

Komen Issues Conference Focuses on Black Women

Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

A few tickets will be available at the door for the Susan G. Komen Oregon and South-west Washington 16th Annual Breast-Cancer Issues Conference, coming up Saturday, March 1, from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. the Lloyd Center Doubletree Hotel in Portland.

This year, organizers say a significant focus is on survival and health of African American women; one entire track is focused on the community's special needs around breast cancer awareness.

Keynote speaker is Lisa Coussens, PhD, of Oregon Health and Science Univer-

work of Oregon & SW Washington, a support group for Black women with breast cancer. "This may motivate them to get a mammogram, because African American women and people of color have, in a lot of cases, a higher death rate compared to others."

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sity's Knight Cancer Institute, who offers an overview of current breast cancer research and treatment.

Another standout speaker is Nathalie Johnson, M.D., a breast surgeon who is medical director of Legacy Cancer Institute and Legacy Breast Health Centers.

"I think definitely in the African-American community, and with other women of color, we need to understand our risk," says Kim Moreland of the Sisters Net-

work of Oregon & SW Washington, a support group for Black women with breast cancer. "This may motivate them to get a mammogram, because African American women and people of color have, in a lot of cases, a higher death rate compared to others."

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Evergreen High School We The People Constitution Team Headed to National Competition



Vancouver, Wash - Evergreen High School (EHS) We the People Constitution Team have been invited to represent Washington State at the National Championships in Washington D.C. April 25-29. This is the first time in 27 years that a team outside of King/Pierce County will represent the state at Nationals. Students have been working since June to understand and defend the principles and foundations of American Constitutionalism and how it applies to their everyday lives. Students who are alumni of the EHS program are now working in the Executive Office of the White House, the US State Department, American Bar Association, the Irish Parliament, as interns at the WA State Legislature, as committee staff for the US Senate, and many are practicing attorneys or currently in law school. The 20 students and two teachers must raise \$35,000 in order to compete at this level. Many fund-raisers are planned. To contribute to the cause please donate today at www.fundly.com/evergreen-we-the-people.

women are more likely to die from breast cancer than women from other groups.

"We do know that African American women, a lot of times young African American women, are diagnosed with a more aggressive type of breast cancer," says Toni Mountain, a 35-year breast cancer survivor who is Survivor Programs Manager for the local Komen affiliate.

That more aggressive kind of breast cancer is called "Triple Negative," because it's estrogen negative, progesterin negative, and Her2 negative; it is unclear why Black women are disproportionately impacted by Triple Negative Breast Cancer.

"A lot of times, the targeted chemotherapy does not respond well to this particular type of breast cancer," Mountain said. "As a result,

African American women not only are diagnosed with a more aggressive breast cancer, but their mortality rate is much higher."

A big part of the Conference this year is about getting the word out in Black communities around the need for regular cancer screenings and early detection — including mammograms.

Komen is working with the Sisters Network; also

with Worship in Pink, a local awareness project by Kathy Kendrix, and area church congregations on outreach.

"We are trying to make sure women they go to the physician for a high-quality breast exam so that these cancers can be detected early, because if you are detected early, with breast cancer, the five-year survival rate right now is up to 99 percent," Mountain says.

Once breast cancer spreads to other parts of the body, the survival rate drops to 23 percent.

Moreland is a founding member of the Sisters Network in Oregon & SW Washington. A national organization, the Sisters Network was started by Karen Eubanks Jackson, an 18-year breast cancer survivor based in Texas.

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