

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



ABOVE+BEYOND
CANCER

FOUNDER'S LETTER



Adversity leads to personal growth. That's an enduring lesson that permeates my understanding of the way of the world. You don't learn much about yourself when everything is going perfectly well. It's when things are difficult that we find the strength that already exists deep within ourselves. After 2020, I know that this lesson also applies to organizations as well individuals. The COVID pandemic has been a source of adversity and a source of innovation for Above + Beyond Cancer. I am so proud of the way that the Above + Beyond Cancer team has responded to the challenges of 2020.

In April 2020 our book, *Above and Beyond Cancer* was published by Drake Community Press. This culminated a 2-year collaborative project with Drake University students and faculty. The collaboration included undergraduate courses that explored social determinants of health, narrative medicine, philosophy of hope and optimism, creative non-fiction, and art as therapy. Senator Tom Harkin wrote in his forward to our book, "You will be convinced, as I have become convinced through the years that there is 'something else' that contributes to the healing of patients and the cures brought by modern technology. That 'something else' is what this book is about."

All proceeds from the sale of the book benefit Above + Beyond Cancer and allows us to develop and deliver programs for cancer patients and their families.

In response to the increased needs of patients undergoing cancer treatment, Above + Beyond Cancer, with the generous support of a grant from the Iowa Cancer Consortium, developed a program in 2020 to provide out-of-town patients undergoing cancer treatment free lodging at area hotels during their weeks of treatment. We recognized the need, we evaluated possible solutions, and we quickly implemented a program to provide this vital service. We look forward to expanding this service in 2021.

As social distancing became a reality in all of our lives, in 2020 we found new ways of providing important services to cancer patients and family members safely. We continued to provide in-person physical activity and supportive services, but we also, like the rest of world, became adept at shifting some of our programs to the virtual realm. In collaboration with MercyOne Cancer Center and with support from the Iowa Cancer Consortium, we transitioned our weekly Cancer Education Series into a Zoom Podcast. Patients and family members can join us in real-time every Wednesday evening from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. for the educational offering or they can view it at their convenience on our website or YouTube channel.

I hope that you enjoy this annual report. You will learn more about our programs and how we have impacted the community in 2020. You will also learn how we intend to continue to elevate the lives of those touched by cancer in 2021.

None of us is as good as all of us. Thank you for all you have done to support us throughout the years. With great appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dick".

DR. RICHARD DEMING

Above + Beyond Cancer
Founder



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

I distinctly remember the first meeting I attended via Zoom, it was in early 2019, and it seemed like an efficient and kind of a cool way to meet with people who were halfway across the state. Little did I know that in March of 2020, nearly every meeting I would attend for the remainder of the year would require a Zoom connection. It was an uphill battle, but I learned how to navigate Zoom as quickly as possible, then to share documents/slides and allow others to share as well. Then we decided to use Zoom Webinar for our Evening of Inspiration as well as our Cancer Education Series each Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. and the learning curve ramped-up again. It was clear that Zoom was now going to be part of our Above + Beyond Cancer DNA.

One undeniable benefit is that Zoom has allowed us to have nearly 100 percent attendance for our Board meetings during the pandemic. We tackled plans on how best to move forward and that was immeasurably important. While the conversations were serious and meaningful, these evening meetings also allowed Board members to be in their homes and relax a bit. I even recall seeing a periodic sip of wine and even a margarita on a patio.

On the subject of integration of technology – I want to specifically mention our Program Director Mary Van Heukelom who created our YouTube channel and we began posting videos for Total Training, Yoga and Meditation.

Once we started holding each Wednesday's Cancer Education Series on Zoom and recording each session, those videos were posted on our YouTube channel as well. We now have an ever-growing library of resources for education, advocacy and exercise, referenced by more than 100 viewers each week.

We have all added new skills to our personal and professional lives and we can efficiently use the cutting-edge technology to connect to one another. However, what rings truest to me during these pandemic times is that the people connected to Above + Beyond Cancer are amazing. From the Board members, to the willing program participants, to the really impressive staff – we have all risen to the top and dealt with all of the many challenges that have come our way. I guess I should expect nothing else from this group, considering nearly all of us have experienced cancer at some level and have come through the other side.

Chris

CHRISTOPHER GOODALE

*Above + Beyond Cancer
Executive Director*



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OPTIMAL LIVING PROGRAMS

"Thank you Above + Beyond Cancer! I would not be as healthy as I am today without you."

- 5 YEAR CANCER SURVIVOR

Above+ Beyond Cancer was founded on courage, to think out of the box, and to keep trying. We believe in the ability to grow with our adversities. Since last March, Above + Beyond Cancer Programs have adjusted appropriately.

Weekly we have been offering Total Training, Healing Yoga, Meditation, and the Cancer Education Series through mediums such as Facebook live, Zoom, and YouTube. Geography and schedule are no longer an obstacle as anyone may access these free classes. Each month provides survivors with the opportunities to participate virtually in our Book Club, Watch + Talk Club, as well as our Nutrition + Cooking Classes.

In addition to these on-line offerings, our commitment to promoting activity outdoors remains strong. Each Tuesday we meet at Greenwood Pond to hike in the woods, and practice a few yoga poses by the water. On Wednesdays we Urban Pole Walk in Water Works Park. This is a new exercise that offers great benefits like improving strength, posture, and heart health. Outside activity is essential to our physical, mental and spiritual well being and staying connected with one another and nature.

A survivor may receive a referral from their physician and enroll in the Next Steps Program at MercyOne Health & Fitness in Clive.

This program is scholarshiped by Above + Beyond Cancer and includes assessments as well as a tailored fitness program for survivors. This fall we aim to return to in-person programming in partnership with the metro area YMCA's, as they have agreed to continue offering 12-week scholarships for cancer survivors.

"It has been five years since my breast cancer diagnosis. I have participated in the virtual exercise class, the hikes, and the pole walking. In different ways, these programs have helped me live my best life. The virtual exercise class on Mondays and Fridays helps with my cardio, weights, and strength training goals, while the Tuesday early morning hikes get me outside to enjoy a beautiful wooded setting while connecting with others - a perfect way to start the day. Thank you Above + Beyond Cancer! "

-CANCER SURVIVOR MARY KACERE

Lastly, we offer Wellness Coaching that includes goal setting and a program that can be suitable for home or at a fitness facility. We meet survivors at their comfort level whether it's virtual, outdoors, or inside with a mask and social distancing.

Survivors and caregivers can still lean into us. We are still delivering hope, gratitude, and joy. We are still offering quality programs with mission-driven instructors. Join us!



2020 EVENTS

WORLD CANCER DAY HIKE- JANUARY

This annual walk through at Greenwood Park in Des Moines was held in early February to recognize World Cancer Day. The group of more than 100 cancer survivors and caregivers hiked about 5 miles, on a beautiful warm winter day!

FUR RIDE- FEBRUARY

This annual ride from Orilla to the East Village started in 2019, and grew rapidly in 2020. While only a few handfuls of riders braved the cold on the inaugural ride, more than 45 riders took to the streets to 1717 Brewing in the East Village. Lunch was served and live music from Guilty Pleasure inspired some excellent dancing. There was even an auction for Dr. Deming's faux fur coat!

EVENING OF INSPIRATION- MAY

Originally scheduled to be held at Franklin Junior High on April 21. Due to the pandemic, the Evening of Inspiration took place virtually via Zoom on Saturday, May 9. This was the kick-off for the *Above and Beyond Cancer* book and featured guest host Sonya Heitshusen, Drake Senior Madelyn Bjork and musician Charlie Lustman. Special thanks to Dylan Huey, who did a wonderful job with production and Kelsey Parker, who ran the "backroom" to help make the event a success.

NATIONAL CANCER SURVIVOR DAY BIKE RIDE- JUNE

To honor National Cancer Survivor Day we planned a bike ride from Slater to Woodward on the High Trestle Trail. The 2020 event was cancelled due to COVID-19. We already have plans in place for 2021!

ELEVATE FESTIVAL- OCTOBER

WOW, what a day! With a temperature of 80 degrees and ample sunshine, we welcomed 246 registrants to Water Works Park in what can only be described as a hugely successful event for Above + Beyond Cancer! Music from The Sheet was awesome, the Yoga led by Ben "Good Vibes" Spellman was inspiring, the 5K was exhilarating and the Meditation with Hannah Rush was calming. A huge thank you goes out to Michael Zimmerman and Riproar, as well as all of the volunteers that made the event run so smoothly. This event would not be possible without our loyal sponsors, who came through this year in a special manner. On her participant's survey one woman said, "as I walked to the parking lot after the event I was humming Reggae tunes, feeling energized and very safe."

2020 EVENTS

CELEBRATE LUNCHEON

Due to the pandemic restrictions, we were not able to hold this special annual event in person in the fall, so we created a Celebrate! Video, which can be viewed by using the following link: <https://youtu.be/OnMVodPFw1w>. We were very thankful that John and Stefanie Stenberg were so generous to allow us to record the video in their beautiful showroom at Pigott. We were honored to be able to continue our tradition of recognizing people and organizations that are doing amazing things in the cancer world with the Above + Beyond Cancer Award. This year recognized Morgan Newman, Molly Zaver and Can Do Cancer. Morgan is a metastatic cervical cancer survivor, who continues to advocate tirelessly for cancer awareness with organizations such as the Iowa - American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Bras for the Cause - Madison County, the Iowa Cancer Consortium, Iowa Department of Public Health, and Des Moines University. She is an outstanding example of how a cancer diagnosis can give us a new path in life that might just provide us with a very powerful way to positively affect the lives of others. Breast cancer survivor Molly Zaver started Can Do Cancer, back in April 2012, with the simple, yet profound idea to provide practical information and much needed services to breast cancer patients in an easy, well-coordinated manner.

ADDITIONAL EVENTS

- **Snow Shoes and Yoga at Jester Park** - 22 cancer survivors and caregivers took to the trails at Jester Park and learned the deep joy that can come from snow shoeing through the winter woods. Yoga at the Jester Park Outdoor Recreation & Wellness Center was an invigorating way to cap off the evening!
- **Paddle + Pose** - held at Easter Lake, this annual activity featured kayaking, canoeing and stand-up paddle boarding. Yoga, which was held on dry land, was also part of this event, which was enjoyed by 20 cancer survivors and caregivers
- **Bike + Camp** - planned for Aug. 8 - 9, this event was designed to have people ride the metro bike trails from Des Moines to Saylorville Lake. Due to a 100+ degree heat index this event was modified to a 25 mile Saturday morning ride from Bike World in West Des Moines to the East Village for brunch, with 13 survivors and caregivers attending.
- **Yellow River + Effigy Mounds Adventure Weekend** - was held Sept. 18 - 20. The group of 23 caregivers and cancer survivors enjoyed camping and hiking in the fall beauty of the Yellow River State Forest in northeast Iowa. On Sunday the group travelling the 15 miles to Effigy Mounds and learned about these fascinating, ancient Native American spiritual ground.

TRANSFORMATIONAL JOURNEYS

The Africa Journey to do medical mission work in Nairobi, Kenya, then climb Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, was planned for mid-June. The team was made-up of 36 total trekkers from states across the nation. Training started at the Wellmark YMCA in February, but by mid-March the Journey needed to be postponed due to the pandemic. With the pandemic travel restrictions remaining in place in 2021, there are hopes to head to Africa in 2022.



2020 ACTIVITIES



CYCLING CLUB

Is now in its fourth year of existence. The start was delayed this year due to COVID-19, with the first ride on June 2. These happen every Tuesday starting at 5:30 p.m., usually from the shelter at Water Works Park and riding the Great Western Trail to the Cumming Tap, although numerous Metro Trails have been used this summer. The weekly groups range from 10-25.

HOTEL PROGRAM

Above + Beyond Cancer began implementing a Hotel Partnership Program in late 2020. This effort had been coordinated by the American Cancer Society, which needed to discontinue the program from their offerings due to the COVID-19 economic slowdown. The Above + Beyond Cancer Hotel Program partners with local hotels to provide complimentary nights of lodging to out-of-town cancer patients, and their caregivers, when they must travel away from home for treatment.

"Today was my last radiation treatment, and Above + Beyond Cancer made this an amazing experience. This sickness is emotional also, so the help the organization provided me -with the comfortable hotel close to the hospital, an Uber gift card, gas cards and always taking care what I needed was a BIG BLESSING. This help and support in this hard time of my life has helped me not only physically but also emotionally."

- MARCELA, CANCER SURVIVOR

Many patients are already paying very high medical bills so supporting them with as needed, as-available complimentary lodging is one way to help them through this challenging time. Above + Beyond Cancer and our hotel partners were thrilled to offer more than 60 nights of lodging to cancer patients and their caregivers in the last quarter of 2020. We would like to thank our hotel partners for their generous support of this program:

- Best Western Plus Clive
- Hilton Downtown Des Moines
- Sheraton West Des Moines



PLANNED GIVING

Kent Zimmerman has Above + Beyond Cancer in his estate plans because he believes it is “an outstanding community resource that is vital to helping cancer patients and their families.”

Kent’s cancer story started in 2006, when his late wife Anne was diagnosed with cancer and Dr. Richard Deming became her Radiology Oncologist. Five years after Anne’s death, in 2012, Kent joined Above + Beyond Cancer’s third international journey to the third highest mountain in the Himalayas. As a caregiver, he would be one of the two oldest trekkers.

On returning, Kent joined the Above + Beyond Cancer Board. Kent contributed ongoing analysis of trends in the cancer community and of what was needed to build financial stability. After a couple years, Kent took on the role of interim executive director, with a goal of implementing plans and programs to enhance sustainability of the fledgling non-profit.

Kent remained an active member of the Above + Beyond Cancer leadership until his retirement from the Board at the end of 2018. In his words,

“Above + Beyond Cancer became very important to me in its support of the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of cancer patients and their families. In addition, Above + Beyond Cancer has become an important and valuable community health resource. And that in a nutshell is why Above + Beyond Cancer is in my will.”

To learn more about including Above + Beyond Cancer in your estate plans please visit our website at aboveandbeyondcancer.org/estate-gift/, or contact Executive Director Chris Goodale (515-770-1426 or chris@aboveandbeyondcancer.org).

We would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you, or your financial advisors, may have about making a planned gift to Above + Beyond Cancer.



THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 DONORS

All gifts made to Above + Beyond Cancer are appreciated. We have made every effort to insure that this list is accurate. We apologize for any misspellings or inaccurate information and would welcome hearing your feedback at chris@aboveandbeyondcancer.org

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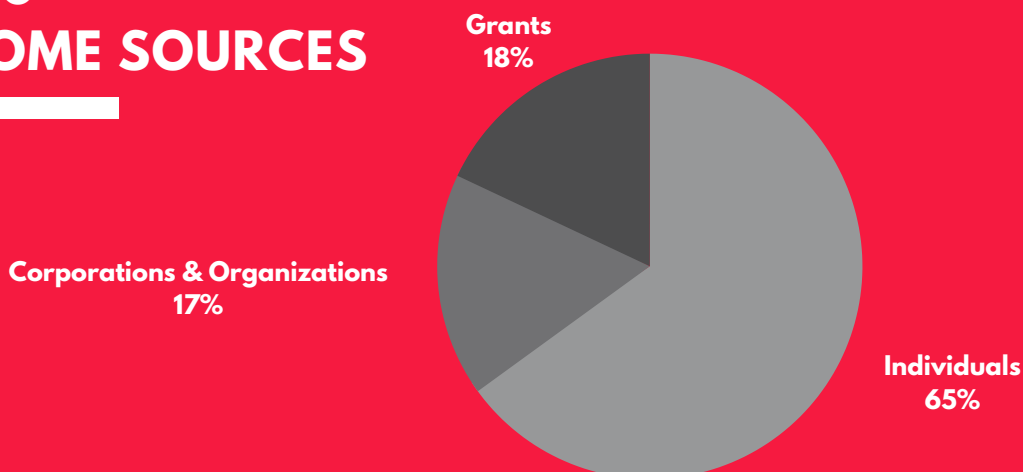
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One of the most humbling and heartwarming manners in which gifts come to Above + Beyond Cancer is when donors make a special point to mention their friends and loved ones upon making a gift to our organization. It is a meaningful way to remember those who are no longer on this earth and those whom we desire to honor.

IN 2020 GIFTS WERE MADE TO ABOVE + BEYOND CANCER IN MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

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Bobby Moore
Madonna Nichols
Gail Orcutt
Karen Parman
Matt Randol

Donna Redwing
Steve Roberts
Jill Shireman
Lauren Kernan Smith
Sandra J Smith
Mary Sparks
Nancy Strother
Tom Urban
Paul Voda
Sue Tew Warming
Eva Wells
Kathy Wennihan

IN 2020 GIFTS WERE MADE TO ABOVE + BEYOND CANCER IN HONOR OF THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

Jane Allen
Justin Anderson
Deb Baldus
Tiffany Berkenes
Kamla Birusingh
National Brain Tumor Awareness Month
Betty Brannaman
Casey Conner
Steve Courtney
Steven Danna
Nathaniel Day
Lauren Delpesce
Dr. Dick Deming
Erin Dennis
Carol Duffy
Allison Hingst Elo
Tony Fahrenkrog

Chris Goodale
Gail Goren
Richard Graves
John Heinrichs
DeAnne Jones
Jane, Kim, Mel and Katie
Perry & Priscilla Larson
Patrick McCaffery
Ellen Nelson
Seth Phillips
Shari Randol
Dick Schweitzer
Noah Schweitzer
Dr. Robert Shreck
David Stevens
Shelley Tucker
Kent Zimmerman

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[ABOVEANDBEYONDCANCER.ORG](https://www.aboveandbeyondcancer.org)