



Holly A.

*“On life’s vast ocean diversely we sail,
Reason the card, but Passion is the gale...”*
-Alexander Pope-

In 1999, I was diagnosed with Stage III Breast Cancer. Though I never felt lucky to have been burdened with this disease, I do feel lucky to still be living disease free, especially when one considers that nearly 40,000 women in this country die of breast cancer every single year. This figure astounds me.

This diagnosis changed the course of my life and allowed me to witness the great birth of the Breast Cancer Coalition. The founders, each a true visionary, welcomed me with open arms. I have served as the Executive Director of the Coalition since 2001.

When it comes to issues around women’s healthcare and matters of advocacy, I have never been an observer of the process. Throughout my years as a childbirth educator, nurse, midwife, and nonprofit administrator, women and women’s health issues have been at the forefront of everything I do. We are, each one of us, inherently active beings. And as such, our greatest fulfillment, must come in acting, physically or mentally exercising our talents and realizing our potential. As advocates, we strive to become most fully what we are capable of being and we desire to work for something larger than ourselves.

The women of the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester give the words “passion” and “fulfillment” new meaning. They demonstrate, every single day, that one need not be physically strong or beautiful, financially wealthy or powerful, intellectually brilliant or socially connected to make a difference. The women associated with our organization inspire me. I am hopeful that, by working together, we can make a greater difference in the lives impacted by this disease. Being involved with a group of people so committed to the importance of what they are doing, and to the people with whom, and for whom, they are doing it, has been one of my life’s great pleasures. My greatest treasure is my family... my husband Tom, my children Zach, Ian, Morgan and Griffin, and my grandchildren.