



A BOVE + BEYONG CANCER	

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A WORD FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

It was a pleasure to serve my first year as Board Chair for Above + Beyond Cancer in 2023. Throughout the year, the organization was able to support cancer survivors and caregivers through our Hotel Program and Optimal Living Programs. We hosted several events including our annual Fur Ride, An Evening of Inspiration, Elevate Festival, and launched a new one this year - the Jump! Event where 18 brave souls jumped out of an airplane to raise money for our organization. We celebrated this amazing accomplishment with a Hangar Party in their honor and unveiled a new campaign created by Flynn Wright entitled "Find Your Wellpower."

The Wellpower campaign focuses on Well Body, Well Mind, and Well Spirit. At Above + Beyond Cancer, we challenge people to find what motivates them to live above and beyond. We know a cancer diagnosis doesn't define you and we want to help all survivors and caregivers to live their best life.

We are so excited to see what next year brings and hope to see you at one of our 2024 programs or events.





A RECAP FROM OUR FOUNDER



When looking back at 2023, I can think of one word that comes to mind – community. This year brought Above + Beyond Cancer so many new opportunities to connect with those who are touched by cancer and those who want to support our mission. Our team at Above + Beyond Cancer made incredible strides to build an even greater community within our organization.

The Hotel Program continues to be one of the most useful programs we provide, with an immediate impact to cancer patients and their families. This program provides hotel rooms to patients who are receiving cancer treatments in cities that are 50 miles or more from their home. As this program grows, I am grateful for the impact we make for those who may not otherwise have been able to receive treatment. What a great way to serve our survivors!

In June, we took a group of 31 cancer survivors and caregivers on a transformational journey to Africa. First, we provided humanitarian support to Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center, a center that provides cancer care to the underserved population of Tanzania, including childhood cancer survivors. It was an opportunity to give back to our expanded community halfway around the world. Following the medical mission, we climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa, topping out at 19,340 feet. The joy, accomplishments and friendships formed on this transformational journey were inspiring. Our journeys provide cancer survivors and caregivers the opportunity to challenge themselves, help others, and reach above and beyond what they might think is possible. I look forward to our 2024 journey - hiking the northern portion of the Appalachian Trail in early October. I hope that you consider joining us.

This past summer, eighteen brave local celebrities took the leap at our JUMP! Event. Eighteen presumably sane lowans willingly leaped out of an airplane (with parachute attached) to raise money for Above + Beyond Cancer! Our friends at Flynn Wright came up with the idea – we had no idea how successful it would be! The memories created, stories told, and lives touched created a rippling wave of impact for our organization. Over \$100,000 was raised as we engaged many new people to our organization. Do you want to JUMP! in the future? We can make that happen!

At the Hangar Party to celebrate our skydivers, I referenced the song "Live Like You Were Dying" by Tim McGraw. Each day is a gift and there are opportunities all around us to make a difference. Above + Beyond Cancer is doing just that – impacting lives, creating opportunities for survivors and caregivers and inspiring them to do something they've never done before – whether it's jumping from a plane, climbing a mountain, taking a yoga class, learning about nutrition, or reading a new book. There's an opportunity for everyone to find community, fellowship and friendship at Above + Beyond Cancer. We're honored to have a hand in creating that community. And, we're glad you are here, with us.

Please enjoy this annual report and take a minute to reflect on how 2023 inspired you to enrich your own life and build your own community. I hope the efforts in our programs and events inspire you to live each day like the gift it truly is. Thank you for all you have done to support us throughout the years. Cheers to 2024!

With great appreciation,

AT A GLANCE

CHECK OUT SOME STATISTICS ON WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED IN 2023!



75%

of Optimal Living participants report improved mental wellbeing 13,245

video views on Facebook Live *' and YouTube



420

people attended Celebrate! event in November - a new record!



ABOVE+BEYOND

CANCER

31

adventurers climbed Mount Kilimanjaro this summer



98%

of Optimal Living participants report improved cardiovascular health 913

nights of lodging provided through our Hotel Program







20 BOARD 23 MEMBERS



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KELSEY PARKER



BECKY POSPISAL



MARY VAN HEUKELOM

President

Operations Manager

Director of Mission Delivery









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EVENING OF INSPIRATION

Our transformational journey participants, family and friends gathered in April at the Des Moines Playhouse to watch a short film by Dylan Huey Photography about the journey to Wyoming and Montana! Guests enjoyed light bites and beverages and reminisced about their experience together. It was an incredible night of strength, courage and community!

Save the Vate - April 11. 2024

ELEVATE FESTIVAL

For the fourth year, 200+ participants joined us at Water Works Park on a hot day in August for a 5k walk, yoga and meditation, lead by our friends at Good Vibes Movement. Des Moines band, The June Bugs, entertained the participants who relaxed at the park after the event. Elevate Festival was an amazing way to relax, recharge and connect with others.

Save the Date for a NEW Event - June 21-22, 2024

JUMP! + HANGAR PARTY

Our inaugural event of 2023 was a smashing success! 18 brave local celebrities jumped from an airplane to raise over \$100,000 for Above + Beyond Cancer. In September, we celebrated their incredible efforts at the Hangar Party at Exec 1 Aviation with food, drinks, music from Damon Dotson Trio and a jump video. We are so thankful for the efforts of the jumpers!

Save the Date - September 5. 2024

CELEBRATE!

Our annual Celebrate! event exceeded over 400 people! We celebrated award winners Mary Van Heukelom and Iowa Cancer Consortium, heard about the amazing outcomes we achieved in 2023 and heard an inspiring keynote from cancer survivor Wendy Hammers. We auctioned off incredible experiences like a camping trip and dinner with Dr. Deming - great way to end the year!

Save the Date - November 14, 2024

AJOURNEY LIKE NONE OTHER

In June of 2023, thirty-one brave adventurers boarded a plane to Tanzania, Africa for an adventure of a lifetime - climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. A trip of this magnitude can change a person's life - and two of Above + Beyond Cancer's participants can testify to that. Becky Pospisal, our Director of Mission Delivery, sat down with Jamie O'Brien and Erin Sawhill, both cancer survivors, for insight and memories from this epic transformational journey.

What was hardest thing about going on this journey?

Jamie: The hardest part of the journey for me was being able to make my body keep going when it really wanted to call it quits. There were a few times I cried when I finally reached camp for the night. Some tears of joy because I made it and a few tears from pure exhaustion. When it got hard, I had to continually remind myself that I CAN do hard things. Mind over matter. Dr. Deming promised us some suffering on this pilgrimage, and he delivered.

Erin: Stepping out of my comfort zone during this challenging climb was a profound experience. I learned that true growth often lies just beyond our comfort barriers. Had I not embraced vulnerability and accepted the support that was offered, I would have missed out on the profound personal, spiritual and emotional growth that came from acknowledging my own limitations and, in turn, the incredible strength of those around me.

What did you learn about yourself?

Jamie: I learned how fortunate we are in America for the healthcare we have available to use, and also how dedicated the doctors are at KCMC in Tanzania to providing quality care for their patients without having a lot of resources. And, I learned I can go without a shower for an entire week and survive. Most of us were surprised that once we got going it didn't bother us as much as we had all expected.

Erin: My journey up Kilimanjaro offered the transformative power of embracing vulnerability. As I reflect on my climb, I vividly remember the outstretched hands that were always there for me. Whether it was a hand congratulating me for a job well done, a hand reaching out to prevent a potential fall, or a hand extended to help me take the next step, they were ever-present. The decision to accept those helping hands was mine to make.











How did this journey relate to your own cancer journey?

Jamie: Perseverance and gratefulness are two words that come to mind when I think about how the two experiences relate to one another. Both required me to push through the unknown and tackle challenging and sometimes painful situations while doing my best to remain positive, continue to laugh, and seek out the good from each experience. I am grateful that my body was strong in both situations, and that I was and still am surrounded by supportive family and friends.

Erin: Accepting help and support isn't a sign of weakness but one of empowerment. It was through vulnerability that I truly understood the strength in leaning on others, just as I had once needed others to lean on during my days as a pediatric cancer patient. Climbing Kilimanjaro forced me to confront my own limitations and recognize that asking for and accepting help is not a sign of inadequacy but a testament to human connection and resilience.

Do you have any favorite memories to share?

- Dr. Deming's daily prayers, stories, poems, and reflections
- Dr. Deming proclaiming, "It's a GREAT day to be alive!" throughout the day, especially in the morning.
- Eating meals together each day. It was always a time to share, reflect, and laugh. (And try to figure out what we were actually eating.)
- · Dancing and singing with the porters and guides.
- Conquering Barranco Wall. What an adventure that was!
- Morning "tent service" with coffee or tea. (The porters/cooks knew how tired and cold we were, and it was nice to have some warm coffee first thing in the morning.)
- Unbelievably beautiful starry skies at night
- · Seeing the sunrise as we summited.
- Being off the grid. No phone. Just nature and each other.
- Having time with my own thoughts to reflect
- Experiencing the moving prayer flag ceremony through song, sharing, and silence
- Visiting KCMC and singing and dancing with the children receiving cancer treatment

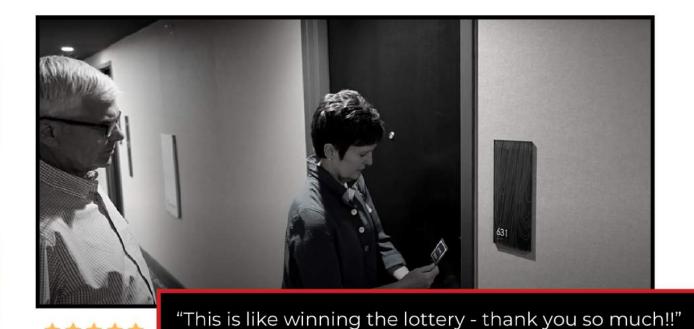
Jamie is a cancer survivor. When she's not working as an educator, she enjoys spending time with her husband and two adult sons. She loves trying new restaurants, taking her dogs on adventures and skiing. She currently resides in Des Moines, Iowa.

Erin Sawhill is a pediatric cancer survivor. When not busy as a licensed mental health professional and business owner, she enjoys spending time with her husband and daughter. She loves running and discovering new places in her city. She currently resides in Ankeny, lowa.



Above + Beyond Cancer's Hotel Program provides accessibility and the likelihood patients can complete treatment, even when they may be hours away from their treatment center. Our program has exploded in 2023, providing more hotel rooms than ever and the program continues to grow each year.

We are grateful to those who believe in our mission of the hotel program and touch the lives of survivors during their journeys. Our hotel partners, individual philanthropists, grantors, cancer centers and nurse navigators keep this program alive, and we are grateful for their efforts and contributions.





913 NIGHTS OF LODGING PROVIDED BY THE HOTEL PROGRAM IN 2023

1,750 NIGHTS PROVIDED SINCE THE HOTEL PROGRAM STARTED IN 2021



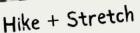
FROM ANOTHER RECIPIENT OF THE HOTEL PROGRAM...

"Thank you so very very much!
I am so speechless. We are so grateful for this help and to be able to put this off our plate.
Thank you for all you do for families like ours."

"I am grateful for the community who has welcomed me and the friendships I have gained. Having cancer isn't as lonely.

I love it when I'm reminded in class what exercises help with recovery and prevention and I have incorporated these exercises into my daily life."







From an instructor...

"Doing reiki brings me such joy!! It always puts into perspective just how blessed I am! It's an honor to be able to hold space for such kind people searching for healing!"





Our programs are free to survivors + caregivers thanks to donors like you and our community partners that cover the cost for scholarships from MercyOne Health & Fitness Center, YMCA and Trail Point!



"Above + Beyond is the best thing that has happened to me in the last year and a half. It gives me purpose every day, helps me connect with others and allows me to move my body and strengthen myself in ways I didn't think I could. I've meant so many people that are just gifts to me. Above + Beyond Cancer has changed my life after cancer."

Lynn Sandoval

Yoga4Cancer, Urban Pole Walking, and Recovery + Beyond





A SURVIVOR + A CAREGIVER

BY FRED NELSON

An inspiring perspective about navigating both roles



I first became involved with Above + Beyond Mary Van Heukelom Cancer when contacted the Des Moines Meditation Group in 2015 where I was a meditation leader. That same spring, I was scheduled for prostate cancer surgery late in April. My wife, Sandie's loving care and my meditation practice were helpful in dealing with my cancer diagnosis and recovery from surgery — and I started volunteering, teaching and leading meditation for the new Above + Beyond Cancer meditation program. In 2018, I went on the transformational journey to Mt. Kailash in Tibet. This was a very inspirational experience! Since retiring in 2021, I'm very involved in the Optimal Living programs including weekly hiking + yoga, spin class, book club, bike rides, and the pilgrimage to climb Kilimanjaro in Africa this past summer.

Above and Beyond Cancer, the community of those on the cancer journey, and Above + Beyond Cancer's programs and events have been important support for me as someone with cancer and as caregiver — for my wellbeing. There is an unspoken bond between others dealing with cancer -- a bond that is difficult to articulate but immeasurably helpful and inspiring. For me the Mt. Kailash journey was a powerful awareness experience of this community of support in facing challenges as cancer patient and caregiver. I flew a prayer flag for my father, who died in 1987, and was overcome thinking about my mother as his caregiver. Sandie and I are monitoring for recurrence of cancer with no current treatment needed. This year, Sandie encouraged me to apply to go on the Kilimanjaro journey.

Kilimanjaro was an incredibly inspiring adventure with a wonderful supportive group of people! The day before we summitted, we flew prayer flags to honor, support, and remember individuals and families affected by cancer. I brought several prayer flags including one that acknowledges my dear wife, Sandie, and me as we support each other on our continuing life journey.

The climbing of Kilimanjaro is a great challenge (it's a big mountain with difficult trails). For me it is a metaphor for the challenges of life — dealing with cancer — the importance of being supported when needed and being supporter for others during their challenges. We are all hikers in life — sometimes needing a hand to help me up the trail and and sometimes being the one with the helping hand. I tell people that Kilimanjaro was a journey for both Sandie and me. In some ways, the journey was for everyone who is touched by cancer.

Fred and Sandie live in Des Moines. In addition to participation with numerous Above + Beyond Cancer activities and events, Fred assists as a volunteer. Sandie and Fred enjoy road trips to Arizona where son, daughter-in-law, grandchildren and other family reside.











ORANGE SCENTED CALIFLOWER RICE

Pilaf:

1 small cauliflower, trimmed and cut into florets

1 T olive oil

1 shallot minced

2 scallions finely sliced

Sea salt and freshly ground pepper

1/4 c toasted slivered almonds

1/4 c toasted and chopped pistachios

1/4 c dried currants or cherries

1/4 c pomegranate arils

1/3 c chopped fresh parsley

1/3 c chopped cilantro

1/4 c fresh mint leaves

1 1/2 tsp orange zest

Dressing:

1 T orange zest

3 T fresh squeezed orange juice

1 T olive oil extra virgin

1 Trice wine vinegar

1 teaspoon minced ginger

1/2 tsp sriracha or other hot chili sauce

Pinch of red pepper flakes

Place all dressing ingredients into a mason jar and shake until emulsified. Set aside. Make the pilaf. Working in several batches, place the cauliflower in a food processor and pulse until it resembles rice. This should yield 4 cups.

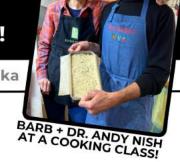
Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the shallot and cook, stirring, for 6 minutes or until soft. Add the cauliflower rice, scallions, a generous pinch of salt and a few grinds of pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, for 2-3 minutes more until the cauliflower has just softened. DO NOT OVERCOOK.

Remove the skillet from the heat and let it cool slightly. Transfer to a large bowl and toss with 3/4s of the dressing, almonds, pistachios, cilantro, mint, and orange zest. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Transfer to a platter, drizzle with the remaining dressing, and serve with the orange wedges.

Try out this recipe from our Cooking + Nutrition class hosted by our partners at the Kitchen Collage!

ATK's Plant Based Cooking Cookbook - Contributed by Teresa Adams-Tomka





Support Above + Beyond Concer

Donors like YOU keep our programs free to cancer survivors + caregivers year round!
Consider making a donation or joining our Monthly Giving Club by scanning the QR code with your smartphone camera.

You can also visit our website: aboveandbeyondcancer.org/donate

A FAREWELL FROM OUR PRESIDENT

When I first arrived as Executive Director, Above + Beyond Cancer was just seven years old and I was the first full-time employee. The first event I helped with was the old Adventure Tri – a race where partners stayed together as they canoed, biked, and ran. The event was a blast, but ran into a few challenges. For the canoe portion of the race, we were to use the Racoon River in Water Works Park, however, it was flooding over its banks, so we worked with Michael Zimmerman at RipRoar and moved the race to Jester Park. The participants canoed around a small lake, ran down trails, and biked through the park roads, which was made a bit more challenging when it started to snow - sideways! From that event Above + Beyond Cancer netted \$4,214. There were 186 participants who were kind, understanding, and effervescent through the location change and even the sideways snow! The other impressive thing was the sponsors for that event. They too were kind, understanding, and happy to help this great organization.

By contrast, the final event I helped with was November's Celebrate! Event, which was a lovely evening (no snow) and had more than 400 people in attendance! At that event, Above + Beyond Cancer raised more than \$100,000! This event too featured survivors and caregivers who are truly amazing people as well as generous and highly committed



Chris Goodale

2019-2023 PRESIDENT ABOVE + BEYOND CANCER

donors and sponsors. In fact, three of the sponsors that supported that original Adventure Tri were also sponsors for the Celebrate! Event.

As I exit my role as President of Above + Beyond Cancer I am honored to have been a part of the growth that this organization has experienced over the 5 years I have served. This is due to the dedication of great staff members like Mary Van Heukelom, Kelsey Parker, and more recently Becky Pospisal. The Board of Directors has also worked diligently over that time period to professionalize our efforts, with special thanks to Greg Shireman, Chuck Cutler, and Becky Moomey for serving as Board Chairs during my tenure. One last thanks goes to Dr. Dick Deming, for without Dick's vision for how cancer survivors and caregivers could benefit by movement, adventure, and comradery, this organization would never have become this great! The future is very bright for Above + Beyond Cancer and I look forward to attending future events and activities – see you all then!



20 DONORS

Thank you to our generous 2023 donors!

All gifts made to Above + Beyond Cancer are appreciated. We have made every effort to ensure accuracy of this list. We apologize for any misspellings, inaccuracies or missing information. We welcome feedback and corrections to kelsey@aboveandbeyondcancer.org.

FOUNDER'S LEVEL PARTNER \$20,000+

American Cancer Society
Richard L. Deming, MD
Exline Family Donor Fund
Iowa Cancer Consortium
Iowa Oncology Society
MercyOne Central Iowa
Mission Cancer + Blood
Shah Family Charitable Fund



DIRECTOR'S LEVEL PARTNER \$10,000 - \$19,999

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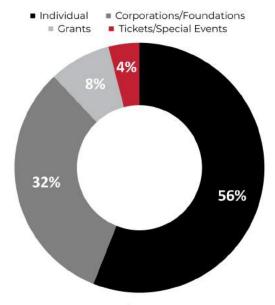
Morgan Newman

Rob and Kelly Real Estate LLC

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Tito's Handmade Vodka

2023 BY THE NUMBERS



TOTAL: \$1,036,186

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\$250-\$499

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