

African-American women in the fight against Breast Cancer

Written by

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Dallas, TX - Breast cancer is the most common cancer among African American women and the second most common cause of cancer death, exceeded only by lung cancer. More than 6,000 African American women are expected to die from the disease in 2009 alone.

These startling realities drive Alexine Clement Jackson, the first African American female board chair of Susan G. Komen for the CureR. "I am a 23-year survivor of breast cancer. I know early detection saved my life. Being a leader in the breast cancer movement empowers me to empower others."

A tireless volunteer, Jackson also served a five-year term as national president of the YWCA. She currently serves on the board of the Intercultural Cancer Council, the Cancer Research Foundation of America and the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, among others. In addition to chairing the Komen for the Cure board, Jackson also co-chairs the Circle of Promise, a program designed to mobilize, motivate and empower African American women to become active in public policy efforts.

Jackson is working to bring attention to the fight against breast cancer and encourage everyone to get involved in this global movement during October, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

"Education and awareness are our greatest weapons against the myths, fears and challenges surrounding breast cancer," Jackson said. "For our own sakes and for the future of our families, we must take charge of our health."

Komen hopes Jackson's leadership and presence will help recruit ambassadors for the Circle of Promise. Actress and breast cancer survivor, Diahann Carroll has become the latest national ambassador for Circle of Promise. To learn more about becoming an ambassador, visit www.circleofpromise.org

Circle of Promise partner, TV One, has produced a documentary, titled "Breast Cancer Examined: An African-American Perspective" which airs on Sunday, October 11 on TV One at 8:00 p.m. ET with support from Luster Products.

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This first-of-its-kind documentary takes an in-depth look at breast cancer in the African American community. It features personal stories from Gabrielle Union and Rene' Syler, and survivors including Diahann Carroll, Richard Roundtree, Ebony Steele, Alaina Reed Hall and more. For more information visit www.circleofpromise.org

"We are very excited about building awareness during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and throughout the year. Working together, we will save lives and defeat breast cancer," said Jackson.

Susan G. Komen for the Cure's Circle of Promise campaign is an unprecedented campaign to engage women of color to help end breast cancer forever. The campaign educates women on empowering themselves and other women to take actions that will save lives. The Circle of Promise is supported by proud partners General Mills and American Airlines who are committed to having a positive impact on the African American community. The campaign's goal is to recruit 100,000 ambassadors. To register to become a Circle of Promise ambassador, visit www.circleofpromise.org.

Nancy G. Brinker promised her dying sister, Susan G. Komen, she would do everything in her power to end breast cancer forever. In 1982, that promise became Susan G. Komen for the Cure, which is now the world's largest breast cancer organization and the largest source of nonprofit funds dedicated to the fight against breast cancer with more than \$1.3 billion invested to date. For more information about Susan G. Komen for the Cure, breast health or breast cancer, visit www.komen.org or call 1.877.GO KOMEN.