

## This is My Story...Betsy



**Diagnosis:** In treatment for Metastatic Breast Cancer, Stage 4 diagnosed 2007, 2013, 2022, 2023.

In 2007, at age 57, I was diagnosed with Lobular Breast Cancer. I had several surgeries, including a bilateral mastectomy. Stage 2a. I had 8 rounds of dense dose chemotherapy. My Oncologist, Dr. Luis Rodriguez from the START Center, advised me after many months of treatment, that he had given me every chemical and treatment available to treat me for my breast cancer. He said, "Betsy, I encourage you to join the DIVA program and to participate in its support groups, diet and nutritional programs and exercise classes, to keep you strong and healthy. Now, it's up to you!" And he handed me a DIVA pamphlet. I was one of the original DIVAs, joining in March, 2008.

I retired from a local Telecommunications Corporation in 2008 and had lots of time to learn how to survive and thrive through ThriveWell. In my breast cancer journey, I studied and became a Certified Prosthetic Fitter. For three years, I sold beautiful mastectomy products, bras, and wigs to other women with breast cancer. It was the best job I ever had! I found it's in giving that you receive. I loved helping other women in their breast cancer journeys.

In 2013, my breast cancer came back. I stopped working and had to go through more harsh chemo treatments and radiation. I lost my hair for the second time. It was a very difficult time in my life as I accepted that my disease was not curable. But it was treatable and I would be in treatment for the rest of my life. My treatments worked 100% with no adverse side effects. I think I was able to tolerate the second round of treatments because I was in great physical and emotional health, thanks to the DIVA exercise and nutritional programs.

In 2022, my breast cancer returned for a third time, even though I had remained in continuous treatment receiving infusions every three weeks! My daughters and I were devastated! I was overwhelmed. But Dr. Rodriguez responded with additional meds and suggested that I prepare for more surgery.

In March of 2023, I had more breast surgery, but the cancer remained. I was overwhelmed with sadness! So, I had more surgery in April of 2023, this time very drastic breast surgery, and removed my implants and underwent more radiation therapy.

Today, at age 74, I must still remain in treatment, but I am cancer free. Because of my active participation in ThriveWell Cancer Foundation's programs, I healed quickly. I am strong, healthy, and very happy.