

CYNDI ASHMUN - 2005 HONORARY SURVIVOR CHAIR

Ashmun was first diagnosed with breast cancer 22 years ago at the age of 28. She developed new cases of breast cancer at the ages of 35 and 41. She was treated first with a lumpectomy and 35 radiation treatments; secondly with a partial mastectomy and 35 radiation treatments; and lastly with a radical mastectomy and Tamoxifen.

"The first time I was naive. The second time I was shocked. The third time I was just mad," she said. Ashmun is an advocate for self-exams. After a mammogram revealing no problems, she revisited her health care provider to follow-up on a lump that she found.

"I went to see the doctor and I was sent into see a surgeon. Everyone was shocked it was malignant. Your best defense is to know your own body, and not solely rely on a mammogram," she stressed.

Ashmun says she triumphed over breast cancer three times with the support of her husband, two daughters, and physicians.

"It has been a very long journey, but I have not walked this path alone. I remember all of the people that I've met and the friendships that I've made."

Ashmun, now age 50, has had side effects from her radiation treatments, including a clogged artery and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

However, she hopes that her story of survival helps others realize that there is life beyond cancer.

"I want to share the positives and hope with someone else so their journey isn't as frightening."

"The survivors are there as a beacon of hope for anyone else who may walk in their footsteps."

For her dedicated involvement with the Affiliate and her own heroic story of survivorship, Ashmun is the Komen Quad Cities Race for the Cure® 2005 Honorary Survivor Chair. She encourages every Quad Citian to do their part to fight breast cancer.