Daniel Jacoby: Giving Back with Courage and Generosity

“The year was 1997 and I was two years into living out a lifelong dream as the co-founder of a fast growing start-up company called Digital Insight. We had just received our first round of venture capital funding, when I got a message from my doctor telling me to call him immediately.

"I was 31 years old when I walked into the doctor’s office a few days later. I felt like one hundred when I left. The doctor told me that I had a very large tumor in my brainstem. I shut down after he said brain tumor. I was in shock; he could not possibly mean me! I was too young to have cancer. But as the doctor spoke on, shock turned into reality, and then numbness. Somehow I drove home. I called my mother on the phone and completely broke down. Before I knew it my dog and I were back living at my parents’ house.

"Why did this happen to me now? I felt that I was helpless and my cancer was suddenly in control of my life. I was an independent individual who did not like getting help from anyone. In an instant my life was reduced to a life of uncertainty and I would need help from everyone.

"It took a few days, but I started telling myself that this was IT! This was life and death and no one could fight for my life but me. I then began to regain some control by learning everything I could about my cancer, diagnosis methods, and treatment options. Although the treatment wiped me out physically and mentally, I thought, if I felt this horrible, then my cancer must really be taking a beating.

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Young Adults Connect at TWC

At 7 p.m. on the third Friday of every month, something special happens at The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura: the Young Adults Networking Group meets. Led by facilitator Maryana Palmer, a group of young adults discuss feelings, issues, anxieties and the gamut of emotions one experiences living with cancer.

After 26 years specializing in counseling cancer patients and their family members, Maryana Palmer retired from private practice. After facilitating other Wellness Community support groups, she started the Young Adults Networking Group nine years ago.

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Daniel Jacoby: Giving Back

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“Six weeks later I walked out of St. Joseph’s medical center after my last radiation treatment. I was filled with the relief of finishing treatment and the anxiety of having to wait to see if the treatment was effective. I thought, ‘was I now just supposed to re-enter life as if nothing had happened?’ I almost wished the treatments weren’t over. If the treatments were over, what could I physically do to continue the fight to destroy my cancer?

“At my next visit to my radiation oncologist I told him, ‘If I don’t fight, if I don’t do something, I feel like the tumor will get a second chance and start to grow again.’ He directed me to The Wellness Community. It was clear the physical fight was now over and the mental fight was just beginning.

“What I found at The Wellness Community changed my life. I joined a participant support group, the brain tumor group and the young adult group. The first few weeks I sat quietly listening to the most amazing stories of survival and perseverance that I had ever come across in my life. The stories were inspirational in so many ways and I saw how my friends battled with dignity and held sacred the sanctity of life.

"I posed tough questions to my support group, i.e. what was truly important in my life, and listened to their heartfelt and thoughtful answers. And then I realized something powerful. These wonderful people in my group, who were going through so much, still reached out to someone in need. With all they were going through, they still were giving! This was an empowering moment. For many months all my thoughts and actions were focused on me. After that particular support group I felt that I was not damaged goods anymore but I could once again contribute something meaningful to someone else’s life.

"Many talk about a cancer benefit. Like many others, I feel my life is more meaningful and fulfilling after cancer than it was before. I thank The Wellness Community for this. I cannot imagine what my life would be like if not for the services and community I found at The Wellness Community toward the continued availability of services. He also has served as a "buddy" for others who are newly diagnosed with his type of brain tumor.

Daniel’s leadership brings a unique perspective, that of a Wellness Community participant and that of a business leader. “The biggest problem I see facing charities is that of sustainability. People do not realize that running a charity such as The Wellness Community is similar to running a business.” Thus, Daniel’s presidency has had two foci, strategic planning and the development of the infrastructure to support program growth and expansion.

Daniel not only gives his time, but his treasure. He has made an annual pledge of $50,000 to The Wellness Community and also has served as a “buddy” for others who are newly diagnosed with his type of brain tumor.

Daniel is a rare testimony to that which is best in the human spirit: compassion, courage, generosity, service and endurance.

Article by Marty Nason, R.N., M.N., Program Director.
Young Adults Connect at TWC

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The group is open to individuals between ages 20-40. It is not just for cancer participants; family and friends in the required age group are encouraged to participate. “The need was there,” states Maryana. “Cancer patients need to have a place to feel safe, to know that they are not alone and to get support from other people going through similar situations.”

Even though the group meets only once per month, strong friendships form. Ann Weisberg, a 36-year-old cancer participant, says “People that I thought were great friends left. You find out what is really important in life when you are confronted with cancer. All of the people in group have some form of a life transformation; priorities have changed. We relate to each other’s fears, and there are plenty. How can life-long bonds not be formed?” Maryana adds, “Whatever fears you have, whether they are relationship issues with a spouse or family member, dating, the fear of the unknown, dependency issues, career issues, the fear of infertility due to treatment - the participants understand. People get it here.”

Thais Saint, a 30-year-old breast cancer participant said, “I feel so comfortable coming here. I don’t feel alone anymore. I have had a tremendous amount of support from my family, but really, they cannot even begin to understand because it didn’t happen to them. There are others in the same boat with me. I can share my anger, my fears, and other, deeply personal issues and know I will not be judged. I feel safe sharing. There is a lot of comfort in that. It’s also nice that family and friends can attend the group.”

The Young Adults Networking Group meets the third Friday of every month from 7-9 p.m. Join at anytime and remember – family and friends, between the ages of 20-40, are also welcome!

Article by Debbie Wilson, Program Assistant.

Honoring Our Volunteers

Volunteer of the Year: Yvonne Watkins

Yvonne Watkins came to The Wellness Community two years ago as part of a team from Amgen to evaluate and advise on our computer network, including our database.

Yvonne kept coming -- week after week -- to assist with and finally create an all new Access-based, user friendly database. She spent a minimum of one full day most weeks, plus additional work from home in Venice, California.

Yvonne, a computer consultant, finished her work for Amgen some time ago, but she continued to make the long trek to Westlake Village to complete her project. She has given more time and dedication than any other volunteer this past year, and was named Volunteer of the Year at our 2002 Volunteer Appreciation Party.

Virtual Wellness Community

Cancer support services are now available anytime, anywhere. Visit The Wellness Community National at www.thewellnesscommunity.org and click on Virtual Wellness Community. Cancer patients find weekly, real-time online support groups facilitated by trained professionals such as our own Anne Gessert. Also available are educational resources, mind-body exercises, and nutritional info.

The Virtual Wellness Community is presented by Amgen and supported by Lilly, Glaxosmithklin Oncology, and Roche.
Acts of Kindness: A Way of Life for TWC Volunteers

The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura honored its more than 500 volunteers on July 25 at the annual Volunteer Recognition Party. Held at the home of former board president Len Linton and his wife Judy, the event was a wonderful tribute to the hard work of everyone involved in TWC. We’ve listed our volunteers here to further recognize the people who are so critical to our success. Thank you!

Front Desk
Mary Ann Bang
Irene Bright
June Brown
Patricia Carelli
Hertha Chalfant
Lydia Conrad
Judy Crane
Pat Crosby
Carol DeZee
Joan Dodge
Cheryl Etherick
Ann Gerace
Fran Greenwald-Frank
Patricia Hank
Zabelle Lorenzen
Hillary McGowan
Gloria Moorman
Dee Morrow
Suzanne Purnell
Melissa Silver
Cora Washick
Marlyn Way,
Coordinator
Shari Zaretter

Computer Support
Andrew Burg
Paul Crossman
Jim Grettzinger
Kate Maglio
Yvonne Watkins

Hospitality
Elaine Brown
Ruth Buono
Judy Crane
Al Crowley
Margaret Dugan
Carole Jacobucci
Anne Hohimer
Frank LaFlamme
Zabelle Lorenzen
Carl Mackey
Wayne Madsen
Linda Nelson
Donna Peddicord
Mary Puopolo
Suzanne Purnell
Pat Sage
Kristin Toscano
Louse Van Muijen
Marilyn Way
Anna Weller
Ken Weller
Janice Wolf
Len Wolff

Bulk Mailings
Ruth Anderson
Mary Anne Bang
Tony Battaglia
Carmen Bell
Mary Linda Bent
Irene Bright
June Brown
Debbie Campbell
Luella Canfield
Adreanne Clark
Geri Conlan
Mike Crouch
Jay Cuppert
Joel Cuppert
Mary Lou Davis
Valerie Davis
Carol DeZee
Karen Diener
Margaret Dugan
Florence Faber
Dwight Feldman
Lyle Glasgow
Myrna Glasgow
Kaarren Grant
Margaret Harder
Marie Harding
Vl Heller
Emery Hober
Shirley Keaster
John King
Ruth Knott
Helga La Fiana
Pauline Lamorta
Daisy Le Vine
Kathy Mazzoni
Joan Medley
Kimberly Moore
Gloria Moorman
Evelyn Muller
Marena Murray
Scott McFarland
Dorothy McFallard
Linda Nelson
Susan Newlan
Karen Nutkiewicz
Pat Perry
Mary Puopolo
Robert Ranallo
Annette Richman
Geri Schneider
Helen Sterndel
Robert Thau
Kristin Toscano
Linda Valosko
Violet Warner
Anna Weller
Gail Wheelock,
Coordinator

Decorating Committee
June Brown
Patricia Carelli,
Chair
Joan Dodge
Zabelle Lorenzen
Valerie Uram
Sandi Vane

Bulk Mailings
Ruth Anderson
Mary Anne Bang
Tony Battaglia
Carmen Bell
Mary Linda Bent
Irene Bright
June Brown
Debbie Campbell
Luella Canfield
Adreanne Clark
Geri Conlan
Mike Crouch
Jay Cuppert
Joel Cuppert
Mary Lou Davis
Valerie Davis
Carol DeZee
Karen Diener
Margaret Dugan
Florence Faber
Dwight Feldman
Lyle Glasgow
Myrna Glasgow
Kaarren Grant
Margaret Harder
Marie Harding
Vl Heller
Emery Hober
Shirley Keaster
John King
Ruth Knott
Helga La Fiana
Pauline Lamorta
Daisy Le Vine
Kathy Mazzoni
Joan Medley
Kimberly Moore
Gloria Moorman
Evelyn Muller
Marena Murray
Scott McFarland
Dorothy McFallard
Linda Nelson
Susan Newlan
Karen Nutkiewicz
Pat Perry
Mary Puopolo
Robert Ranallo
Annette Richman
Geri Schneider
Helen Sterndel
Robert Thau
Kristin Toscano
Linda Valosko
Violet Warner
Anna Weller
Gail Wheelock,
Coordinator

Video Committee
Liz Balley
Paul Baskin
Gail Crawford

Latin Outreach
Pedro Arteaga
Carmen Castro
Maria Cruz
Alicia Davila
Nydia Galbusera
Nester Gallardo
Maria Hernandez
Rosa Maria Lara
Irene Layman

Community Outreach
Donna Applegate
Patricia Beeman
Frank Brough
Todd Cardona
Laurie De Jesus
Marilyn Feldman
Bob Ferber
Barbara Froloff
Gretta Helendoorn
Bob Huebert
Jeanne Huebert
Alisa Katz
Noreen Knutson
Ann Lipari
Jackie Marenstein

Sandy Martinez
Joyce Novak
Suzanne Purnell
Nancy Rey
Stephanie Scher
Kate Silverman
Theila Starr
Al Stein
Shari Zaretter

Quilt Project
Ruth Buono
June Brown
Carolyn Engel
Eva Nehering
Lyn Olson
Berh Pascual
Marcey Pascual
Irene Sanum
Joanne Smith
Vera Thau
Juanita Villanueva

Special Events
Marty Absher
Sheri Abug
Linda Adalton
Georgette Adang
Mark Aldrich
Wendy Aldrich
Lisa Allison
Hazel Allen
Ara Amini
Ava Amini
Cynthia Anders
Ruth Anderson
Joe Anglin
Linda Anglin
Arlene Angwin-Kipple
Donna Applegate
Allison Atherton
Katie Baker
Barbara Ballman
Mary Anne Bang
Paul Baskin
Shirley Baskin
Debbie Beauford
Bernice Bennett

Hospitality
Elaine Brown
Ruth Buono
Judy Crane
Al Crowley
Margaret Dugan
Carole Jacobucci
Anne Hohimer
Frank LaFlamme
Zabelle Lorenzen
Carl Mackey
Wayne Madsen
Linda Nelson
Donna Peddicord
Mary Puopolo
Suzanne Purnell
Pat Sage
Kristin Toscano
Louse Van Muijen
Marilyn Way
Anna Weller
Ken Weller
Janice Wolf
Len Wolff

Building and Grounds
Floyd Bennett
Jerry Nerher
Carol Robinson,
Chair

Central Kitchen
John King
Emily Hober
Vi Heller
Margaret Harder
Margaret Law

Latino Outreach
Juanita Villanueva
Herminia V anegas
Antonia Morales
Leocadia Moreno
Guadalupe Pelez
Elvira Perez
Rosy Ramirez
Dolores Rodriguez
Martin Rojas
Maria Ruiz
Maria Ryan
Mariana Salazar
Monica Tejada
Antonio Trejo

Building and Grounds
Floyd Bennett
Roger Benson
Melissa Berenstein
Debbie Berglas
Barbara Bernhardt
Suzanne Biancardi
Genevieve Bidwell
Brad Bilger
Pamela Billson
Alexandra Bjerg
Dottie Blum
Barbara Boone
Leanne Bossard
Judy Bottomley
Irene Bright
Eric Brill
Shari Brody
Pat Brooks
Kelli Brooks
Elaine Brown
Molly Buck
Rebecca Buck
Sue Benvenuto
Betty Burdick
Trisha Burr
Debbie Campbell
Robin Campbell,
Chair
Golf Tournament
Louella Canfield
Patricia Caputo
Todd Cardona
Patricia Carelli
Robert Carelli
Marie Carrillo
Mary Cheever
Faye Chey
Diane Cibicho
Jo Ann Clapsaddle
Sharon Clary
Mary Claybaugh
Delores Clemens
No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.

-Aesop

Volunteer Spotlight: Marilyn Way

Marilyn Way is the Coordinator of the Front Desk Volunteers. She began volunteering at The Wellness Community five years ago, after retiring as the Office Manager at the YMCA. In her free time, she likes gourmet cooking, gardening, entertaining, and reading. “Being a part of an organization that reflects such love and compassion has enriched and blessed my life,” notes Marilyn. She brings a high level of expertise to her role as front desk coordinator, and is always willing to take on new challenges and offer excellent suggestions.
Casino Night Benefits TWC

The Wellness Community Valley/ Ventura sincerely appreciates being chosen to benefit from the Agoura/ Oak Park/Las Virgenes Chamber of Commerce’s September 21 Casino Night fundraiser, held at Calamigos Ranch. Special appreciation goes to chamber board president, Alex Soteras, and his Board of Directors!

Volunteer Spotlight: Rosa Maria Lara

Rosa Maria Lara, one of our first aliados (volunteers), has been an active volunteer since the inception of the Latino Outreach Program in 1999.

Rosa Maria has a special gift and is one of our most giving and effective peer counselors. She has assisted numerous participants and their families, developing close relationships with them and helping in the most needy of times. We treasure her kindness and generosity of spirit.

Share the Beauty of Holiday Homes

Now in its 11th year, the Holiday Homes Tour is one of The Wellness Community’s most important fundraising events.

This year, five Westlake homeowners will share their holiday traditions. Tickets may sell out prior to the event, so purchase yours in advance at The Wellness Community or by calling 805-379-4777 for a list of ticket outlets. You can also call to sponsor an ad in the annual tour booklet. Volunteers needed for that weekend! Please call Ellyn Wallen at 805-379-4777.

Aliados Bring Hope to Those in Need

The Latino Outreach Project (LOP) serves cancer patients and their loved ones in the Spanish-speaking community. LOP offers support groups, educational programs, social events, hospital visitations, resource referrals, and educational literature. The Program maintains a toll-free helpline for patients and their families. Unique to The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura is the Corp of trained volunteers known as Aliados who serve as peer supporters.

We’d like to share a letter we received from Cidelia Marquez, a member/volunteer of one of the support groups.

In February, we had a member of our support group in Santa Rosa hospitalized. He was in the City of Hope in Duarte.

Because we spoke to the nurses and through visits, we found out he wasn’t doing well. A group of six from the group got together and went to visit him. We had heard that beside his illness, he was despondent and not willing to talk or try to do better.

During our visit we had him talking, sharing his experience there, laughing and being more positive. He is now out of the hospital and doing much better.

I feel proud of the people in our support group because we are like a family. They come through when the need arises. I just thought of sharing this with The Wellness Community staff in Westlake Village.

Sincerely,

Cidelia Marquez, Aliado

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2002 Holiday Homes Tour

| Saturday, December 7 | Ticket prices: |
| 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. | $20 in advance |
| Sunday, December 8 | $25 at the door |
| 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. |  |
**New Strides for Hope Marathon Fundraiser**

A team of runners and walkers from The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura will join teams from Wellness Communities from across the country to participate in the February 16, 2003 Mardi Gras Marathon in New Orleans.

Training for the team is under the direction of professional trainer Robert Mills of CLUB 26.2. Each Saturday, the team will train to run or walk a full or half marathon. Each team member must raise a minimum of $2,900 for cancer support programs at our Westlake Village facility.

Although a few Wellness Communities have competed in marathons including Vancouver and Kona in previous years, 2003 marks the first time all Wellness Communities have been invited to join the National office to send teams. This will be an annual event. If you would like more information, call Ellyn Wallen, special events coordinator, at 805-379-4777.

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**Volunteer Spotlight: Len Wolff**

Len Wolff, 87 years old, never ceases to delight us with his warm smile. Once a month, for 10 years, he has served as an orientation leader, giving hope to newcomers to The Wellness Community. He is a 10-½ year survivor of prostate cancer and says he comes here because he is “addicted to TWC.”

“The Wellness Community played a big role in my survivorship. I give doctors 50% of the credit and The Wellness Community 50%. I volunteer because I want to give back and give newcomers hope.” Len also attends the Wellness Connection group, the bridge club, drum circle, and of course, parties.

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**Ways to Give Support**

**eScrip**
Shop with your pre-registered credit card or Vons Club card and 2% more or less goes to The Wellness Community. Registration is easy at www.escrip.com, or call 805-379-4777 for the eScrip form or more information. Our Group ID number is 7240121.

**Vehicle Donations**
Ventura County - Many Motors 805-383-0207
Los Angeles County - Fundraising Partners 800-203-2940

**Furniture Donations**
Simply Resale 805-988-4246

**Business Contributions**
- **Albertson’s**: Pick up a Community Partners card at The Wellness Community and have it scanned when you buy groceries.
- **Hawthorne Savings**: Hawthorne Savings will give a donation when their customers designate The Wellness Community.

**United Way**
You can designate TWC in your United Way contributions by filling in the name and address of The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura in the pledge designation space.

**Attention Federal Employees!**
The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura is a member of the Los Angeles and Ventura Counties Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). If you wish, you can designate your CFC gift to our organization just by putting down our 4-digit number, 8049, which is listed in the CFC directory. The number for The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura for Los Angeles County-based employees is 3047.

**Donated Items**
We need the following items. If you can help, donations can be dropped at our Westlake Village office.
- **LCD Projector**
- **Colored or white reams of paper**
- **Kitchen and bathroom paper and plastic items**
- **Software and computer equipment** (call for specifics)

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Recently, Robbie Longley treated participants to a classical flamenco guitar concert, sponsored by participant Tim Vance.
Weekly:
Orientation meetings led by cancer survivors
Tuesdays, 7pm
Fridays, 10 am

Participant and Family Groups
Ongoing weekly support groups at locations in Westlake Village, Camarillo and Encino
Attendance at orientation and interview required.

Family and Friends Drop-In Group
Tuesdays, 6pm Westlake
Wednesdays, 6pm Camarillo

Programs in Spanish
2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7pm, Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church in Canoga Park
Wednesdays, 10am-Noon at L.A. County Olive View-UCLA Medical Center in Sylmar
2nd & 4th Thursday, 7:00pm-9:00pm
Santa Rosa Catholic Church in San Fernando
Workshops & social events – call for dates and times
Spanish Helpline: 1-888-707-9355

Programs in the San Fernando Valley
VBS Counseling Center at Valley Beth Shalom, Encino
Call for dates and times

Relaxation/Visualization sessions
Fridays, 1pm-2pm

Beginning Yoga
Wednesdays, 4:15pm-5:15pm

Qigong
Saturdays, 9am-10am

Bridge Club
Mondays, 1pm-3pm

Quilting Club
Call for dates and time

Monthly:

Gynecological Cancer Networking Group
1st Monday, 7:00pm-9:00pm

Colorectal Cancer Networking Group
1st Wednesday, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Breast Cancer Networking Group
3rd Tuesday, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Brain Tumor Networking Group
1st Thursday, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Lung Cancer Networking Group
1st Thursday, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Leukemia Society Support Group
2nd and 4th Thursday, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Young Adults Networking Group
3rd Friday, 7:00pm-9:00pm

Prostate Cancer Networking Group
3rd Saturday, 10:30am-12:30pm

The Wellness Connection
For those beyond the day-to-day fight for recovery
2nd and 4th Tuesday, 7:00pm-8:30pm
1st and 3rd Tuesday, 11:00am-1:00pm

Special Programs:
Kid’s Circle
For children 5–12 with adult family member with cancer
Four consecutive Saturdays in spring and fall
Parents Group meets at the same time, begins October 5

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction – 8-week course
Offered throughout the year – call for dates, times and locations
Offered at the Cancer Care Center of Ventura County in January/February 2003

Yoga for Stress Management – 8-week course
Mondays, 11:30am-12:45pm. Call for dates

Drum Circle
Call for dates and time

Teen Rap
For teens with an adult family member with cancer
Group and individual counseling available
Call for dates and time

Workshops
“Ask the Doctor about Ovarian Cancer Treatment”
Presented by Michael Hogan, MD, Gynecological Oncologist
Thursday, October 17, 7:00-9:00pm

Social Events
Thanksgiving Feast
Friday, Nov 15, 6:00pm

Holiday Party
Friday, Dec 14, 6:00pm

Fundraising Events
Holiday Homes Tour
Saturday, Dec 7 and Sunday, Dec 8

Strides for Hope New Orleans
Mardi Gras Marathon Fundraiser
Sunday, Feb 16, 2003

Call 805-379-4777 to be added to our monthly calendar mailing list or visit our website for a complete list of Wellness Community Valley/Ventura programs.

The Wellness Community is a national nonprofit organization with the mission to help people with cancer and their loved ones enhance their health and well being by providing a professional program of emotional support, education and hope.

“News” Published twice a year by The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura

Elizabeth Ginos feels the rhythm and lets loose at the drum circle.