

Survivor Connection



An electronic newsletter from SurvivorConnect
A project of the Survivorship Clinic
Division of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology

- National Cancer Survivors Day is Sunday, June 7
- A Survivor's Story
- Caitlyn Miller, today

National Cancer Survivors Day



Invite your family and friends!

JUNE 7, 2015

For additional tickets for family and friends SAVE OVER \$16 OFF REGULAR \$41.99* ADMISSION Use the exclusive Promo Code **CHILDRENS601** to purchase tickets for only **\$25.00***!

To purchase Kennywood tickets:

- Go to www.kennywood.com.

National Cancer Survivors Day is Sunday, June 7



National Cancer Survivors Day is **Sunday, June 7**. Noon until the park closes!

Thanks to a generous donation from the Kennywood Charitable Trust, each survivor will receive two (2) tickets while supplies last, on a first come, first served basis.

To reserve your two free tickets, please email the following information to survivorconnect@gmail.com

- First and Last name of survivor
- Email address where we can send the confirmation
- Cell number (where we can reach you if we need more information)
- Number of people who will be attending the complimentary lunch

Once you receive your email confirming that you have two free tickets, please print it out and bring it to the front gate of

Spring 2015

CancerCon



by Betsy Becker

In April, I had the privilege of attending [CancerCon](#), the largest gathering of young adult cancer survivors, caregivers and advocates in the world.

Since I was diagnosed with leukemia 10 years ago, I had not met many other survivors my age. When I got to CancerCon, there were 600 of them from all over the world, and over the course of the weekend they became my best friends! I got to know my new friends at night, and during the days we attended sessions about a variety of topics, ranging from relationships to fertility to health

- Enter the promo code in the box at the top of the screen and click GO.
- Enter the number of tickets you wish to purchase at the discounted price and click ADD TO CART.
- Click either CONTINUE SHOPPING or SECURE CHECKOUT and finish the transaction with your credit card information.
- Print out your tickets and bring them with you to the park.

**Tickets purchased at Kennywood are plus a \$1 amusement tax. Tickets purchased online at Kennywood.com DO NOT include the \$1 amusement tax, but are plus a \$1.25 processing fee. Tickets are not reusable passes and are valid for only one admission and must be surrendered upon entrance. Tickets are not valid for Phantom Fright Nights or Holiday Lights. Offer expires June 7, 2015.*

Survivors - Find Us on FACEBOOK



We have a CLOSED Facebook group! If you want to join, send your email address to survivorconnect@gmail.com.

Kennywood Park (our window will be marked) and pick up your tickets on the day of the picnic.

You can purchase additional tickets at the special rate of \$25 per ticket. See the column to the left for details.

Invitations will be sent soon in the mail. Look for them!

A Survivor's Story

By Caitlyn Miller



In May of 2000, my own body was fighting against me. I was only two years old—one month shy of my third birthday—when I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). At this age, I did not fully grasp the severity of my illness or the toll it would take on my body or my family. I just continued on with my life because, honestly, I thought cancer was something everyone my age had to go through. Some may call this ignorance piteous, heartbreaking, or even tragic, but I think it is inspiring.

This experience has opened my eyes to my future, which is why I will be attending Duquesne University's School of Nursing in the fall of 2015. I strive to give back to the doctors and nurses who supported not only me, but my entire family throughout my treatments. I want to make a difference in people's lives, lessen their pain, and provide a crutch for them to lean on when life may seem unbearable.

If this illness was not a part of my history, I would undoubtedly be a very different person than who I am today. Today, I have confidence; I have the desire and determination to not only reach, but

insurance. There were also many exhibitors at the conference, and I signed up to volunteer for several organizations close to my heart.

Being at CancerCon made me feel more comfortable talking about my cancer with other people, and eager to help others. Before the conference, I felt hesitant to tell my story because I didn't want to be treated differently. But now I know I am different and that's okay because I can use my story to encourage and support other young cancer survivors. CancerCon put me outside my comfort zone in the best possible way. It was one of the best weekends of my life and I can't wait for next year!



We will send you an invitation to join!

Do you have a survivor story to share?



Contact Noelle at noelle.conover@chp.edu if you would like to share your story!

exceed any goal I set for myself. Although I had to fight cancer at a young age, I am extremely grateful for my support system: my oncologists, my nurses, my teachers, my coaches, my peers, and my family and friends. I am grateful for the meaningful life lessons I have had the privilege of being exposed to, making this whole experience humbling. And lastly, I am grateful for my second opportunity at life, because without it, I would not have the potential to change the lives of others.

Caitlyn Miller, today



Update from Cancervention



by Sierra Lilac

On April 18th, a group of young adult oncology patients and survivors traveled across the state to attend the first ever **Cancervention**, a conference for young adults with cancer and their caregivers, in Philadelphia, PA.

The conference was organized by Penn Medicine and Young Adult Cancer Connection and brought cancer patients from all over the surrounding area together to discuss the unique needs of this 18-39 year old age group.

Throughout the day, the attendants heard from various speakers who had a strong connection to cancer. The keynote speaker, Suleika Jaouad, who is an Emmy-award winning columnist for the New York Times, explained her struggles with not only the physical, but also the emotional aspects that come with a cancer diagnosis. These changes and difficulties can impact patients long past their treatment plan has ended. The day also consisted of various

breakout sessions on topics ranging from long-term side effects, survivorship, self-advocacy, yoga, art therapy, and navigating one's way through college and their career.

The conference connected those affected by cancer when it might be hard to relate to their own peers. Everyone was able to bond over shared experiences and struggles, even telling tales of their "cancer perks," or the advantages to dealing with this life-threatening illness. Many of the speakers on a patient panel discussed how they needed to search for a new normal after their cancer diagnosis as their physical, social, and psychological circumstances changed drastically.

Even though all of the participants in the conference have been faced with the obstacle of battling cancer, many seemed to channel it into a positive life experience that enabled them to mature as an individual. Three-time cancer survivor Joshua Potter described his biggest takeaway from the event saying, "Life goes on. There are so many people that go through this, but they are still going." As one looked around the room, it was evident that there is a life beyond cancer full of hope, strength, and encouragement.

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