

TENACIOUS

STRONG

EMPOWERED

RADIANT

ATHLETE



Recovery on Water 2017 Annual Report

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Devlin Murdock, *Programs Manager*

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Coordinator*

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Lily Papaleo, *Assistant Head Coach*

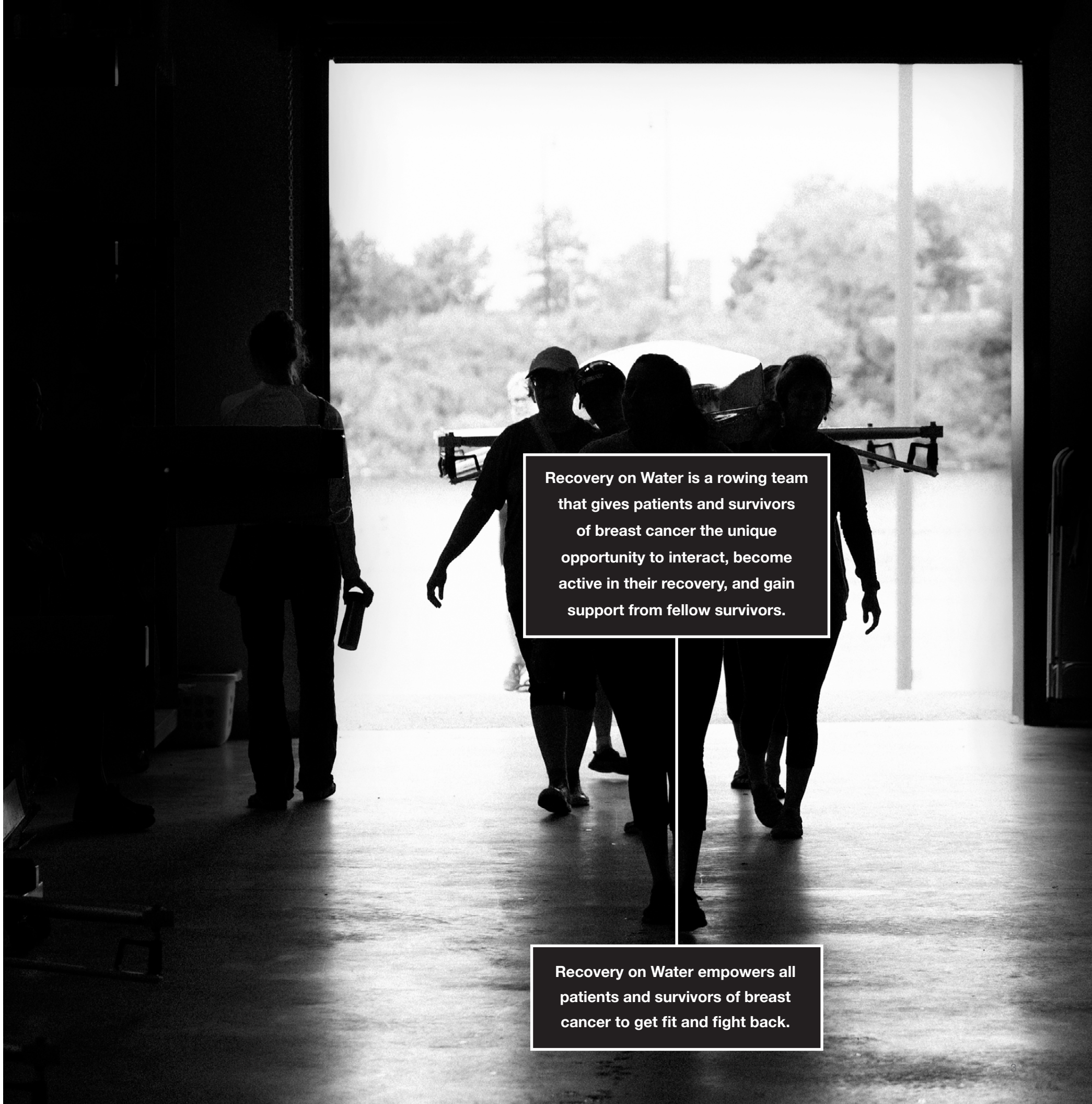
Barb Franco, *Masters Coach*

Lindsey Hochman, *Masters Coach*

John Albrecht, *Novice Coach*

Monica Bernardo, *Novice Coach*

Kym Reynolds, *Indoor Coach*



Recovery on Water is a rowing team
that gives patients and survivors
of breast cancer the unique
opportunity to interact, become
active in their recovery, and gain
support from fellow survivors.

Recovery on Water empowers all
patients and survivors of breast
cancer to get fit and fight back.

Letter from the Executive Director

Ten years ago, when Recovery On Water was little more than a concept in my 22-year-old brain, I had one expectation: “I’m going to help women with breast cancer learn to row.” That was it.

There was no grand vision for what the group might one day become, and certainly I didn’t imagine then that this would eventually serve as my profession. But we succeeded in that first year. We made a difference. And expectations rose steadily from that—as our team grew and interest in our mission continued to spread, suddenly every year began to surpass the one before it.

Now here we are, ten years later. Our team, along with our staff and board, has built a diverse and dynamic organization that continues to exceed expectations.

ROW is now in the most advantageous place it’s ever been. The Eleanor Boathouse, unveiled by the Chicago Park District in December 2016, has allowed us to conduct greater outreach in the community and has itself become a haven to hundreds of people in the community. Throughout 2017, we captured incredible national attention that has heightened our visibility (one of our new strategic initiatives!) and given us a broader audience of survivors. We grew our staff, hiring nine-year ROW member and survivor Kathleen Behner as our Operations & Outreach Coordinator, and began to embrace a new demographic of volunteers through our Associate Board.

And once again, we’re setting the bar just a little bit higher. In 2018, ROW is exploring opportunities to extend our model into additional geographic areas while staying mindful of our own quality and sustainability. We are embracing new concepts for more holistic programming and building on our partnerships with area hospitals and healthcare advocates. Just as we’ve done throughout the last decade, we are trailblazing new possibilities for a truly unrivaled program and sharing the value of everything we’ve learned during our own development.

Among the things we’ve learned in ROW’s first ten years is the value of taking risk. While mindfully anticipating our needs, our growth has consistently afforded us the

opportunity to consider program expansions, new site additions and a more impactful community footprint. We will continue taking these calculated risks in 2018, knowing they will contribute to our growth. As rowers, we like stability. We like strong, solid boats that are well set. So it only makes sense that in these last ten years, ROW has grown as a sustainable organization—always ensuring we are “set” before trying to advance—and being able to move so many patients and survivors toward the finish line and a life beyond diagnosis. We have helped them move toward a new identity as a rower who finds strength alongside other women who know just what they have been through.

At our most recent annual meeting, members of the team and board all took a moment to share what ROW means to them, using just one word. Each of the words shared that night—support, exercise, strength, meaning, inspiration, friendship, love, camaraderie, hope, laughter, sisterhood, and power—more than accurately describes ROW, which has become far more than I could have imagined a decade ago.

Thank you for your continued support of our mission and our vision to use the sport of rowing to change lives. ROW started as a concept and as a dream. With your help, generosity and support, it has grown into a thriving organization paving the way for women to get fit, fight back and have fun.

Jenn Junk,
Executive Director



Values Statements

We believe in the power of sport.

It is a valuable tool, capable of improving fitness and quality of life for patients and survivors of breast cancers.

We value teamwork.

While we know that a boat is made of many individuals, we come together and row as one. We put the team first.

We celebrate diversity.

Our team and board are ethnically and socioeconomically diverse.

We aim for quality.

We are thoughtful stewards, results-oriented and data-driven. We are constantly evolving our impact based on the needs those we serve.

We value commitment in all the forms it takes.

Showing up and working hard is essential.

We aim to build a sustainable organization.

We want ROW to serve patients and survivors for years to come.

ROW Celebrates 10 Years in 2017!

ROW's first official practice was February 2—Groundhog's Day—2008 at the Dammrich Rowing Center in Skokie.

It followed several months of exploratory conversation and planning between executive director Jenn Gibbons Junk and co-founder Sue Ann Glaser, whose fortuitous first meeting came about when both were in search of a Chicago rowing team for breast cancer patients. Their vision became real in that first practice, when ROW's eight founding members jumped on their ergs for the first time and followed Jenn's lead as their new coach. The team owned no shells, had no space to call its own, and was entirely volunteer-run.

But by word-of-mouth publicity and dedication to an idea, ROW began to steadily grow. The rest may be history, but for ROW that history is the unshakeable foundation on which a growing team of volunteers has built a national force for hope and athletic inspiration.

In 2017, more than ten years removed from that first fateful meeting, ROW is growing still. We now make our home in Bridgeport's Eleanor Boathouse, have built a fleet of 10 shells, host practices every day of the week and boast membership of more than 80 women. Our mission to support breast cancer patients and survivors is unchanged, but our outreach and audience are continuously evolving, with every effort supported by an impressive board of 15 professionals, a full time staff of 4, and part time staff of 7.

Ten years is an impressive milestone, but it's no time to rest on our laurels. We are moving ahead with new plans to reach a broader and more diverse audience, strategic initiatives to guide our sustainable development and internal organizations to keep us on-track for positive results.



Impact by the Numbers

325

Survivors reached

1,500

Community Class Visits

24

New ROW Members

3

ROW Practice Locations

4

Weekly Community Classes

8

Weekly Member Workouts

264

Community Class Attendees

6

Hospital Partners

10

ROWpen Houses Hosted

12

Community Business Partners
& Affiliates

A Look Back at ROW 2017

January

ROW moved our ergs and boats into the Eleanor Boathouse, our long awaited permanent home!

February

Survivor & ROW member Kathleen Behner joined our staff to further our outreach work in hospitals and to manage our operations.

March

Due to cold air and water temperatures, the St. Pat's Sprint was held indoors for the first time in 6 years. Despite the lack of green river action, rowers raced to the sound of bagpipers on the ergs, and raised funds and awareness for ROW.

April

The newly formed ROW Associate Board hosted their first event, The Boat Race Viewing Party Fundraiser.

May

We hosted our first ever coxswain clinic, training over 25 new volunteers how to be a coxswain on the Chicago River.

June

Ten of our survivors completed their very first "Wild Woman Tri," which includes kayaking 1.5 miles, cycling 12 miles and running/walking 3.1 miles. Held in Busse Woods, this accessible sprint-triathlon was a perfect opportunity for some of our survivors to take on a new challenge together.

We worked with UIC Health to host the first annual Cancer Community Walk, a two-mile route from UIC hospital to the Eleanor Boathouse celebrating survivorship with patients and physicians.

July

ROW participated in the Chicago Sprints Regatta at Lincoln Park Boat Club.

Athleta came to Chicago for a two-day video shoot.

We hosted Ride4ROW, our annual 100 mile cycling event in southwest Michigan. 30 cyclists raised over \$50,000 for ROW.

September

ROWers raced at the Milwaukee River Challenge.

October

The Athleta Power of SHE campaign launched, bringing ROW to Athleta stores across the country. 30+ cities reached out in response, wanting a ROW program for survivors in their communities.

A race for every weekend: Tough Cup, ROWtoberfest, Head of the Rock and Race4ROW. Our last regatta was cancelled due to the oil spill on Bubbly Creek, cutting our water season short by two weeks.

ROW received national press from CBS Evening News and ABC Good Morning America.

November

Blueprint Fitness hosted the 26.BLU erg marathon, bringing in over \$5,000 for ROW.

We celebrated 10 years of existence at the Let the Good Times ROW Gala at the Italian American Sports Hall of Fame.

December

Initiated our first incentivized winter training program resulting in over 10 million meters rowed by ROW athletes.



Taking the Stage in 2017

ROW Embraces National Press & Newfound “Power”

The women of ROW are no stranger to the media spotlight. Throughout the years, unique fundraising events and special outreach endeavors have all consistently garnered local and regional news coverage. Every interview and panning camera has been regarded as an opportunity to thrust ROW onto a bigger and brighter stage, presenting its mission to an ever-growing audience of survivors and supporters.

But no past performance could have prepared the organization for its unexpected role as a 2017 media darling. From ESPN coverage of Jenn’s presentation during the 2017 espnW: Women + Sports, Chicago Summit, to the inclusion of ROW in Athleta’s nationally acclaimed “Power of She” campaign, 2017 presented ROW with its greatest-yet moments to shine.





ATHLETA

Building & Launching the ROW Athleta Campaign

- 30 Production Hours
- 12 Rowing Hours
- 12 ROW Members
- 5 ROW Coaches
- 1 Drone Crew
- 6 Facebook Posts (to 455k+ followers)
- 300k+ Views
- 550+ Shares
- 6 Tweets to 47k+ followers
- 30+ requests from survivors across the country wanting to bring ROW to their community!

Aligning with Athleta

Athleta first launched the “Power of She” campaign in April 2016 as its largest ad campaign ever. It was instantly met with enthusiasm and delight from women who championed ageless athleticism, personal determination and a wondrous sense of adventure. Almost a year later, as the women’s athletic apparel company was preparing to launch both its new iteration of the campaign and its all-new Empower Bra, a sports bra design for women recovering from from a mastectomy, they decided to contact ROW with a special invitation.

After past partnerships in which Athleta supported ROW with fundraising and shopping events, they now wanted to feature the organization in their October “Power of She” content and promotions. It would mean extensive coverage in social media, print, video, web and Athleta stores, as well as an exclusive revenue-sharing opportunity through sales of Athleta’s pink “Power of She” sports bra. It was an unprecedented invitation that would give ROW unrivaled, ongoing visibility in the press.

ROW Proves the “Power of She”

ROW’s “Power of She” footage was shot along the Chicago River and inside the Eleanor boathouse, which has served as the backdrop of ROW’s success throughout 2017. Twelve team members were cast for the promotional feature, which was filmed over the course of two days in May 2017. Rowing through Chicago’s early morning chill, welcoming camera rigs and production crew into their shells as remote-controlled drones filmed from above, the ROW athletes proved themselves, and their team, the embodiment of the “Power of She.”

When ROW’s promo debuted in Athleta’s social media on September 26, 2017, a vast nation of survivors, supporters and adventurous believers began to affirm what we had long known: The women of ROW—those who pull through chemo and radiation sickness, lymphedema and fatigue, and who band together against the ceaseless fear of recurrence and the realities of metastasis—are endlessly inspiring.



Additional Press

As the “Power of She” campaign spread, so did word of ROW. And when combined with coverage related to speaking engagements and fundraising events, 2017 proved to be our organization’s most valuable year yet in terms of media attention and press coverage.

- ESPN.com - 64.3 million unique monthly visitors**
- Cosmopolitan.com - 35 million unique monthly visitors**
- Brit + Co (brit.co) - 6.6 million unique monthly visitors**
- shape.com - 8.8 million unique monthly visitors**
- CBS Evening News - 6.6 million viewers**
- Good Morning America - 4.2 million viewers**
- Athleta: 130+ stores nationwide / 16,500+ unique monthly site visitors / 21 million+ catalogs circulated**



Finding Recovery on Water

Every woman who takes to the water as part of ROW is on a unique and personal journey. While breast cancer is the common thread that unites them all, “recovery on water” has come to hold a different meaning for almost every woman who claims a seat in our shells.

For some, rowing represents a desire to stay healthy and prevent cancer recurrence. We have women who are one, five, ten years and more into their remission, and who pull with the hopeful belief that they can now keep cancer at bay. Many of them will. But for others, rowing represents a desire to stay fit, and stay alive, for just as long as their disease will allow. It’s a way to enrich every day with accomplishment and to celebrate the joy of living, while maintaining a powerful and combative spirit in the face of something from which they may never physically recover.



Stage IV Breast Cancer, Recurrence & the Women Who Row Through it All

The statistics surrounding metastatic breast cancer and breast cancer recurrence are not entirely conclusive. However, it is estimated that 6-10 percent of new breast cancer diagnoses are initially stage four, or metastatic; this means cancerous cells have spread into other areas of the body and cannot be fully eradicated. It is further estimated that the number of metastatic recurrences in existing breast cancer cases is as high as 30 percent. While these numbers have improved in the last 25 years, there is still far to go in terms of medical research and new treatment options.



Understanding the Realities of Breast Cancer

- About 1 in 8 U.S. women (12.4% of the female population) will develop invasive breast cancer over the course of her lifetime
- As of January 2018, there were about 3.1 million women in the U.S. with a history of breast cancer, including those in active treatment and who have completed treatment
- Approximately 6-10% of new breast cancer cases are diagnosed as Stage IV (metastatic)
- Metastatic recurrences are unknown but estimated to range between 20-30% of all existing breast cancer cases
- A woman's risk of breast cancer nearly doubles if she has a first-degree relative (mother, sister, daughter) who has been diagnosed
- Less than 15% of women who get breast cancer have a family member who has been diagnosed
- About 5-10% of breast cancers are thought to be caused by inherited gene mutations
- The most significant risk factors for breast cancer are gender (being female) and age (growing older)
- Women who are regularly physically active have a 10%-20% lower risk of breast cancer compared to women who are inactive.
- In 2017, an estimated 252,710 new cases of invasive breast cancer will have been diagnosed among women

In the meantime, ROW is honored to have among its family of athletes several women who are in active treatment and who are faced with the reality of a metastatic diagnosis. Yet they continue to practice. To compete. And to pull alongside their teammates. For these women, recovery on water is part of their mission to defy the odds and take every available platform to share what they know and challenge others to focus more intentionally on the realities of and future possibilities for metastatic breast cancer.



MEMBER PROFILE:

Jill Haagenon

When considering what message she could possibly offer to those living with breast cancer, whether they're in active treatment or remission, Jill Haagenon can think of only one thing, "Get the whole picture."

As one of the 6-10 percent of patients whose initial cancer diagnosis was de novo metastatic—meaning she was diagnosed stage four from the beginning—Jill's journey with breast cancer has been a rather solitary one. Her story ebbs and flows between the simple determination of an inherently adventurous spirit, the kind drawn to international competitive sailing, tennis and rowing, and the struggle of one who has already lost many of the fellow stage four cancer patients with whom she shared brief friendships.

"When you get caught de novo, it's really hard to figure out how to go on tomorrow. I was feeling great, I was doing all this stuff, and then I find out I have stage four breast cancer. It took me a long time to figure out what it was I was going to do with this."

But Jill is the type who's quick to find her purpose in any situation. So, following her diagnosis almost three years ago, as she went straightaway into heavy chemo, she simultaneously embarked on a new mission: To shine a light on the realities of metastatic breast cancer. This potential outcome

for any breast cancer patient is one she finds too infrequently discussed outside certain circles and not strongly emphasized in popular awareness campaigns.

"I've been really involved in the social media stuff, where our role as advocates [has been] to go out on our Facebook, and all our social media, and get those facts [about metastatic breast cancer] out." Though Jill herself admits to not knowing much about the truth of metastatic breast cancer until she began researching her own diagnosis, she was still surprised by the number of friends who responded to her social media outreach with a simple, "We didn't know."

That's precisely what she's trying to change.

"I advocate for two groups. Met-Up, which is trying to get a lot of this stuff in Washington changed, because at no time do we know how many women have stage four breast cancer. And stage four needs more. Up until then, we have awareness, awareness, awareness. In stage four, you want a cure, or you want something to help

you get along longer." In addition to her work with Met-Up, Jill also advocates for METAvivor, a nonprofit that gives all donations to research for metastatic breast cancer and support of patients living with the disease.

Despite her passionate frustration with metastatic breast cancer and the seeming lack of awareness that surrounds it, Jill still maintains an easy lightheartedness. She resonates with delight when talking about her tight-knit family, speaking primarily of her sons, Nate and Gabe; describing them as "chalk and cheese" in their polarity, she also enthuses that both are ceaselessly supportive of her. In other moments, Jill is quick to laugh at herself when telling stories of her own mischievous sense of humor and competitiveness, characteristics that revealed themselves quickly during her comedic first run-in with ROW.

When she first joined the team in summer 2017, Jill was faced with a minor clashing of worlds thanks to her former role as a competitive sailor. "I think I acted like I was sort of a hot shot, because I knew about boats." The playful, self-amused grin spreads across her face. "I was like, 'Oh, well aren't we going to rinse the boat off right now before we put it in?' Because a clean boat is a fast boat. They're like, 'No, we'll rinse it off after.' Like, okay.

I was like, 'Oh, do we have shammies?' They're like, 'No, we have rags.' Like, calm down!"

In the earliest stages of her journey with breast cancer, Jill explored yoga and meditation, and dove into books that she thought may provide guidance. While these pursuits didn't do much to satisfy her venturesome personality—she recalls how her brain wandered consistently off the mat—she did find a few nuggets of inspiration that surfaced anew once she settled in with her rowing family. "There's a lot out there about how people are different, and how you should be kinder than you can imagine to other people. Love and kindness, you know? Love and kindness. It's all the way we should be. But we're all imperfect, so a lot of times we're not as kind as could be. I feel like in ROW, we have a lot of really kind people. That was like a good added plus for me that reinforced something I was trying to get.

"[ROW] has become a major part of my life. I love the people that I've become friends with. Because I have brain mets, I don't remember a lot of names and sometimes I forget words, but they're so forgiving!" Her face breaks into a gleaming smile once more as she says it. "It's just like this really cool, nice family, and

it is very family like. People are super supportive and funny but, like a family, they're going to push you hard and not let you off the hook."

With exercise as her self-proclaimed saving grace, and ROW the outlet through which she's able to maintain it, Jill has approached breast cancer as yet another adventure. As she carries on in her role as advocate, she is also participating in clinical trials and keeping her sights set on tomorrow—both her own tomorrow, and the tomorrow she may be able to help others achieve.

"If you've been tagged by breast cancer at any stage, you're part of it. You're part of this tribe now."

"I'm at the stage in my illness that, probably from here on, I am just going to be on some kind of clinical trial. I've already been on one. And the way I look at that, if it doesn't work for me at least I'm giving them some information for people that are coming up. We all know that we're temporary here. I don't want to live forever, but I'd like to make it to the summer."

And this brings her full circle, back

to the message she has for all breast cancer patients, where she pauses.

"I often wonder, if I was in stage one or two, and I met somebody who was stage four, would I want to know more about it? Or would I kind of want to keep a low curtain on it?" But she knows the curtain is not an option. Not for her. "Breast cancer isn't pink you know? I don't want to put up any guards or borders to other people; they've got their own issues, too. But I want them to know what this is—a disease people are dying from, and are dying from as much as they were 20 years ago. If you've been tagged by breast cancer at any stage, you're part of it. You're part of this tribe now."

For now, as Jill continues in her mission to bring greater awareness and, more importantly, research dollars to metastatic breast cancer, she's delighting in the opportunity to connect with her still-new ROW tribe.

"I'm just trying to take it in. And then, in practice, it's great having a coach because you just have to do what you're told. You can just concentrate on them, and you don't have to make decisions, and you don't have to think about what you're going to get at the grocery store later. I just do my job, and I just learn how to do it well. Then, I walk out, and I feel like I have something new." ■



ROW
Recovery on Water

MEMBER PROFILE:

Jeannine Love

Musician. Professor. Widow. Author. Activist. Rower. Breast cancer patient. Jeannine Love's identity is intrinsically tied to many roles and experiences, but it seems none can singularly define her.

A self-proclaimed shy musician, she chose at a young age to set aside her plans for a music degree to instead pursue a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Public Administration; today she is a tenured professor at Roosevelt University who must overcome nervousness before every class, but she does so for the euphoria of engaging students who wish to truly change the world.

To any outsider, hers is an accomplished life. But Jeannine's achievements have been earned, and her identity shaped, along a winding road of devastating events, including the loss of her partner, Aric, who she was with for almost 16 years, and a Stage 1A breast cancer diagnosis, which she received in September 2016. Though either of these experiences could have been paralyzing, for Jeannine they have served as a unique opportunity to learn and grow.

"For both widowhood and cancer, one of the things that's been really striking to me is how much I've learned going through both of these processes. I've learned a lot about

dealing with crisis. I've learned a lot about connecting with other people, developing empathy, developing patience, learning to really draw from and honestly express gratitude in spaces where it feels like you shouldn't have any gratitude."

This focus on gratitude has helped her more fully appreciate life. "People tend to be so future driven. 'I have to get this goal,' 'I have to get this goal.' You forget what's happening right now. [I've learned to] just slow down and re-prioritize, connect with friends and people that I love, do things that I love."

Two things she loves and has leaned on heavily? Music and exercise.

"I went without playing music for a while until my late partner surprised me with a banjo, because he knew I'd always liked the instrument and wanted to play." Life initially got in the way of her playing the banjo regularly but before long, and partly in response to her partner's playful nagging, she prioritized playing. "Right before [Aric] died, I was just like, 'You know what? I'm going to promise you

this—I'm going to learn to play that damn thing.' So a few months after he died, I started taking classes, and I've been playing it since. It actually ended up being a really great thing, both for healing from—getting through his death, it was good grief therapy—and it was also really good healing therapy for after breast cancer."

Jeannine describes music as a sort of meditation, one that lets her use her brain in a completely different way, and from this idea she transitions naturally to talk of exercise, which she describes in a similar fashion. Shortly after Aric's passing, she took the lead of several friends who were runners, despite having always hated running, and found a new catharsis.

"Your brain goes into a different space, [and] you're concentrating on your body and...that effort, and you can sort of unplug from the overwhelming of your grief or diagnosis or whatever. That's part of why I gravitated to ROW when I found out about it."

And how she found out about ROW was a beautiful coincidence. After the loss of her partner, Jeannine sought a local community of women who could understand her loss and struggle to move beyond it. Her search led her to the Chicagoland Young Widowed Connection, where she made a fast

friend in Diana. Both women had lost their partners to liver disease and found comfort not only in the Young Widowed Connection but also in exercise, and it would eventually be Diana who told Jeannine about ROW.

"She came over after my mastectomy, just to visit and cheer me on. While she was there, she was like, 'Oh hey, by the way, my really good friend, Jenn, has this group called Recovery On Water and it's for breast cancer survivors, and it's a rowing team, and I totally think you'd dig it.'"

Dig it she did. After visiting a ROWpen house, Jeannine was instantly drawn to the community of breast cancer patients and survivors who respected where she was at in her own recovery and overwhelmed her with camaraderie and laughter. She joined the team in March 2017, just six months after having received her diagnosis and less than four months after her mastectomy. Within another four months she was participating in the team's milestone Athleta shoot.

"That Athleta shoot, actually, was a really wonderful gift to me because I spent 12 hours two days in a row getting to know some of my teammates...in a way that would have taken a really long time just coming to practice a couple times a week. And just the idea that [ROW] would

It says something about ROW that, when you walk through that door, you're a member.

even consider giving my name [for the shoot] when I was so new was really cool. It says something about ROW that, when you walk through that door, you're a member. You don't have to earn your cred [or] prove yourself. It's like, no, you are part of our community."

For a woman who has maintained her inner strength and resolve through so much, it seems natural that Jeannine would gravitate toward the physical demands and generous community of ROW. And in this context, with striking resilience, she quickly dismisses the possibility of letting herself be paralyzed by grief. "Life gave us what life gave us and we can be pissed off about it and make ourselves miserable or we can do the best we can and try to enjoy our time together. That is something that's special—to be able to maintain that positivity through all of this and not to just shut down, but to keep pushing through and not letting everything interrupt my ability or my desire to meet these other personal goals.

"I think in our culture we're not good at talking about things like death [or] chronic illness. There's this notion that recovery somehow means healing it and making it go away; like you can somehow go back to the person that you were before death, before diagnosis. And that's not possible. Grief and death [are] with you forever. That doesn't mean that you are stuck in a state of crisis or overwhelming grief or that you are immobilized. It just means that is always now part of your being and your identity."

Reflecting on all she has learned thus far, Jeannine notes that new things are scary. With rowing in particular, she feared the idea of pulling together with her teammates, worrying that she would disrupt the boat. And as it so often is in life, mom was the reassuring voice that encouraged Jeannine to row on.

"My mom was great. I was talking to her about that fear [of rowing], and she was like, 'Think about it like playing music. When you play music, you have to be in sync with everybody else...you know someone is conducting and you are following that rhythm. Right? When you're in the boat, somebody is setting the stroke, and everybody else is following that rhythm.' I was like, 'I can do that.'" ■

2017 Impact Survey Overview

As we reviewed the responses to our 2017 Impact Survey, one thing was made abundantly clear: ROW continues to increase the frequency, duration and intensity of workouts for patients and survivors who join the team by a significant margin. To clearly highlight this, we broke down the data to look at impact on Novices—those who have been on the team for less than a year—and Masters. In this approach, the most representative data to consider is that of our Novice group, as these women tend to have the clearest idea about their exercise regimes before and after joining ROW, which means they can most clearly illustrate ROW's immediate impact.

Factoring together the increases in frequency and duration, ROW has effectively doubled the amount of time our novices spend working out on a weekly basis.

When identifying trends in year-over-year Impact Survey data, we cannot account for any individual's athleticism or commitment to exercise prior to joining our team. However, we can hope to elevate their commitment, and our 2017 survey results suggest that we are accomplishing that very goal and impacting members' lives in a very tangible way.

78%
increase in frequency
(roughly 1.75 additional
weekly workouts)

9%
increase in workout
duration (almost 4 extra
minutes per workout)

19%
increase in workout
intensity, increasing one
whole unit of intensity (5.25
to 6.25 on a 10-point scale)

Getting Fit to Fight Back

Those who decide to begin a new workout program, or enhance their existing program, do so most often with a goal of maintaining a healthy body weight. Apart from breast cancer, there are countless variables that can affect one's ability to achieve this goal, but when factoring in chemotherapy and other treatments, medical procedures and the side effects associated with a breast cancer diagnosis, maintaining a healthy weight becomes even more challenging. According to our survey responses, this common goal is equally common among our team:

92% say maintaining a healthy weight is an important fitness goal of theirs, and

97% say ROW has helped their efforts to achieve that goal

Body, Heart & Soul: Rowing for Emotional Health

In addition to the evident physical benefits, with this year's survey we also hoped to gain insight regarding the emotional benefits of participating in ROW. To that end, we were delighted when **95 percent of respondents explained that being a part of ROW has changed how they view themselves in a positive way.** Taken in conjunction with the comments that accompany their answers, the numbers bear that out.

When asked whether attending ROW practice has made them feel more supported or less alone, **95 percent of respondents said "Yes"** and described community or camaraderie as the reason. The same percentage also suggested that attendance impacts their self-esteem in a positive way, citing the challenge and accomplishment associated with learning a new sport. But the effects of ROW don't conclude with practice—most respondents have said the impact goes well beyond.

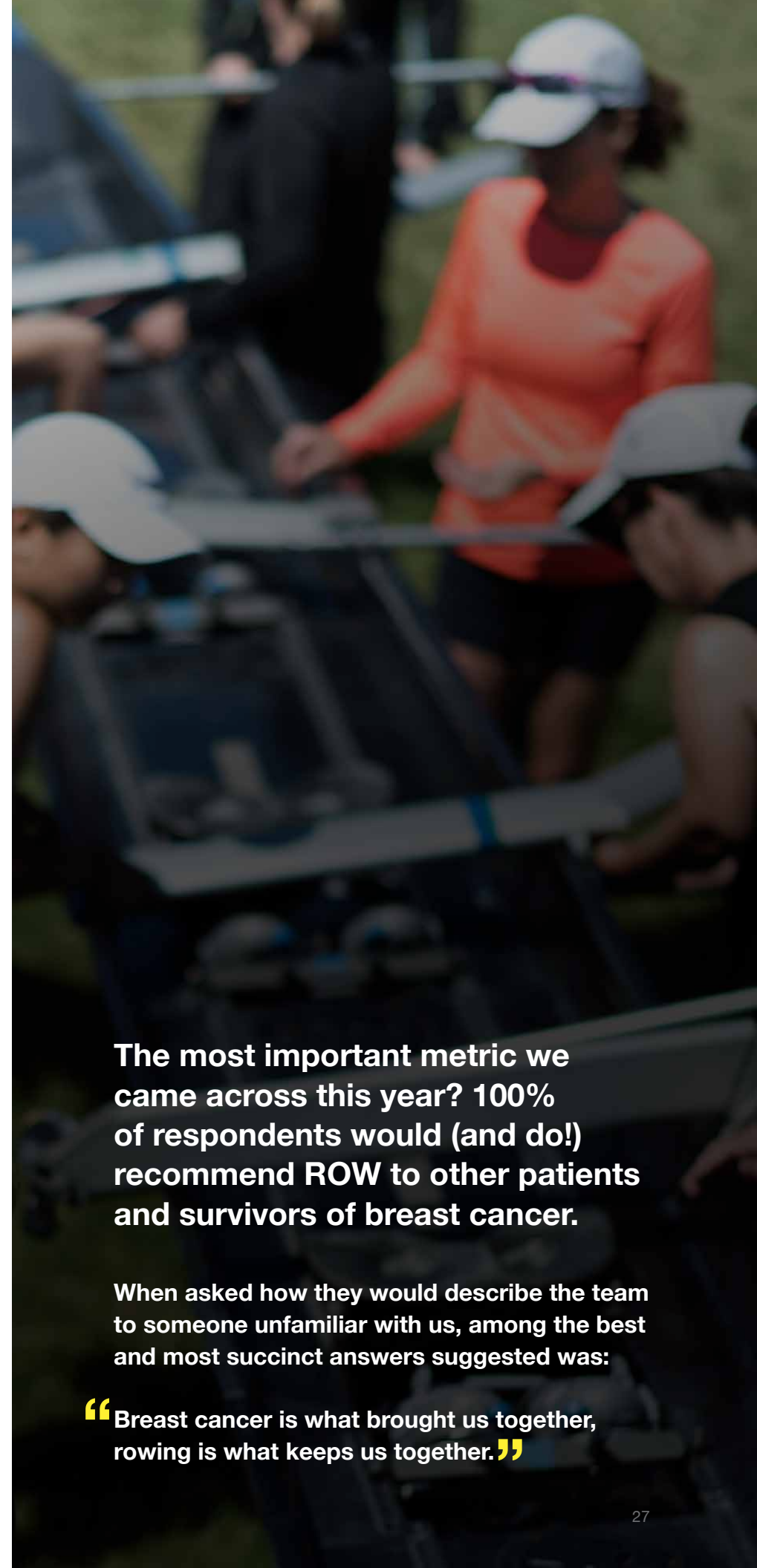
80% said they feel like they're part of a community, and

77% now feel that they have a larger support network

The most important metric we came across this year? 100% of respondents would (and do!) recommend ROW to other patients and survivors of breast cancer.

When asked how they would describe the team to someone unfamiliar with us, among the best and most succinct answers suggested was:

“Breast cancer is what brought us together, rowing is what keeps us together.”



Faces of ROW



READY? ROW!

SOUNDING
OFF

“I am not my cancer.”

“Having teammates who understand what I’m going through is priceless. And, having awesome coaches who are patient and knowledgeable and make us feel like athletes is incredible. And the laughter. So much laughter. The folks here just make me happy.”

“The ability to have informal conversations with other survivors makes me feel ‘normal’ and even calmer.”

“I feel good about being part of a team and a community, making time for that team and for myself, trying something new (and for me, scary), expanding my skills, broadening my sense of self as an athlete, knowing that even though I’m in treatment I’m still getting out there.”

“ROW has given me a new identity. Before ROW, I often thought of myself as a cancer survivor with lymphedema. Now, I am a ROWER.”

“While not totally there yet, being with a group of women who all have the scars to prove they have experienced breast cancer, has definitely helped with my acceptance of my body issues caused by treatment.”

“I feel well cared-for among my ROW teammates. They ask how I’m doing and they share their own experiences. Since the sport requires coordinated effort and teamwork, that spirit permeates our relationships at every level.”

“I am a rower! I also see some bravery in myself for joining the team and getting on the water...before getting out on the water I was afraid of those boats! So, I had to conquer a few fears to get here.”

“I feel a sense of physical power, accomplishment and pride after many of the practices.”

“I mean, I already knew cancer survivors in general were pretty badass, but my ROW teammates redefine that! Also the ability to endure something so scary, including things like lymphedema and even metastasis, with so much good humor is pretty awesome. Makes me feel proud to be a survivor.”

“I feel more accomplished and more disciplined. I also feel like if I can lift a boat, row with 7 other people and make the boat move, I can do anything!”

“The coaches refer to us as ‘athletes.’ That’s a term that I would have NEVER used to describe myself. Until ROW!”

“Seeing others who are resilient when facing adversity makes me aspire to be the same.”

“Even though I’m having a hard time with chemo brain from my other cancer I’m still able to learn!”

“I can’t imagine my life without rowing, and the only way I could have gotten here was through the breast cancer price of admission. Sitting here today, I’m ok with that price.”

“In many ways, physically and mentally, I have found strength I didn’t know I had. Even when I’m feeling challenged and sometimes disappointed in my performance, I do know that my teammates and coaches have my back and that I will always be a member of this family.”

“I am a rower.” // “We endure and flourish.” // “I am not alone in this.”

Behind the Women of ROW

Devlin Murdock joined ROW as a coach in 2014 and instantly demonstrated an inherent thoughtfulness and consideration for our athletes’ unique experiences. In 2015, he came on full time and has since managed our behind-the-scenes efficiency and growth as Programs Manager.

In addition to being a US Rowing Level II certified Masters coach with a history of rowing achievements, Devlin is a ceaselessly hard worker with a knack for diving headlong into new experiences. He helps us uncover and capitalize on endless opportunities to improve our programs and further support not only our members but the entire community that in turn supports us.



Outreach Achievements & 2018 Outlook



Contributor Spotlight: Kathleen Behner

Kathleen Behner joined ROW in 2009, just one year after practices began, as a way to reclaim control of her body and create a new sense of accomplishment and calm. A radiology oversight had cost Kathleen the benefit of early detection and left her feeling vulnerable, but she quickly set her mind toward wellness and survivorship.

After nearly nine years with the team, and 13 years removed from her initial diagnosis, Kathleen leapt at the opportunity to support ROW full-time as Operations and Outreach Coordinator, a position she accepted in February 2017. She now oversees recruitment and outreach, working to grow both membership and general awareness of ROW, and also manages the accounting.

Describing the recruitment aspect of her job, which takes her into hospitals and community cancer events throughout the Chicagoland area, Kathleen beams, “It really is magical. Watching new people get excited about the thought of exercise, and seeing the novices’ faces after their first time on the water or after finishing their first race, it really is just magical.” But she’s quick to note that the excitement and swagger aren’t for new novices alone. “There’s a lot of bragging rights that come with [this], like ‘Look what I can do after cancer. Look how strong I am.’”

2017 Outreach Efforts

Last year’s outreach efforts focused heavily on spreading the word, taking full advantage of our exquisite South Side boathouse and considering how we could begin to widen our embrace and touch a new community beyond breast cancer.

In Kathleen’s adventures out to community cancer events, we’ve learned that much of the metropolitan area is still entirely unaware of ROW, despite the consistent publicity our organization has received locally and nationally. Clearly, we needed to get more creative about outreach! Here’s a snapshot of new and ongoing events hosted in 2017, all with the intention of spreading the word, raising funds and growing our community:

- Weekly community classes hosted by ROW coaches John Albrecht and Kymberly Reynolds
- ROWpen House, a monthly event where women can meet current members of ROW, explore Eleanor Boathouse and learn more about our programs
- St. Pat’s Sprint, an annual rowing event and fundraiser hosted by ROW and the Chicago Rowing Foundation
- Inaugural Cancer Community Walk with UIC and Recovery On Water
- Donation-based yoga series with Paige Carney, certified yoga instructor and ROW member since 2014
- 26.BLU, an annual erg marathon hosted in partnership with Blueprint Fitness and designed to emphasize the positive effects of community, support and exercise
- Race4ROW, an annual 5K duel race between the University of Illinois and DePaul University to benefit ROW
- Ride4ROW, an annual 100-mile cycling event to raise funds and awareness for ROW
- Girl’s Night, a recurring rowing and yoga event designed to welcome a broader community of women to the Eleanor Boathouse
- South Side Smackdown, an annual indoor regatta hosted by ROW and Chicago Training Center that challenges participants to earn their best 2k time





ROW Associate Board

Contributor Spotlight: Monica Bernardo

Monica Bernardo was 14 years old when her high school rowing team—Ignatius Chicago Crew (ICC), of Saint Ignatius College Prep—began volunteering with ROW in 2009. Service hours are mandatory for ICC athletes in their freshman and sophomore, but for Monica the commitment quickly became much more than filling a square.

“These women are all my 10th and 20th mom, and I was learning to row with a lot of them. I loved ROW as soon as I started volunteering—so many of the

members supported me through school and gave me great life advice. Really, they helped me grow up.”

Today, Monica is supporting the women who first supported her, working as a novice coach and occasional coxswain, and in 2017 she helped launch the Associate Board. As associate chair of the board, she manages all social media outreach and helps coordinate special fundraising events alongside six other founding members.

Young Professionals Embrace ROW

In late 2016, a handful of ROW coaches decided there was a way to attract younger volunteers and contributors to our organization. Their presence—and their professional talents in many cases—could bring new life and perspective to our work and create opportunities for contributors who don’t want to get in a boat or on the water.

Officially established in January 2017, the ROW Associate Board unites young Chicago professionals to spread awareness of ROW’s mission through special events, a volume-based donor pool, and volunteer and coxswain recruiting, training and management. In their inaugural year, the board focused on growing their own ranks and exploring events that might capture the attention of their target 20 to 35-year-old audience. Before year’s

end they grew to a team of ten and hosted two new events— The Boat Race and Beer4ROW—raising nearly \$4,500 in admission and raffle ticket sales.

In conjunction with their mission to grow the volunteer ranks, the Associate Board was also tasked with rethinking and reframing fundraising. While ROW has found great success in its annual events and remains generously supported by private donors, our Associate Board leaders knew there was a way to gain new patronage from those with the will to give but have less disposable income to offer. This idea led them to create the Monthly Giving Club and the “10 for 10” giving campaign, the latter of which ran throughout quarter four of 2017.

MONTHLY GIVING CLUB:

Lets participants set up a recurring monthly, quarterly or annual donation, and welcomes any donation amount, whether it’s \$1 or \$100.

“10 FOR 10” GIVING CAMPAIGN:

Launched in honor of ROW’s ten-year anniversary and invited people to give a one time or recurring donation of \$10.



Looking Toward the Future of ROW

It is always a challenge to consider “what’s next,” especially when we are moving ahead from such a landmark year. But with careful guidance from our board and mindful strategy from our staff and members, we have already begun planning key events and acquisitions for 2018 and have created a roadmap of exploratory initiatives for what lies beyond the calendar year.

2018 Highlights

SPRING 2018:

ROW is set to purchase a rowing barge for learn to row events, novice training and technical work for masters. Rowing barges are wide set for stability and provide a center walkway between two hulls, letting coaches get up-close with their rowers; this is ideal for those who are just learning to row and also gives more seasoned athletes an opportunity to refine and improve their form.

SUMMER 2018:

In May 2018, ROW will host its inaugural Power10 Camp (www.powertencamp.org), a four-day rowing camp for breast cancer patients and survivors that will let them create community, gain support and be empowered to reclaim their bodies after diagnosis. Located in Northern Michigan, this camp will welcome up to 100 participants from across the country and will accommodate all experience levels, including those with no rowing experience.

Strategic Initiatives for 2018

In preparation for 2018 and beyond, the ROW board has identified the following new initiatives to explore across the next three years:

- Explore opportunities to expand ROW beyond Chicago.
- Provide more holistic programming for members, such as nutrition and supplemental program offerings.
- Increase visibility of the organization.
- Add a second location for rowing on the water.
- Build on partnerships and collaborations with hospitals and healthcare advocates.



Financial Snapshot

(unaudited)

ASSETS

Cash	258,293
Short-term investments	100,340
Other assets	11,067
Property and equipment, net	109,824
Total Assets	479,524

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Current liabilities	7,198
Equity	
Net assets - unrestricted	275,742
Net assets - temporarily restricted	196,584
Total Liabilities & Equity	479,524

REVENUE

Individual giving/special events, net	331,282	78%
Program income	71,915	17%
Foundation/trust grants	19,000	4%
Other income	606	1%
Total revenue	422,803	100%

EXPENSES

Program	284,514	79%
Administrative	46,143	13%
Fundraising	29,733	8%
Total expenses	360,390	100%

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS 62,413

Recognizing Our Donors

\$50,000 and above

Barbara Bebee
Ozinga

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Athleta
Phil & Marsha Dowd

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Bears Care
Ferguson-Yntema Family Trust
Josh Howard & Mary O'Neal
Thomas Opferman
David Powell
& Kathleen Behner
The Rhoades Foundation
The Rocca Family

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Blueprint Fitness
Clif Bar Family Foundation
John Grant Crowley
Sandra Kirmeyer
Mat Construction
Michele Willmott

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Bridgeport Catholic Academy
Nina Clark
Cloudbakers
Connamara Systems
Connexion
Joan Conover
Terrence Conway

Raymond Coronado
Sarah Donovan
Flatwater Farms
Sue Ann Glaser & Alan Alson
Amy & Mitch Greenwald
Marisa Jackson
Jenn & Andy Junk

Laura McNally
Devlin Murdock & Katie Rich
Joan Neal
Network for Good
Donald & Nidhi O'Meara
Prairie Management
& Development

Thomas & Karen Reepmeyer
Kymberly Reynolds
Samman Shahpar
Elizabeth Simpkin
David Skelding
& Karen Deighan
Frances Tuite & Simon Meredith

\$500 - \$999

Hector & Jackie Aguilera
John Albrecht
Kelly Anderson
Madison Appraisal
Brandenburg Industrial
Service Company
Joe Byrd
Thomas Campbell
Kevin Conway
Robert Dahlgren
Carol Danstrom

Elizabeth Davis
Richard Dees & Nora Flint
DonateWell
Dwanna Edwards-Thomas
Fairpointe Capital, LLC
Gracie's
A.J.R. Green
Jill Haagenson
Arun Heer
Elizabeth Holland
Steve & Jan Junk

Lauren & John Kern
Peter Klovk
Kathy Lai
Gary Markle
Patricia McEnaney
Mary Ridley & Greg Lundberg
Sheboygan County
Cancer Care Fund
Testa Produce
Deborah Thorne
Julie Toole

Alex Trepka
Michael Weisbach
Diane Wojcik
Zipsprout

\$250 - \$499

Salma Aldaas
Diana Almazan
Amazon Smile
Jeana Anderson Cohen
Susan & Andrew Baker
Marjorie Behner-Sands
Curtis Bezault
Zachary Bonig
Dana Brink
Julie Brown
Madeline Brown
Canal Street Properties
Douglas Cannon
Dan & Sharon Cayelli
Don & Elsa Cayelli
Fady Charbel
Carol Coughlin
Joseph Dillier
Amanda Diner
Daniel Dominguez
Stephanie Eilts

Howard Ellman
Linda & Steven Feinstein
Cathy Feldman
Beth Geiger
Ethel Gillespie
Girls on the Run
Georgianna Gleason
Scott Goldstein
Barbara Goodman
Robert Gottschalk
& Lou Ann Miller
Todd Greenwald
Sheryl Herzog
Tara Hoffmann
Jennifer Hugens
Charlie & Dana Jacobson
Robin Jessen
Hannah Kaiser
Suzanne Keers
Adam Kelly
Susan Klock

Gayle Lee
Sarah Little
Ashley Mayer
Nicholas McClanahan
Elliot & Whitney Michel
Jean-Marie Minton
Jean Molitor
Kate Monahan
Steve Monieson
Sharon O'Brien
Arlene Oium
Raymon Pedersen
Leann Pope
Joanna Porvin
Raven and Dove
Antique Gallery
A grant from David Reinisch
& Julie Kiefer Fund
at the Chicago
Community Foundation
Karen Remsen

Corey Rubenstein
Debra Russell
Michael Ryan
John Sabet
Peter Schultz
Elizabeth Selph
Richard Selph
Debra Shore
Larry Shrader
Sheena & Jason Smith
Jessica Swanson
Mark Templeton
Frank Tsai
Marianne Vangel
Elise Weisbach
Kristen Welch
Amy Wenz
Richard Wetzal

