



Cancer CAREpoint

COUNSELING • ASSISTANCE • RESOURCES • EDUCATION

Personalized support services for anyone in Silicon Valley whose life is touched by cancer

Summer 2016

Pressures of cancer in the Silicon Valley workplace

In the take-no-prisoners workplace culture of Silicon Valley – where vacation time piles up because employees don't want to risk being left behind – two Cancer CAREpoint clients have found their high tech employers to be understanding and supportive as they deal with cancer in their lives.

Worry about work is a major stressor for cancer patients and caregivers. There are state and federal laws to protect employees with health issues, but those don't address the emotional and relationship challenges with bosses and co-workers.

Employees are more than a skill set

“People carry their whole self into the workplace, not just a skill set,” said **Brad Leary**, LCSW, CT Director of Patient and Family Services at Cancer CAREpoint. “Every employee brings physical, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of themselves to the job. Smart employers recognize this and try to be as accommodating as possible.”

That was the case for John who informed his manager just hours after his wife received a devastating diagnosis of Stage 4 colon cancer.

“I've worked for this company for 19 years so I feel I have built up a lot of social capital,” he said. The firm has allowed him more flexibility on his work hours so that he can accompany his wife to some treatments and all consults with the doctors, and he was able to change positions to one that is more operational and easier to handle when he is distracted.

“The anxiety level can get high and it is easy for your mind to go to a dark place thinking about the future,” he said. “Thinking about a work project is hard when you are preoccupied with personal feelings. It's a struggle to remain relevant with the constant distraction of worrying about my wife.”

Claire has also experienced positive support from her company during two bouts with cancer – non-Hodgkin's



lymphoma in 2013 and breast cancer last year. She is just now returning to work part-time as a human resources professional after being on disability for six months.

“My boss told me right away to go on disability so I could focus all of my energy on getting well,” she said. “The whole team at work has been great because everyone knows someone who has had cancer and knows how hard it is.”

Prepare for co-worker reactions

Brad recommends that cancer patients and caregivers prepare themselves for a variety of reactions from co-workers. Some may express empathy while others may ask intrusive questions or make unhelpful comments because they don't realize they are making you uncomfortable.

Claire has been very open to telling people about her cancer and even references it in workshops she facilitates on how to manage change. “I didn't expect the reaction I got,” she said. “It felt like everyone paid more attention to what I had to say

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Honoring their beauty

A message from the Executive Director

Every day at Cancer CAREpoint we see what a difference our Wig Bank makes for people with cancer. We witness the transformation that takes place when cancer patients go from feeling depressed and overwhelmed to being able to face the day with new courage and strength.

Hair loss is universally one of the most difficult aspects of treatment and reminds patients of their disease, impacts social interactions, and can lead to a decrease in self-esteem and sexuality.

The Wig Bank at our Cancer CAREpoint Resource Center has been remarkably successful but we also knew that transportation to our Resource Center is a significant barrier to accessing support services for many low income cancer patients.

The solution? Bring our Wig Bank out to the community. When we approached the staff at the **Sobrato Cancer Center at Valley Medical Center** (VMC) to ask if we could come to them, we got a resounding Yes!

The Cancer CAREpoint and VMC staff worked together to transform a VMC conference room into a welcoming hair salon filled with dozens of wigs of all colors and styles as well as providing translations in both Spanish and Vietnamese. One patient even came straight from her radiation treatment still wearing her hospital gown because she didn't want to miss her appointment.

We provided 29 cancer patients with wigs, hats, scarves and the strength to face their cancer. We weren't surprised that the evaluations

showed 100% of participants reported decreased stress and anxiety as a result of the Wig Bank.

"Estoy muy agradecido por este programa y que he venido hoy. Gracias a Dios por personas como ustedes que le dan mucha atención a las personas que tienen cáncer" one patient wrote on her evaluation. *(I am very thankful for this program and that I came today. Thank God for people like you who give so much attention to people who have cancer.)*

It turned out to also be an emotionally rewarding day for our volunteers, such as **Libie Cilker** who said "What stood out was the healing that took place.

Each woman wore her wig as she left the clinic. Many of these women don't have time for themselves. Seeing them shed tears of joy made me feel good."

The Wig Bank visit to VMC showcased what is best about Silicon Valley – organizations working in collaboration with a "can do" attitude that provides a solution to a real need in the community. It also showcases what is best about Cancer CAREpoint and its services to all cancer centers and oncology practices. Together, we made it happen and improved the quality of life for these cancer patients and their families.

Interested in how you can support our efforts to bring our Wig Bank out into the community? Feel free to email me at rob@cancercarepoint.org. Your support is always appreciated. Thank you.



Rob Tufel

Rob Tufel, MSW, MPH
Executive Director

A special thanks

The Wig Bank at VMC was made possible because of extraordinary support from our volunteers, **Marita Trobough** of The Next Step boutique, **Nam Cho, MD** and **Barbara French, RN** at VMC, Cancer CAREpoint staff **Sheryl Brown** and **Cecilia Carranza** and VMC Foundation Director **Chris Wilder** who generously contributed to sharing the costs with Cancer CAREpoint.

Pressures of cancer in the Silicon Valley workplace

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Cancer CAREpoint client Claire

and some come up to me afterward to share stories about family members who had cancer. It seemed to level the playing field and bring a closer connection."

She realizes from comments made by other cancer patients in Cancer CAREpoint support groups that not all employers are as supportive as hers, but she recommends that cancer patients ease back into work at their own pace.

"Go back slowly to test your physical stamina and how much 'chemo fog' you still have," she said. "If you enjoy your work, find a way to do it. It is a great distractor as you go through recovery and it also gives your caregiver some time alone to refresh."

"Many of us derive a sense of purpose, accomplishment and satisfaction from our jobs," added Brad. Patients and caregivers should not feel guilty if they need time and space away from the workplace to cope with one of the most difficult periods of their life. It is up to each individual to find the balance, and we're here to help them do that."

Cancer in the workplace checklist

- Although by law, cancer patients do not need to divulge their diagnosis to their employer, many cancer patients have found it best to tell your manager as soon as you can. Whether you are the patient or caregiver, the manager will appreciate knowing in advance that there will be absences, distractions and probable impacts on your productivity.
- Check in with the Human Resources Department to become familiar with company policies as well as your legal rights.
- Discuss with your manager who in the company needs to know about your situation. You should feel in control of who learns about the cancer diagnosis and how much detail you want to disclose. This is a time when it's all about what you want!
- Use support groups like the ones offered at Cancer CAREpoint to talk about your feelings and work options you are considering.

For more advice and tools on how to handle cancer in the workplace, contact Cancer CAREpoint for other resources.



HEALTH & HEALING SPEAKER SERIES

for Cancer Patients, Families & Caregivers

Noted specialists sharing expertise with our community in the welcoming environment of Cancer CAREpoint's Resource Center



Chinese Medicine Self-Care Alternatives for Cancer

**Wednesday, June 15
6:30-8 p.m.**

Speaker: Candy Yang, Certified Nurse Practitioner at Kaiser Permanente, who is trained in both Western and Eastern medicine, will present an overview of Chinese medicine as well as information about self-care for cancer complications. Learn how Chinese medicine addresses the root of cancer while focusing on restoration and the whole body.



Cancer and the Workplace Managing Legal, Practical and Emotional Issues

**Wednesday, September 14
6:30-8 p.m.**

Speaker: Hon. Roberta Hayashi, Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge and employment legal specialist. Joining her for the discussion will be Brad Leary, Director of Patient and Family Services.

**Cancer CAREpoint Resource Center
2505 Samaritan Dr., Bldg. 400, Suite 402, San Jose**

Advance registration is required for both events. Limited space available. Register now by calling 408.402.6611 or emailing brad@cancercarepoint.org.

All talks are offered at no charge.

Our Community Cares

Thank you to our donors and the many individuals, businesses and community groups that are supporting Cancer CAREpoint and making a difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families.

May 2 was a beautiful day for golf and for Silicon Valley cancer patients and their families when 124 golfers took on the challenging **Golf Club at Boulder Ridge** to raise \$60,000 for Cancer CAREpoint services.

The event was inaugurated last year by **Paul and Charmain Gardner** in honor of their son who they lost to cancer. Participation doubled this year with the help of **Gary Olimpia**. Special thanks to **Paula Ball** for organizing the dinner auction following the tournament.



Gary Olimpia, Jan Willoughby



Scot Strotman, Paul Gardner, Darin Devincenzi



Janet Higgins, Jan Hoover, Pat Yates, Sally Jones



Lorrie and Jack Cuthbert

2nd Annual Cancer CAREpoint Golf Tournament

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Thank you from  Cancer CAREpoint



Volunteer Vicky Meraza-Santos, Client Coordinator Cecilia Carranza, Board Member Theresa Bumb

The community of **St. John Vianney** in San Jose donated dozens of homemade blanket sets for cancer patients during a Sunday outreach visit to the church by Cancer CAREpoint. It was one of several outreach activities held this spring at venues throughout Silicon Valley including **Japantown Health Fair, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish Health Fair, Los Gatos Presbyterian Church** (thank you, **Beth Barry**, for the introduction) **Xilinx** and **Regional Medical Center**.

A beautiful evening of Chopin, Chocolate and Champagne at the Montalvo Arts Center in Saratoga featuring **Katya Grineva** and **Byron Duckwall** benefited Cancer CAREpoint. Thank you Board member **Gay Crawford** for organizing this special event.

NBC Bay Area featured Cancer CAREpoint in its coverage of SV Gives and for good reason –120 generous donors surpassed the \$25,000 goal to meet the matching grant offered by **1440 Foundation**, the **Teal Foundation** and the **Toeniskoetter Family**. Altogether, more than \$50,000 was raised in one day to support Cancer CAREpoint's support services.



Hundreds of yoga enthusiasts took to their mats (and hammocks!) in April to participate in **Pose 4 A Purpose**, a weekend yoga event benefiting Cancer CAREpoint. Seven local yoga studios took part in the virtual yoga-thon and offered special classes and activities such as "Cocoon Relaxation" in aerial hammocks and "Candlelight Flow" with acoustic guitar accompaniment. A big thank you to **Almaden Yoga, Breathe Los Gatos, Breathe @ Rivermark, Shakti Yoga Shala, Willow Glen Yoga, Yoga @ Cindy's** and **Yoga of Los Altos** for taking part and an even bigger thank you to **Lorien Neargarder** for organizing this outstanding event.



Nadya Carlson-Bowen organized a wonderful fundraiser at **Brittania Arms** for Cancer CAREpoint in memory of her twin sister, **Vera Carlson-Bowen** and her battle with colon cancer.



It was bunco time again March 20 when Cancer CAREpoint was the beneficiary of the spring Shake, Rock and Roll Bunco event sponsored by **KBAY Radio** and hosted by radio personalities **Lissa Kreisler** and **Sam Van Zandt**. Thank you to volunteers **Paula Ball, Amanda Wong, Vicky Meraza-Santos** and Board member **Sandi Frazer** for helping to create such a fun afternoon.



Santa Teresa Women's Golf Club celebrated its 10th year of raising money to support cancer patients with a donation of \$5,500 to Cancer CAREpoint. Funds were generated from tournament entry fees, a raffle and additional donations from players, other golf clubs, golf instructors, members and friends. **Cathy Priest** reported that the event was even more meaningful after one golfer met a cancer survivor on the day of the tournament who has taken advantage of Cancer CAREpoint services and expressed how much she appreciates those programs and the support of the community.



Cancer CAREpoint Executive Director Rob Tufel was recently interviewed by **Maggi Scura** for the Comcast Newsmakers TV program.



Energetic and dedicated students of the **Homestead High School Cancer Society** organized a 5K Walk/Run to benefit Cancer CAREpoint. We appreciate your support.

A grand opening party for **Glacé Cryotherapy** was held at the **Sono Bellezza Rejuvenation Studio** on May 1 with proceeds benefiting Cancer CAREpoint. Thank you, **Lisa Cagliostro**.

Meet Cecilia Carranza



Like so many new college grads in Silicon Valley, **Cecilia Carranza** landed a job in the tech industry after graduation from San Jose State University even though she majored in political science with the intention of working with the community. Eight years later she finally achieved her original goal when she became the Client Care Coordinator at Cancer CAREpoint.

“I love it here,” she said. “When I drive home at the end of the day I know we have helped people at one of the most difficult periods of their lives. Some days are hard but all are rewarding.”

Cecilia can most often be found at the front desk of the Cancer Resource Center where she welcomes new and returning clients, answers questions, makes appointments, handles Spanish translations and helps with set up of the many programs offered each week. She also represents Cancer CAREpoint out in the community at health fairs and other outreach events.

She appreciates the way staff members help each other maintain an emotional balance. “Having a positive attitude is important because people come here as an escape from doctor appointments, procedures and being home alone,” she explained. “It is something for them to look forward to.”

Inspired by the passion she observed among Cancer CAREpoint board members, Cecilia recently completed the Latino Board Leadership Academy offered by the Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley. She is now talking with local nonprofit organizations looking for new volunteer board members to find one that is a good fit.

Cecilia lives with her sister and both women have recently adopted new puppies – a rescue Pit Bull and a Shih Tzu. “People laugh when we walk down the street because the dogs are so different in size, but they get along great,” she said.

Prestigious Jefferson Award to Gay Crawford



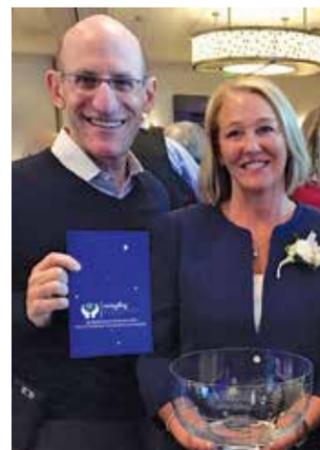
Gay Crawford, a founder and Board member of Cancer CAREpoint, received the prestigious Jefferson Award from KPIX in honor of her lifelong work to improve the lives of cancer patients. A TV news video describing her many achievements can be viewed on the Cancer CAREpoint Facebook page.

The Jefferson Award is described as “America’s gold seal of public service.” Through partnerships with CBS television stations across the country, the program

identifies individuals who have made an impact and share the stories of people considered to be “America’s best citizens.”

Gay was nominated for the award by Cancer CAREpoint Executive Director Rob Tufel, **Jennie Magid**, co-founder with Gay of Hospice of the Valley, and former San Jose Mayor **Chuck Reed**.

Woman of Influence



Cancer CAREpoint Board Chair **Allison Jones Thomson** received two honors this spring in recognition of her contributions to the Silicon Valley community. The **Junior League of San Jose** identified Allison as an “everyday hero” at its annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon.

In May she was named as a “Woman of Influence” by the **Silicon Valley Business Journal** and profiled in a special edition of the newspaper along with other business, government and community leaders.

Donate your vehicle to Cancer CAREpoint

Call 1-888-686-4483 or donate online at cancercarepoint.org/donate.



4th Annual Sports Day for Charity Benefiting Cancer CAREpoint

Saturday, July 30

Grass Volleyball • Kids Obstacle Course • Bike Rides for All Levels

Cabrillo Middle School • 2550 Cabrillo Ave. • Santa Clara

Register Now at wipeout-cancer.org

Good Samaritan Hospital is a Cancer CAREpoint Premium Hospital Partner

Somewhere, oncologists are using advanced techniques to save lives.

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To learn more visit GoodSamCancerCenter.com or call 855-422-2472.



Cancer Survivorship Workshop

This eight-week survivorship workshop is for people who have completed active treatment and are interested in processing the emotional impact of their cancer experience. The approach is realistic, honest and insightful.

Participants will have the opportunity to share feelings, hopes and fears and will be provided with practical tools and resources to move forward after cancer in a healthy way. Participants must be available for all sessions.

Tuesdays, Sept. 13 - Nov. 1
6 pm - 8 pm
El Camino Hospital
2400 Grant Rd., Mountain View

Contact Amy Goldsburly, MSW at amy@cancercarepoint.org to register.



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Executive Director

Rob Tufel, MSW, MPH

Mission Statement

Cancer CAREpoint is dedicated to transforming support for cancer patients, families and caregivers in Silicon Valley through personalized, one-on-one Counseling, Assistance, Resources and Education.

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www.cancercarepoint.org

Our Services

- Counseling
- Nutrition Classes
- Therapeutic Massage
- Yoga/Exercise
- Guided Imagery/Meditation
- Support Groups
- Family CARE Program
- Wig Bank
- Survivorship Programs
- Healing Touch
- Resources and Referrals



Join us for the garden party of the year on Sunday, August 28

Meet and mingle with Silicon Valley business and community leaders at the stunning Los Gatos home of **John and Maureen Machado** to help people in our region whose lives are touched by cancer. Sponsors are recognized in the Garden Party program, the Cancer CAREpoint newsletter and website, and a in a full page ad in the Silicon Valley Business Journal.

You will also be invited to meet other sponsors and hear a brief talk by **Sheri Sobrato Brisson** about her cancer experience and how it inspired her to help others on their cancer journeys.

For sponsorship information, visit cancercarepoint.org or contact Megan Kennedy at 408-402-6285 or megan@cancercarepoint.org.



Sheri Sobrato Brisson