



Providing hope to cancer patients and their supporters for 35 years

**CONSUELO ROSS, BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR AND
FOUNDER OF SURVIVING THE ODDS FOUNDATION, TO RECEIVE THE
2015 RICHARD A. BLOCH CANCER SURVIVORSHIP AWARD.**

Annette Bloch, co-founder and president of the R.A. Bloch Cancer Foundation, announced that Consuelo Ross has been chosen for her willingness to take her cancer story to the public and build awareness and find solutions to the increased incidence of cancer in African-American and Latino populations. The award will be presented at the 30th annual Kansas City Celebration of Life Rally on National Cancer Survivors Day, from 12-2 p.m. Sunday, June 7.



Ms. Ross is a breast cancer survivor who uses her cancer journey, family history, and knowledge to bring attention to the need for increased awareness of cancer, especially breast cancer, in the underinsured, underserved minority communities. As founder and CEO of Surviving the Odds Foundation, Consuelo is dedicated to decreasing the cancer mortality rate in women of color. African-American women have the highest mortality rate when faced with the disease.

It was important for Consuelo to take an aggressive stance when she was initially diagnosed with late stage breast cancer at age 34 - her mother was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer and died in three years. Because her cancer came at an early age, the now 43 year old knew the odds were stacked against her. The younger that women and men are when diagnosed with cancer, the more aggressive it can be. A diagnosis based on stage, grade and subtype makes all the difference to the patient's risk and survival rate. A diagnosis of stage one breast tumor is much different than a diagnosis of a stage 3 triple negative tumor.

Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) is the most aggressive of all breast cancer sub-types. It is faster growing and more likely to metastasize. Her mother's fight against TNBC helped drive the focus of Surviving the Odds Foundation.

Predominately diagnosed in African-American women, TNBC has an average survival rate of five years. Late-stage diagnosis is a primary factor in this statistic. Being forced to make the choice between taking care of their families or tending to their own health and not having the means to afford coverage are only a couple of the socioeconomic factors that impact cancer care in minority communities.

Surviving the Odds serves as a conduit of information and resources at the neighborhood level. Working with faith based organizations, health care facilities, and other minority focused organizations, they can help those in need navigate the health care system. Since its inception, the organization has helped hundreds of women, and Ross calls saving lives and changing statistics her "365-days-a-year job."

Kansas City's annual celebration of National Cancer Survivors Day is an afternoon of information and inspiration for cancer patients, survivors, supporters and caregivers. Dozens of cancer support and treatment organizations set up exhibits on the grounds of the Richard & Annette Bloch Cancer Survivors Park at 47th and Roanoke, just west of the Country Club Plaza. There will be prize drawings, refreshments, Kansas City's Marching Cobras, music by Southern Vixen KC, refreshments, and more. Contact Vangie Rich, organizing chair of the rally, at 816-854-4371 or vrich@hrblock.com for more information.