



February 5, 2019

Dear Friend and Supporter,

The Board of Directors and President/CEO Maria Elena Geyer of CancerPartners, the Coachella Valley's unique cancer support non-profit, wish to announce that after nearly 15 years of serving all those in the community touched by cancer, the organization will cease its operations on or before February 28, 2019.

Founded as Gilda's Club Desert Cities, the organization first opened its welcoming doors in Cathedral City in November 2004, fulfilling the vision of valley resident Paula Berke and her co-founders, Phyllis Greene, Judy Wolfe and Estelle Cooper. It moved to Palm Desert at the end of 2013 and in 2017 changed its name to CancerPartners.

From the beginning, the "clubhouse" was the nurturing, homelike environment where everyone impacted by cancer—men, women, children, teens, as well as their loved ones—received the educational and emotional support deemed by the Institute of Medicine to be as important in cancer care as medical treatment. The professionally led support groups, medical lectures and workshops, healthy lifestyle classes and social events were provided at no cost to participants, ensuring that all could benefit from the program, regardless of their financial situation.

Nothing remotely resembling this kind of all-embracing cancer support existed in the Coachella Valley when the founders began their pioneering efforts in the early 2000s. Today, however, several other healthcare organizations (including two of the valley's hospitals) have begun to offer similar programs. Thus, cancer patients now have a variety of opportunities to get the support they need. CancerPartners, its mission fulfilled, is pleased to refer program participants to these service providers.

The Board is extremely grateful for the support of the hundreds of individuals and organizations that made it possible to serve the community so faithfully and well for 15 years. They include the credentialed facilitators at the heart of the program, healthy lifestyle class instructors, volunteer leaders such as the Medical Resource Council and fundraising event chairs, staff members, foundations that have provided program grants, office and fundraising volunteers, generous donors, community organizations, hospitals and healthcare professionals, and the media. Most of all, the Board thanks the approximately 3,400 cancer patients, survivors, and caring family members per year who have allowed CancerPartners to support them on their cancer journey. It has been a privilege and an honor to be of service.

With gratitude,

Maria Elena Geyer  
President and Chief Executive Officer

Paul D. Golden  
Chairman, Board of Directors

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The CancerPartners mission is to ensure that all people impacted by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action, and sustained by community.

CancerPartners

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