



5th Annual Step It Up! Cure Pancreatic Cancer 5K Walk November 08, 2014



Michael Donnelly

Rochester, N.Y.—The Pancreatic Cancer Association of Western New York has announced that **Michael Donnelly, an 11-year pancreatic cancer survivor** and a board member at Wilmot Cancer Institute, is the **2014 Honorary Chair of its 5th Annual Step It Up! Cure Pancreatic Cancer 5K Walk**. The fundraiser held every November is an indoor 5K walk and family fun day. The 2014 event is scheduled for **Saturday, November 15th at RIT's Gordon Field House from 12:00 noon until 4:00 p.m.** Organizers state that the purpose of the event is to create awareness and generate financial support for local research at the Wilmot Cancer Institute as well as programs and services for patients and their families.

Michael Donnelly, CEO of The Donnelly Company, and a senior career coach, has been an active board member at the Wilmot Cancer Institute since 2006. Diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2003, this November marks his 11th anniversary as a pancreatic cancer survivor. He is also associated with the California-based PANCAN organization and helps counsel patients considering having or who have had the Whipple procedure; a surgery he also underwent to remove the tumor in his pancreas.

“To serve as the Honorary Chair of the 2014 Pancreatic Cancer Association of Western New York’s, (PCAWNY) annual Step It Up! Cure Pancreatic Cancer 5K Walk is indeed a humbling honor, which has a special significance in my being an 11-year survivor of this dreaded cancerous disease,” remarked Donnelly. He added, “The significant strides that this volunteer group has accomplished in these past four years of securing over \$230,000 in financial support directed toward cancer research at the Wilmot Cancer Institute is to be highly commended. Without their dedicated endeavors, the financial “Seed Grants” provided to researchers, Dr. Hucky Land and Dr. Hezel that resulted in a \$2-million grant from the NCI would never have been a reality.”

Throughout his career in communications and financial advancement consulting, he has worked with several major corporations including Eastman Kodak Company, The Du Pont Company, ER-Associates, and The Smithsonian Institute. He served as Director of Communications/Press Secretary for Tom Golisano’s 1994 campaign for Governor of New York State. Additionally, Donnelly was Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer for the Genesee Hospital Foundation and Executive Director of the Rochester Italian Heritage Foundation. Donnelly splits his time between Rochester and Marco Island, Florida. He is an advisor with the Finger Lakes Region American Cancer Society and when in Florida he is active with the Marco Island American Cancer Society Support Group. He and his wife, Helen, are Penfield residents.

“The walk is our major fundraiser and a huge opportunity for us to create community awareness,” stated Mary Ellen Smith, Pancreatic Cancer Association of WNY Vice Chair. Smith added, “As a survivor, Michael plays a significant role as honorary chair in helping us bring more awareness to this horrific disease. To those diagnosed and their families, he also brings hope – something that we strive to create through the upbeat tone of the walk and by educating people about this disease.”

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