



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## Community Walk to Fight Pancreatic Cancer raises \$81,609

**Rochester, NY** - Organizers for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Step It Up! Cure Pancreatic Cancer 5K and Family Fun Day held November 15, 2014 today announced that the event raised \$81,609. Nearly 900 people from across the country attended the event, which was held at Rochester Institute of Technology's Gordon Field House. Scott Spezzano, 98.9 The Buzz, served as Master of Ceremonies. Spezzano lost his mother in 2013 to pancreatic cancer. The annual event is the Pancreatic Cancer Association of Western New York's (PCAWNY) major fundraiser.

"We continue to be humbled by the outpouring of generosity and support from the community," stated Lorie Perez, Pancreatic Cancer Association of WNY Chair. She added, "The event is a fun day where we celebrate the lives of all our loved ones currently battling the disease and honor those who we have lost to this horrible disease. It's also about creating awareness about pancreatic cancer – the risk factors and symptoms. As the fourth leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, and third here in Monroe County, pancreatic cancer lacks awareness and national funding for research so support of grassroots organizations like ours is vital to both."

Event organizers stated that monies raised from the 2014 event will support pancreatic cancer research and patient support services. "The success of this year's "Step It Up! Cure Pancreatic Cancer" Walk is truly a commendable tribute to those that organized this highly-successful event....those that participated.....and those that will benefit from the research efforts being put forth by the Wilmot Cancer Institute to combat this terrible disease that has a profound effect on those being treated," commented Michael Donnelly who served as the first-ever Honorary Chair of the annual event. He added, "As an 11-year survivor of Pancreatic Cancer, I was extremely humbled and honored to be a part of this year's walk which, in turn, helps numerous individuals and families who on a daily basis strive to beat this unfortunate disease that plagues many, not only here in Monroe County, NY but throughout the World. We cannot have enough research."

PCAWNY directly funds pancreatic cancer research conducted at Wilmot Cancer Institute by Dr. Aram Hezel and Dr. Hucky Land. Additionally, the agency offers hour-long patient support groups twice a month for anyone battling pancreatic cancer to provide them with opportunities to meet others who are fighting the disease and to share their experiences as they give and gain support from each other. A Family and Caregiver Support Group is also an hour-long held twice a month. This group focuses on the well-being of family members and caregivers and helping them through the emotional and physical challenges of caring for their loved one. More information the programs and services PCAWNY offers can be found on their website at [www.pcawny.org](http://www.pcawny.org).

EDITOR'S NOTE: PHOTO ATTACHED

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*About Pancreatic Cancer Association of Western NY – Pancreatic Cancer Association of WNY (PCAWNY) is a Rochester, NY based charity established to create awareness, raise funding, and advocate for all those affected by pancreatic cancer. Learn more at [www.pcawny.org](http://www.pcawny.org).*

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**Walk Photos - Survivor Walk led by Honorary Event Chair – Michael Donnelly (center with wife, Helen)**



**Walk Photos – general walk**

