for our nationally-recognized certification exam, and complete an internship at one of our program locations!

Advocacy

As an organization, we continue to strive to raise awareness for the field of exercise oncology. We are working with professionals from leading cancer organizations across the country to advocate for exercise standards to be put in place and expanded insurance coverage options for all. It is a long road, but we are committed to achieving this goal because we understand the impact it will have in the lives of patients across the country. To demonstrate their support of our endeavors, we developed partnership opportunities with both Anthem Insurance Company and United Health Care this year! This allows us to continue to collect the necessary data to move this work forward!

Maple Tree University

Thank you to everyone for their continued support of our mission. Your gifts make it possible for us to offer our life-changing services FREE of charge to our patients!
My oncologist said “Don’t stay in bed” so that’s when I decided to never stop walking!

We ALL have a different story about our cancer and while it is difficult (to say the least) it also provides us the chance to share our stories in an attempt to reach out to, and connect with each other and let each other know that we can rise above! Today we share with you the story of Stacy Steiner, a hard-working mom.

I grew up in the small town of Orrville, I played softball and still love to bowl. I went to UD and majored in Accounting. I’m currently 42 years old and have been married for 15 years, have 2 stepdaughters that are married, and one is about to have her 2nd child. I also have a 14-year-old daughter, Chloe and 12-year-old son, Cooper.

When I turned 40, I went for my first mammogram. A few days before the appointment I did notice some dimpling, but I was thinking maybe I had hurt myself while I helped my dad dig up his back yard while we were in Orrville for Easter.  After the first mammogram, they called and said they would like more tests but reminded me that it’s common for more tests since I had never had a mammogram. I went back... they did another mammogram... then an ultrasound... and as they were doing the ultrasound the radiologist came in and said I needed a biopsy, so I knew then it probably was not good. I had to schedule the biopsy and wait another week. My gynecologist called to tell me that I did have cancer and I needed to call a surgeon.

I followed through with Maple Tree because I thought working out while starting tamoxifen (a drug taken to block the effects of estrogen in breast tissue, used to help reduce the recurrence risk of another breast cancer) might help me lose weight, get into healthier habits and establish more of a routine for working out.

I love having someone dedicated to deciding what workout I should be doing! I love the weekly conversations with Matt (he allows me to vent but then we talk about all kinds of different things, very enjoyable!). Since joining Maple Tree in February of 2018, I believe it’s helped me lose weight, it helps keep all the side effects of tamoxifen very minimal, and I know it also helps to relieve work stress.

I LOVE Maple Tree - I only wish I would have had known of Maple Tree before I started chemo! I love that I can bring my kids with me to my workout sessions (my son loves it)! I believe we should be teaching our kids better exercise habits to help prevent all kinds of diseases!

Thank you!

Stacy used to wear a compression sleeve to each workout and no longer wears one. Stacy is strong and continues to get stronger despite being at risk for lymphedema! Stacy works hard! She understands that even amongst her busy life she needs to prioritize time to maintain her health. Since starting Stacy has lost 16 pounds, increased her cardiovascular fitness by 39.41%, increased her muscular endurance by 194.12%, and increased her flexibility by 14.71%.
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Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.

EPHESIANS 6:10
NEW Locations opened in 2019

FLORIDA
TAMPA, FL
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Tampa, FL 33773

OHIO
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SAVE THE DATE
2020 ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN
November 9-13
$100,000 GOAL

We hope you will continue to support our mission!

For a complete list of our locations, visit
MapleTreeCancerAlliance.org

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