



# It's a Breast Thing Newsletter

Local Non Profit Supporting Breast Cancer Patients since 2007

Website: [www.itsabreastthing.org](http://www.itsabreastthing.org)

Spring Newsletter 2022

We are so excited to introduce you to our new IBT logo.  
Our goal continues to be fund raising and to give out grants locally.  
We will be getting updated materials out soon!

## The Mission of "It's a Breast Thing"

Is to **ENHANCE** the lives of breast cancer patients thru financial grants,

provide **SUPPORT** to survivors and families,

all while establishing strong **PARTNERSHIPS** with care providers.

**DONATIONS** are accepted throughout the year.

**For more information visit our website:**

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

**Grants** are awarded to patients that reside and are receiving treatment in the Mid-Michigan area who have unmet needs related to their breast cancer treatment.

**Grant Information** is available under "Financial Assistance".

### Mailing Address:

It's a Breast Thing  
P.O. Box 743  
East Lansing, Michigan 48826

### Email:

[info@itsabreastthing.org](mailto:info@itsabreastthing.org)

## Our Story



**It's a Breast Thing (IBT)** was created in 2007 in an effort to help local breast cancer patients who were struggling financially. As Salon owners we had always supported local charities but after years of going through the diagnoses of breast cancer with so many of our clients we realized we needed to do more than we were. We created **It's a Breast Thing (IBT)** along with Dr. Carol Slomski and Tonie Brovant and started an annual event to raise money for breast cancer patients.

For the first years we donated the money to local organizations to support that cause but soon became aware of the great financial need in our community. **It's a Breast Thing (IBT)** became a 501(c)3 in 2010 so that we could reach out to and award grants to patients who were in treatment in Ingham, Eaton, Clinton and Shiawassee counties who either had no insurance or inadequate insurance. The first grant awarded was in 2012. Shortly after that Dr. Slomski and Tonie Brovant left the non profit.

We raise the money to fund these grants by holding a fund raising event every year on the first Tuesday of October, where we host our very popular bra decorating contest. Local businesses and individuals decorate bras and compete to be one of the top 12 winners which are then featured in the **IBT** calendar with breast cancer survivors serving as models. We also welcome health related exhibitors who offer valuable information to our guests, and with the support of local experts, we offer an educational program with the latest information about breast cancer treatment.

As the years have evolved, our board of 11 members and all the volunteers that help and support what we do have taken **IBT** to new levels. Our hope for the future is to educate the communities we serve and to increase the number of patients in treatment whom we are able to help. The opportunity to raise the amount of each grant as well as the number of counties we serve will be made possible by our event sponsors and supporters.

We look forward to making a meaningful impact on our community by following our mission to enrich the lives of local breast cancer patients on their journey to better health!

Barb McKessy & Suzi Wyman  
Founders of **It's a Breast Thing** 2007



# A Survivor's Story



In 2016, Sandee Kingsley felt a lump in her breast. At the age of 41, she was sure it was nothing so she did what most 41 year olds would do, she waited a couple of months thinking it would go away. It did not and one morning she woke up to pain in the breast where she had discovered the lump. She called her doctor to get an appointment for her first mammogram. She proceeded to have her mammogram, followed by an ultrasound and then a biopsy.

In August of that year, Sandee was diagnosed with Her2-Positive breast cancer. She sat down with her husband and the doctors and made a plan. Chemo, surgery and then radiation. Great, she thought! We have a plan and we will complete the plan and be done. That's what she believed, and that's what happened. She was in remission!!! So Sandee resumed her life with her husband and children, completing her masters degree and getting her black belt in tae-kwan-do. Life was good.

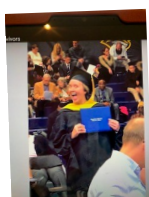
On graduation day, Sandee was walking across the stage to receive her hard earned master's degree in Social Work. She became dizzy, fell and hit her head. She went to the hospital where they did an x-ray. Didn't find any brain trauma and discharged her. The next day, however, Sandee was still feeling nausea and dizziness. So, she followed up with her family doctor and oncologist. More tests were given and they discovered three spots in the brain, liver and lungs. That's when she realized she would be fighting and dealing with this disease the rest of her life.

Sandee found **It's a Breast Thing** shortly after her first diagnosis and attended their October Event. That's when she knew she wanted to support this organization. Her eyes were awoken with so many resources available to her. She met wonderful women, many going through their own breast cancer journeys. Prior to being diagnosed, she was unaware of how many organizations and resources are out there for breast cancer patients. She loved the fact that **It's a Breast Thing** has many doctors involved in it's organization for a variety of tasks. She knew if there ever is a need or question she can turn to **It's a Breast Thing** and they will get her in contact with the correct person or organization.

Sandee received a \$500 grant in 2016 shortly after her diagnosis. She was also awarded a second grant of \$1000 when she received her second diagnosis. These grants were such a relief for Sandee and her family during these difficult times. The fact that **It's a Breast Thing** does not tell the recipient how or what to spend the money on made all the difference in the world. She could choose to pay bills or take her family on a much needed vacation. It didn't matter, the money was hers to use as she saw fit.

Today, Sandee is a fighter to say the very least. She continues to pass along her story of courage and strength to all who ask her. She has had the privilege of giving motivational speeches to various groups and because of that, she has met so many wonderful, kind people. People now have chosen to give back to her with rides to U of M for treatments where they find great places to eat along the way. People will sit with her through her treatment, playing games to help make the time go by.

When Sandee was diagnosed she said "Why me? I'm a good person, I do what I'm supposed to do." And then after a while she thought, "Why not me?" She asked herself, "What can I do to make people happy, make their cancer journey easier, show them it isn't all bad? No one ever tells you about the other stuff that you will experience during your treatment." Sandee will make you smile and laugh along the way. She and her mother are on the OUTREACH committee for **It's a Breast Thing**. This committee helps to educate doctors, hospitals, organizations, everyday people on who we are, what we do, and how they can help **IBT** help more women. If you are blessed to meet this wonderful courageous woman, your life will be forever changed for the better.





# 2022 Happenings!



## #SmallActs Campaign

In addition to awarding \$1000 grants to local breast cancer patients, It's a Breast Thing #SmallActs campaign serves to brighten a breast cancer patient's day. Small tokens of kindness and gift cards for patients are delivered 3 times a year to *Cancer Centers* in the Mid-Michigan area.

MSU Breslin Cancer Center, Sparrow Hospital Herbert-Herman Cancer Center, Red Cedar Oncology, McLaren Hospital, Karmanos Cancer Center, Compass-Health Cancer Center, Mid-Michigan Physicians, Sparrow Eaton-Charlotte, Sparrow-St. Johns, Memorial Owosso or Eaton Rapids Medical Center.

#SmallActs is in need of donations for gift cards. If your organization, business or an individual would like to donate gift cards they can be dropped off at Sola Salons/ Ultimate Image.

Financial donations may be made on our website through paypal.

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

Drop off donations:

Sola Salons/Ultimate Image  
2405 Showtime Drive  
Lansing, MI 48912  
(Eastwood Town Center)

## October Event

Tuesday, October 4, 2022

- A fundraising "Event" showcasing the latest information on breast health, breast cancer prevention and treatment.
- A themed bra decorating contest.  
**Theme: Careers in our Community**
- A calendar with the contest winning bras modeled by local breast cancer survivors.

## Grants Awarded

Total Grants Awarded to Date

**506**

2022 Awarded

**14**

**45 Grant Requests Pending**

**Awaiting generous donations**

**like yours!**

# DONATE

# TODAY

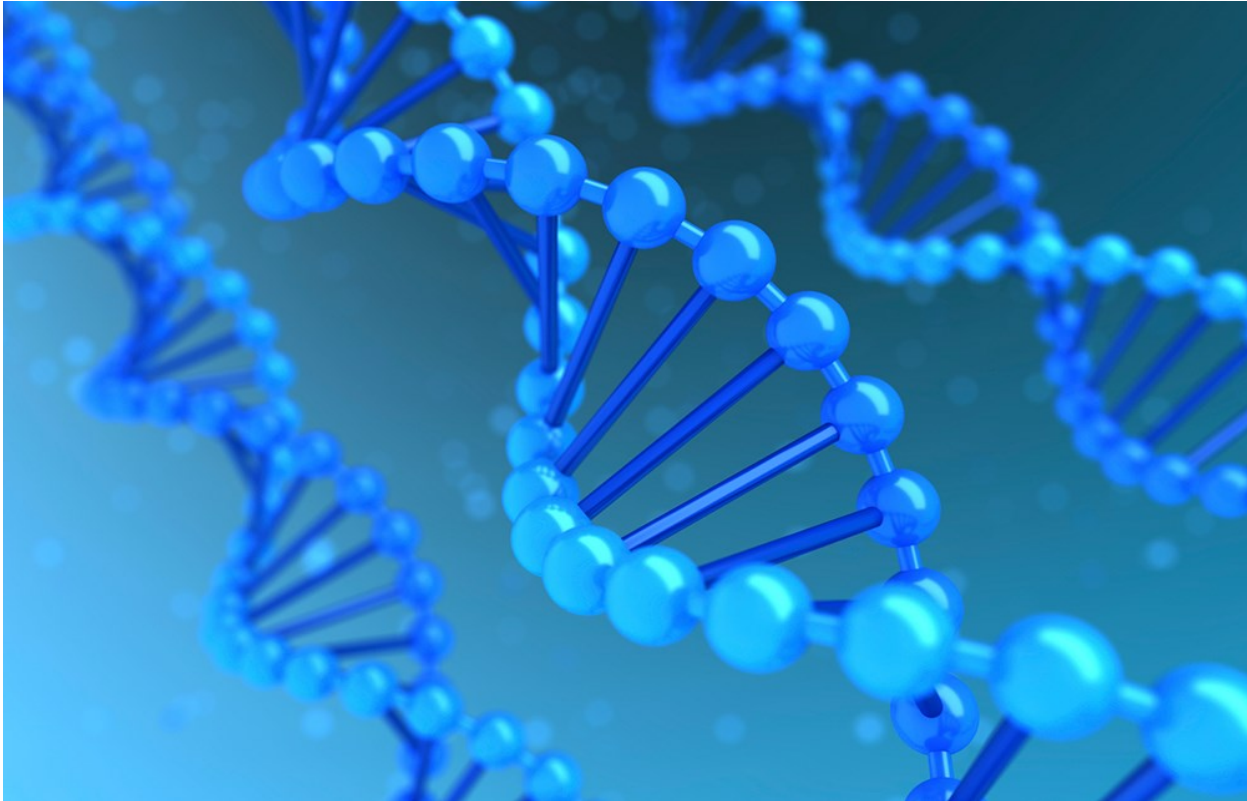
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## Doctor's Spotlight



### Genetic Testing

Do you have a personal history and/or family history of cancer? If so, you might be a candidate for genetic testing. Genetic testing helps identify inherited mutations that have been passed down from family members. Inherited mutations account for 5 to 10% of breast cancers and 20% of ovarian cancers.

Genetic counseling services/testing can determine if a person has inherited a mutation, develop a cancer prevention plan for those at risk of developing cancer and/or help make treatment decisions in those with cancer. Testing certain family members may also be recommended.

Individuals with a BRCA and/or non-BRCA mutation may benefit from increased screening and/or prophylactic surgical intervention. In addition, medications are used to help decrease the risk of developing breast cancer, such as Tamoxifen or aromatase inhibitor. PARP Inhibitors have been approved for patients with ovarian cancer, metastatic breast cancer, metastatic prostate cancer and metastatic pancreatic cancer.

Please talk to a healthcare professional to see if you qualify for genetic testing.

Submitted by Dr. Carol Rapson



# Volunteer Opportunities



## OUTREACH Committee

The OUTREACH Committee is an essential arm of **It's a Breast Thing IBT**. We are a dedicated group who meet monthly to discuss ways we can support **IBT** in the work that it does, by reaching out into the community to breast cancer medical professionals and care providers.

OUTREACH also helps to deliver information about IBT by making presentations to local organizations. In addition, we support **#Small Acts** and the gifts they provide to patients.

OUTREACH helped with fundraising by soliciting gifts to create a gift basket, representing Lansing's Old Town; the Outreach basket was among other baskets auctioned off at the Annual October Event.

**OUTREACH is currently looking for volunteers** to join us every month in our efforts to continue making **IBT** a strong advocate for breast cancer patients and their families.

Contact Joan Johnson at [joanjohnson.outreach@itsabreastthing.org](mailto:joanjohnson.outreach@itsabreastthing.org) to become a part of our Outreach family.

## Fund Raising

- Collect gift cards or financial donations from family, friends or at work.
- Contact the IBT website with others and show them where they can make a financial donation.  
[www.itsabreastthing.org](http://www.itsabreastthing.org)
- Sponsor a monthly donation of \$10.00-\$100.
- Contact OUTREACH if you have an idea for a fund raiser.

Drop off donations:  
Sola Salons/Ultimate Image  
2405 Showtime Drive  
Lansing, MI 48912  
(Eastwood Town Center)

## October Event

**Tuesday, October 4, 2022**

**Eagle Eye Golf Club**

**5:00 - 8:00 pm**

Contact:

[info@itsabreastthing.org](mailto:info@itsabreastthing.org)

if you would like to volunteer.

### **BRA Decorating Contest**

This is a "Bra Decorating Contest". **To be contender for the IBT calendar. All bras must be wearable by our calendar models.**

**Theme: Careers in our Community**

For more information check out our website at

[www.itsabreastthing.org/index.php/bra-contestants](http://www.itsabreastthing.org/index.php/bra-contestants)



### ***Calendar Model***

Our goal for the IBT Calendar is to have a diverse population of breast cancer survivors. If you are interested in being a model check out our website for more information:

[www.itsabreastthing.org/index.php/model-info](http://www.itsabreastthing.org/index.php/model-info)

## Donate Today

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