



Today we'd like to introduce you to Peg Ford.

So, before we jump into specific questions about the business, why don't you give us some details about you and your story.

Ovarian Cancer is the fifth leading cause of cancer-related deaths among women in the United States because the majority of women are diagnosed at a late stage after cancer has metastasized. Five-year overall survival is dismal at 45%, however, if the cancer is diagnosed at an early stage, survival rates greatly improve to over 92%. Realizing how lucky my cancer was diagnosed at early stage and discovering how little awareness was and is known about this deadly disease, spurred me to take action to spread awareness and get early detection for all women!

Ovarian Cancer Alliance of San Diego (OCAofSD) www.ocaofsd.org was founded by myself and Kathy Hagan, who lost her mother to ovarian cancer, to support my initial advocacy efforts.

Through education and research, I pursued opportunities and training to become a Cancer Research Advocate, and as President/Co-Founder of OCAofSD, currently serving as a member of the FDA Patient Advocate Program and NCI Ovarian Cancer Task Force. In addition, I was recently appointed to serve as a member of American Society of Clinical Oncology's (ASCO) Research Community Forum Council and to be part of the Core Planning Team for the upcoming 2019 meeting "Definition and Application of Molecular and Clinical Characterization for Patient Treatment."

Also, locally, I am a member of the Community Advisory Boards of UCSD Altman Clinical & Translational Research Institute (ACTRI) and Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute Cancer Center. And proud to have accepted Soroptimist International of Coronado's 2016 Legend Award!

I am ardently committed to my vision of patient advocates as the bridge between the patient community and the scientific/medical world, working hand-in-hand to impact changes to better serve both communities. I serve as a committee, advisory, editorial and peer review member on numerous panels and meetings to address all medical issues affecting evidence-based research on local, state, national and international levels.

Has it been a smooth road?

I ended up placing the “cart before the horse” in my earlier efforts as my focus was to get the word out about this deadly disease in our community. Fortunately, was able to recruit several ovarian cancer survivors to become part of our programs but it was not until 2013 when it became very clear of the need to start a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization to support our efforts as we were expanding as well as our expenses at such a great rate! Up until this point, Kathy Hagan and her husband and myself were privately covering our expenses which were becoming unsustainable.

In 2014 OCAofSD became a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and in 2015 we were awarded our first grant from Soroptimist International of Coronado “Best of Women Grant!) The following year, I organized the first 1K/5K Walk for ovarian cancer awareness in San Diego County (Teal Steps 1K/5K) where we have over 400 participants and around 100 volunteers successfully raising over \$25,000 to support our programs and efforts!

Last year, 2nd Annual Teal Steps 1K/5K Walk, where we had more than 800 participants raising \$47,500!!! This year the 3rd Annual Teal Steps will be on Sunday, September 23, 2018, at Tidelands Park, Coronado.

Click the following link to register, <https://bit.ly/2l9cRy0>. We are also looking for Sponsorship Partners and if interested, please contact me at ocaofsd@gmail.com. One of our challenges is to recruit venues for our community outreach HEAR Program. Most opportunities come from referrals of individuals who attended one of our presentations and getting the word out to reach other civic groups and organizations. This is a complimentary program for any group or organization, church, etc.

As the pace of our growth continues, our Board Members are hard-working committed individuals, but the struggle now is to locate additional board members as well as financially hire staff support for every day operational needs. In addition, we are always in need of gynecologic cancer survivors to participate in our community outreach programs for both medical and civic groups and the general public. The dedication of our survivors over the years is humbling and beyond my wildest expectations, however, the need to help save more women’s lives continues to be the major and most important challenge.

So let’s switch gears a bit and go into the Ovarian Cancer Alliance of San Diego story. Tell us more about the business.

As there is no screening test for the early detection of ovarian cancer, Ovarian Cancer Alliance of San Diego’s (OCAofSD) mission is to advancing cancer research, education of the medical community for early diagnosis, improving the quality of care for patients, and expanding the community gynecologic cancer

awareness outreach program to civic groups, organizations and the general public throughout the San Diego County.

I implemented the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation Alliance's (OCRFA) "Survivors Teaching Students(r) (STS)" Program at UCSD School of Medicine for Third Year Medical Students in December 2008 and we have started our tenth consecutive school year of presentations where once every six weeks on the students OB/GYN Rotation, a trained team of ovarian cancer survivors go right into the classroom to share their personal stories of how they were diagnosed, what happened, and where they are now.

The goal is to increase the students' awareness of the symptoms and risk factors for the early detection of ovarian cancer. I have further expanded the program to currently eleven schools of nursing throughout San Diego County and two other medical schools as well as residency programs.

In 2013, we launched an innovative program (HEAR: If I Only Knew Then, What I Know Now) to inspire women to be aware of their bodies and be their own advocates to get care in a timely fashion which is but one example how patients are becoming a vital part of medical treatments and partnering in such a beneficial way that can change the healthcare world!

In addition, I collaborated with the esteemed Gynecologic Oncologist, Dr. Afshin Bahador, in his presentations to practicing medical doctors and health care providers in six campuses of major hospitals (Scripps, Sharp) in San Diego County reaching 387 practicing physicians!

From the first STS presentation to 16 third-year medical school students at UCSD, through 2017, we have presented to over 10,938 physicians, healthcare providers, medical and nursing students as well as making presentations to over 78 different community groups and organizations!!

How do you think the industry will change over the next decade?

Unfortunately, until there is a screening test for the early detection of ovarian cancer, we have to rely on all our healthcare providers to think of it first to get women into care on a timely basis. As indicated, early detection can prevent the terrible consequences of late diagnosis which is much too common. Also, awareness to the general public to empower women and their families to know the symptoms and risk factors can save more women's lives.

I am hopeful as research is advancing at such an incredible rate with science down to the DNA, that personalized targeted therapies will have great results for the individual patient leading to ovarian cancer becoming a chronic disease not the death sentence far too many women face today. As more than 75% face recurrences, it is vitally important women get timely care to make a difference.

Contact Info:

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*Save
the
date*



Sept
23rd
2018



Tidelands Park - Coronado, CA | www.ocaofsd.org

OCAofSD Volunteer Appreciation Party 6-9-18



Redundant and dangerous health
research - how can you support
better research practice?

KRONSTAD, 8. NOVEMBER 2016

Peg Ford



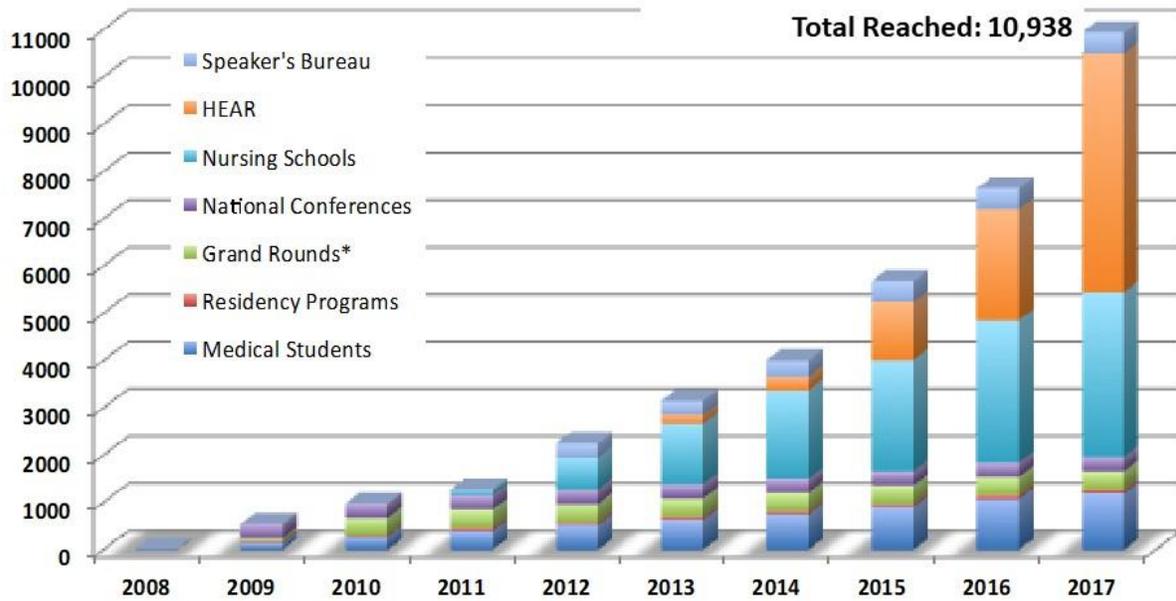
HØGSKOLEN
I BERGEN

BERGEN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE



The Evidence-Based Research Network

Cumulative Number of All OCASD Attendees





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