

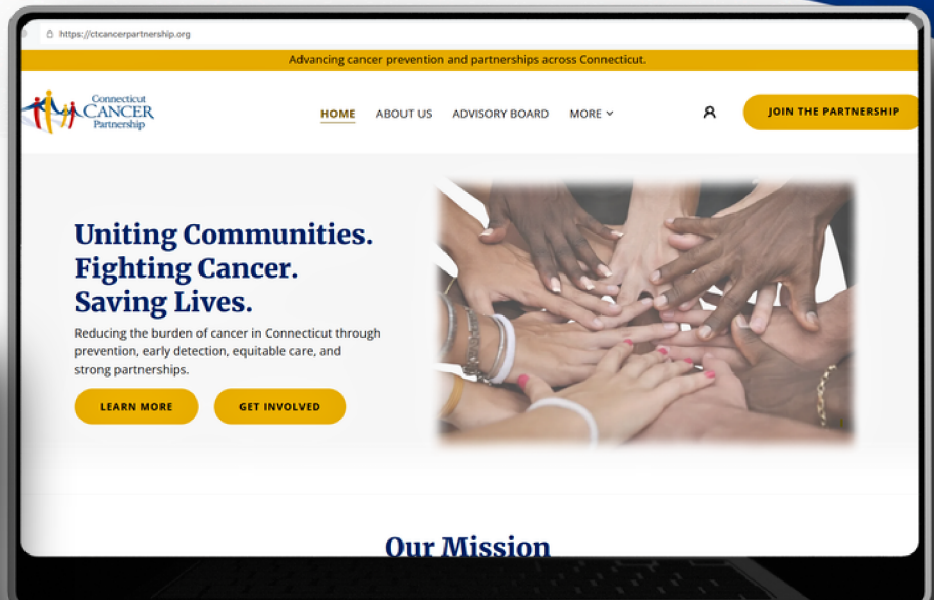
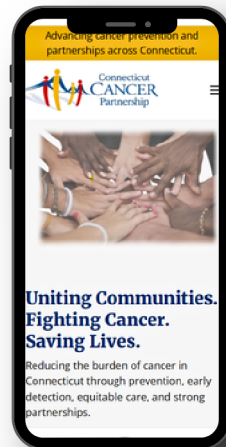


Connecticut  
**CANCER**  
Partnership  
*The Power of Unity*

# WE'RE LIVE!

## The Connecticut Cancer Partnership Website Has Relunched

Your hub for cancer prevention resources, statewide events, survivorship support, and opportunities to get involved across Connecticut.



**350+ Partners**

working together to reduce the burden of cancer in Connecticut

**Uniting Communities. Fighting Cancer. Saving Lives.**

Reducing the burden of cancer in Connecticut through prevention, early detection, equitable care, and strong partnerships.



**VISIT THE NEW WEBSITE**

[www.ctcancerpartnership.org](http://www.ctcancerpartnership.org)



### MEET OUR COALITION COORDINATOR

Please welcome Sierra Cugno, MPH, the Connecticut Cancer Partnership's new Coalition Coordinator.

Sierra brings more than a decade of experience in clinical research and public health, including work in oncology, emergency medicine, and Alzheimer's disease research. She is passionate about advancing equitable cancer prevention and improving health outcomes for Connecticut residents.

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Joy Watkins Jones shares her powerful survivorship journey and message of hope.

*“We don't just survive after cancer, we thrive.”*

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Find support groups, mental health resources, financial assistance, and wellness classes to support your journey.

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**UPCOMING EVENTS & PARTNERSHIP UPDATES**

**New Skin Cancer Working Group Launching.** Learn how you can help shape statewide skin cancer prevention and early detection efforts.



**SURVIVOR SPOTLIGHT**

**JOY WATKINS JONES**

**Breast Cancer Survivor | Founder, JHR Breast Cancer Foundation**

Joy Watkins Jones is a breast cancer survivor, community advocate, and founder of the JHR Breast Cancer Foundation. Inspired by her own journey, she is dedicated to raising awareness about early detection, supporting survivors and caregivers, and helping others find strength, hope, and purpose beyond cancer.

**Q&A WITH JOY**

**1 What did “survivorship” mean to you when treatment ended, and has that changed over time?**

Surviving treatment and surgery marked the beginning of a new chapter in my life. Living with scars reminds me every day that I am an overcomer. Despite the side effects that came with treatment, such as hair loss, weight loss, and a loss of confidence, I decided that I would not allow cancer to keep me down for long.

I had to speak life over myself every day and remind myself that I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Maintaining a positive mindset has helped me regain my confidence and renew my sense of purpose in life.

**2 Did you ever experience feelings of loneliness or isolation during or after your cancer journey? If so, what helped you through those moments?**

During my diagnosis and treatment, I did experience isolation and loneliness, as I was not able to practice my craft as a hairdresser. This induced a great deal of isolation, as I could not interact with my clients as I normally would before being diagnosed. People whom I considered close friends stayed away for fear that I was going to die. This affected my mental health, as I began to feel depression setting in.

I was able to overcome this by seeking and receiving support in the form of mental health therapy through a social worker and a support group at St. Francis Hospital where I was treated. In addition to the services I received at the hospital, my husband and my mother, who were my caregivers at home, showed me endless love, support, and reassurance, even though they were affected by witnessing what I was going through. My church family also provided strength through prayers, phone calls, and visits. I had no choice but to lean into my faith in God as there were days where I felt very defeated. Faith gave me the drive that I needed to get through each day, and faith is still the driving force behind what I do as I believed I have birth purpose I never thought I would in a million years. Out of an unfortunate situation came something beautiful.

**3 What kinds of support or connection made the biggest difference for you as a survivor?**

Five years into my survivorship, I was inspired to launch a breast cancer foundation (Joy’s Hair Repair [JHR] Breast Cancer Foundation) to bring cancer awareness to people in the Greater Hartford Community. This foundation has created a platform where I get to share my story to educate and empower individuals. I passionately promote early detection of breast cancer as I was diagnosed at an early stage (stage II) which I believe saved my life, hence advocacy for yearly screening, as early detection save lives. My healing continues as I host support groups that give other survivors, as well as caregivers, the voice and confidence to share their stories with each other, as their stories matter.

One of my biggest connections has been working with the Connecticut Department of Public Health and the Hartford Hospital early detection program, which has provided yearly mammogram screening free of charge to those that are uninsured.

**4 What do you wish more people understood about life after cancer treatment?**

I wish more people understood that cancer does not define us. Women can live a full, healthy and meaningful life even after cancer. Over experience teaches us gratitude and appreciation for life and our loved ones. It has taught me to be more caring, understanding and to give grace to people as you do not know what they may be going through. People should understand that we don’t just survive after cancer, WE THRIVE!

**5 What message would you like to share with other cancer survivors during National Cancer Survivor Month?**

Be encouraged, continue to share your story as you don’t know who may be inspired. Live life with purpose, stay positive and continue to trust God who has brought you through difficult times. Support someone who is fighting as no one should fight alone. And with our experience, we are able to give assurance to the vulnerable.

**6 Anything else you would like to share about yourself, your organization, and your contributions to the community?**

As the owner of Joy’s Hair Repair Salon, I have the opportunity to speak directly to clients about the importance of screening, as early detection saves lives. I also have had the privilege of speaking to colleagues at hairdressers’ educational forums where I get to talk about how cancer affects our clients, as hair loss is a significant side effect. I believe every cosmetologist needs to be educated on how to care for and encourage their clients who are facing cancer, and to promote self-care. My salon, as well as my foundation, is located on Blue Hills Avenue in Hartford, CT. We are organizing a 5k breast cancer fundraiser walk which will take place on October 17, 2026 at the Elizabeth Park Conservatory. We are open to other organizations joining this cause.

For more information, please email: [jhrbreastcancerfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:jhrbreastcancerfoundation@gmail.com) or visit: <https://jhrbreastcancerfoundation.org/>

“People should understand that we don’t just survive after cancer, we thrive!”

# June is National Cancer Survivorship Month!

## How do connection, isolation, and belonging shape the experiences of employed cancer survivors?

Join us for a virtual conversation featuring Alicia Dugan, Ph.D., of the Connecticut Cancer Partnership, who will discuss her work and research with cancer survivors. Wendy Garvin-Mayo, DNP, APRN, of Collaborative Cancer Care, will contribute clinical expertise and facilitate the discussion, alongside a cancer survivor panelist who will share personal insights from their survivorship journey.

**When: July 28, 2026, 12:00 – 1:00 PM EST**

**Where: Online**

Visit our website to register!

## HONORING EVERY JOURNEY

Each story is unique. Each step forward is a victory. We honor survivors, caregivers, and families for their courage, strength and unwavering hope.

**Your journey matters.  
Your impact is powerful.**





## SUPPORT BEYOND TREATMENT

Survivorship doesn't end with treatment. Scan the QR code or visit our website for a variety of survivorship resources and support for you and/or your loved ones.

## SURVIVORSHIP RESOURCES



Scan the QR code to access a collection of resources designed to support survivors, caregivers, and families including:

-  Support Groups
-  Mental Health Resources
-  Financial Assistance
-  Wellness & Survivorship Tools

SCAN TO EXPLORE RESOURCES

## IMPORTANT UPDATES

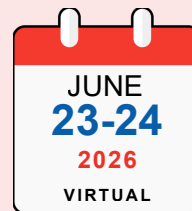


### LUNG CANCER CONFERENCE Now Virtual in June

If you were unable to attend our in-person event in March or would like to participate again, we invite you to join us for a virtual 2-part series. The program will feature the same engaging content, expert speakers, and opportunities for networking.

**June 23, 5:30-6:30PM, EST:** Healthcare Provider Session  
**June 24, 12:00-1:00PM, EST:** Patient Navigator Session

Register [here](#).



### CONNECTICUT CANCER PLAN Development Underway

The Connecticut Cancer Partnership is beginning work on the 2027-2031 Connecticut Cancer Plan. This collaborative effort will help guide statewide priorities for cancer prevention, early detection, treatment, survivorship, and equity. We look forward to engaging partners and communities across Connecticut throughout the planning process.



### NEW SKIN CANCER Working Group

The Connecticut Cancer Partnership is launching a new *Skin Cancer Working Group* focused on prevention, early detection, and education. We are seeking partners interested in advancing skin cancer awareness and reducing the burden of disease across Connecticut.

Interested in joining?

Contact our coalition coordinator, **Sierra Cugno**, at [scugno@uchc.edu](mailto:scugno@uchc.edu) for more information.



**NEW  
RESOURCE  
AVAILABLE**

### Action Plan Template

This tool is designed to help plan, track, and achieve cancer prevention and control goals. Start building impact today!

[DOWNLOAD THE  
TEMPLATE](#)



## TOGETHER, WE MAKE AN IMPACT

Thank you to our partners, providers, and communities for your continued commitment to reducing the burden of cancer in Connecticut. We couldn't do it without you.

