



# alliance

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[ *noun* | al·li·ance | \ə ˈlɪʃ əns ] 1. a union between people, groups, countries 2. a relationship in which people agree to **WORK TOGETHER**

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In days of yore, alliances were forged between countries by kings and queens. Armies were dispatched and frigates set sail in the name of causes said alliances embraced.

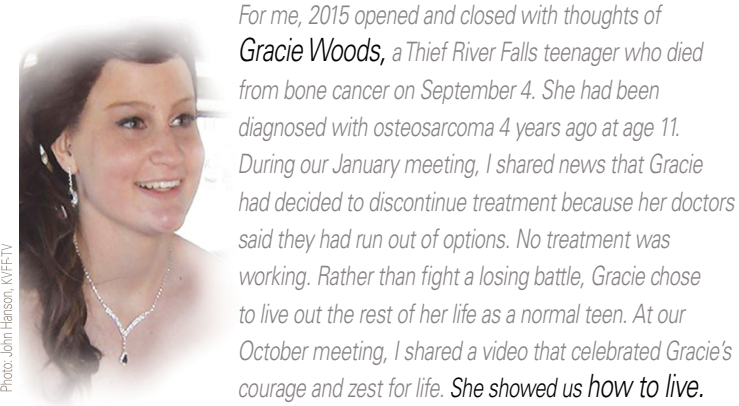
Today, it's not countries but organizations that forge alliances. And it's individuals who dare to advocate for changes not previously believed possible who **make the difference** in the world of cancer control.

Spurred by a belief that **change is possible** – that cancer can indeed be cured if we work together – the Minnesota Cancer Alliance is proud to share these highlights from 2015. So much is possible when we align our efforts and **work together for change**.



# Partners & Friends...

It has been my privilege the past two years to serve as chair of the Cancer Alliance's Steering Committee. In that capacity, I reserved time at the beginning of each meeting for fellow committee members to share how cancer had touched their lives during the three months since we last met. I did so because I firmly believe that *when we connect our hearts to the work that we do, it motivates our brains to work even harder and more productively.*



For me, 2015 opened and closed with thoughts of **Gracie Woods**, a Thief River Falls teenager who died from bone cancer on September 4. She had been diagnosed with osteosarcoma 4 years ago at age 11. During our January meeting, I shared news that Gracie had decided to discontinue treatment because her doctors said they had run out of options. No treatment was working. Rather than fight a losing battle, Gracie chose to live out the rest of her life as a normal teen. At our October meeting, I shared a video that celebrated Gracie's courage and zest for life. *She showed us how to live.*

Gracie is one of an estimated **9,820** Minnesotans who died from cancer in 2015. Until her death, she was one of more than a quarter of a million Minnesotans living with a history of cancer. Many of them are healthy. However, others suffer from physical, emotional, and financial after effects that too easily fall into the out-of-sight, out-of-mind category after active cancer treatment concludes. These Minnesotans, those who have died and those who survive, along with their families and caregivers and advocates, are **the reason the Minnesota Cancer Alliance exists.** They challenge us to work even harder to dethrone cancer, that emperor of all maladies.

By next year at this time, Minnesota will have a new cancer plan – a vision for action over the next decade. I invite you to **get involved in shaping Cancer Plan Minnesota 2016-2025.** And I invite you to help achieve its goals by working together on strategies that align individual and organizational might to create a world that Gracie Woods would be proud of.

Thank you for the privilege of serving.



# 2015 HIGHLIGHTS



<p><b>NEW faces</b></p>	<p><b>NEW policies</b></p>	<p><b>NEW confidence</b></p>	<p><b>NEW resolve</b></p>	<p><b>NEW funding</b></p>	<p><b>NEW opportunities</b></p>
<p><b>JERRI HINIKER</b> (at right), program manager at Stratis Health, and <b>DR. NANCY HUTCHISON</b> (at left), medical director for cancer rehabilitation at the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute and Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, joined the Alliance's Steering Committee in January.</p> <p><b>DONNA MCDUFFIE</b> accepted appointment in April as new director of the Department of Health's Comprehensive Cancer Control Program, which provides leadership and staff for the Alliance. She brings years of experience in strategic planning, prevention programming, and public health practice to the position.</p>	<p><b>SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGES</b> By the end of the year, 35 Minnesota hospitals had pledged or implemented efforts to reduce or eliminate sugar-sweetened beverages, and the Alliance worked directly with 21 of them or their system leadership. Many of them will also stop serving deep-fried food and offer more fresh fruits and vegetables.</p> <p><b>RADON</b> The Minnesota legislature enacted further consumer protections against radon exposure with passage of the Radon Licensing Act. The law requires professionals who test for radon and who perform radon mitigation to be licensed by the state by October 2017.</p> <p><b>TOBACCO</b> Numerous communities around the state adopted local ordinances prohibiting smoking and vaping (using e-cigarettes) in all public places and workplaces. Members of the Alliance testified or wrote letters in support of regulatory changes in Beltrami, Dakota, Douglas, Hennepin, Olmsted, Ramsey, and Scott counties.</p>	<p>When advocates started laying the groundwork five years ago to remove sugar-sweetened beverages from Minnesota hospitals, the goal was to convince nine hospitals to lead the way through policy change.</p> <p><b>35 HOSPITALS ALREADY HAVE ADOPTED POLICIES TO GET RID OF SUGARY DRINKS.</b> What an extraordinary accomplishment! Successes like this motivate the Alliance and its partners to join forces as change agents.</p> <p>Nearly 100 individuals, members and non-members alike, participated in two Alliance-sponsored <i>Make It about Change</i> workshops to learn how to <b>ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE</b> in their organizations, communities and the state as a whole.</p>	<p><b>IN MARCH</b>, 85 individuals from 30 organizations gathered for the State Colorectal Cancer Action Planning Meeting to identify steps needed to achieve an 80% colon cancer screening rate by 2018.</p> <p><b>IN AUGUST</b>, U.S. Congressman Keith Ellison participated in an 80% for ALL breakfast event organized by Alliance partner ACS CAN (American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network).</p> <p><b>IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER</b>, the Alliance-endorsed Provider/Practice Workgroup hosted a webinar series featuring clinics that have been successful at increasing their colon cancer screening rates. Physicians, nurses and office staff from Allina Health, Essentia Health, and Mayo Clinic shared approaches that are working for them.</p>	<p>The Minnesota Legislature, with the full support of the Alliance, approved a <b>\$250,000 INVESTMENT</b> to build awareness and support for the adoption of advance care planning statewide. Grant funds were awarded to the Twin Cities Medical Society Foundation, headed by incoming steering committee member Sue Schettle, chair of the Alliance Advance Care Planning workgroup.</p>	<p>In November, the Alliance kicked off a year-long process to revise and update <b>CANCER PLAN MINNESOTA 2011-2016.</b> The Alliance invites new organizations and communities to speak up, to examine old problems from new vantage points, and to identify strategies that are responsive, adaptable, and light-footed enough to craft a plan for the next decade. Imagine what is possible when people align forces and replace fear with resolve and a vocabulary of hope. More and more Minnesotans survive cancer. Is it time to start thinking about CURE? Not just for certain cancers, but for every cancer?</p>



# Accelerate your efforts...

Work together with individuals and organizations who share your passion and determination to reduce the burden of cancer.



## JOIN a network.

Alliance networks meet regularly to give members a forum to share ideas, coordinate activities, and shape strategies. Currently there are three networks: the Colorectal Cancer Network, the MN Cancer Alliance Commission on Cancer Network, and the Cancer Health Equity Network.



## SEEK ENDORSEMENT for your work.

The Alliance created an endorsement mechanism to amplify and accelerate the cancer-related work of member organizations and advocates. Endorsed projects provide:

- A chance to connect with new partners
- Opportunity to co-brand projects with the Alliance
- Use of the affiliation to support funding applications
- Access to Alliance communication channels including website and e-newsletter



## PARTICIPATE in a workgroup. Serve on a committee.

The Steering Committee works hard to identify where the organization can do the most good as a convener, motivator, and contributor to change.

In 2015, the Alliance supported workgroup initiatives on *licensure for genetic counselors*, efforts to *reduce tobacco use*, increased use of *advance care directives* and strategies to *increase colon cancer screening rates*.

Members also serve on volunteer committees – *Membership, Evaluation, Policy* – that keep the Alliance functioning and vital.



### 2015 STEERING COMMITTEE

Warren Larson, Chair  
*Sanford Health*

Ken Bence, Vice-Chair  
*Medica*

Ruth Bachman  
*Individual Member*

Anne Carlson  
*Colon Cancer Coalition*

Jim Chase  
*MN Community Measurement*

Sarah Christensen  
*Mayo Clinic Cancer Center*

Mari Damhof  
*Individual Member*

Katie Engman  
*Association of Nonsmokers-MN*

DeAnna Finifrock  
*Fond du Lac Human Services Division  
NCCCP*

Matt Flory  
*American Cancer Society*

Thomas Flynn, M.D.  
*Minnesota Medical Association*

Jerri Hiniker  
*Stratis Health*

Nancy Hutchison, M.D.  
*Allina Health, Virginia Piper Cancer Institute*

Barbara Kunz  
*Humphrey Cancer Center, North Memorial*

DeAnn Lazovich, Ph.D.  
*University of Minnesota,  
Masonic Cancer Center*

Shelly Madigan  
*Minnesota Department of Health*

Jeffrey Rank, M.D.  
*Minnesota Gastroenterology, PA.*

Kris Rhodes  
*American Indian Cancer Foundation*

Cathy Skinner  
*The Art of Well*

Patrick Stieg  
*Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota*

Ann C. Vogel, M.D.  
*Individual Member*

Lindy Yakanovich, Esq.  
*Cancer Legal Line*

### ORGANIZATION MEMBERS

African American Breast Cancer Alliance  
American Cancer Society  
American Indian Cancer Foundation  
Angel Foundation  
Art of Well  
Association for Nonsmokers- MN  
Be The Match  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota  
Cancer Legal Line  
Care Partners  
Cashman Center  
Colon Cancer Coalition  
Fond du Lac Human Services Division  
Gilda's Club Twin Cities  
Humphrey Cancer Center,  
North Memorial Health Care  
Lao Assistance Center of MN  
Lilly Oncology  
Masonic Cancer Center, U of MN  
Mayo Clinic Cancer Center  
Medica  
Metro-Minnesota Community Clinical Oncology Program  
Minnesota Breast Cancer Coalition  
Minnesota Department of Health  
Minnesota Gastroenterology, PA.  
Minnesota Genetic Counselors Assoc.  
Minnesota Medical Association  
Minnesota Society of Clinical Oncology  
MN Community Measurement  
Open Arms of Minnesota  
Progressive Individual Resources Inc.  
Sanford Health  
Stratis Health  
Susan G. Komen Minnesota  
Twin Cities Medical Society  
University of Minnesota Cancer Care, Fairview  
Virginia Piper Cancer Institute,  
Allina Health  
West Side Clinic

### INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Lisa Belak  
Lynn E. Everling  
Maggie R. Fowlston  
Catherine Graeve  
Heather Hirsch  
Enyinnaya Merengwa  
Susan Nelsen  
Syndal Ortman  
Melanie Plucinski  
Jeffrey Rank  
Charles R. Rogers  
Janie Walker  
Heather West  
Caitlyn Winchell

**“You don’t do this work of fighting cancer alone.**

**No one group or organization has the reach, the perspective, or the experience. But by working together, we can truly make a difference.”**

Ken Bence  
Vice-Chair, Steering Committee