



LUNG CANCER INITIATIVE  
A NETWORK OF HOPE AND ACTION



# ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

# 2025

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

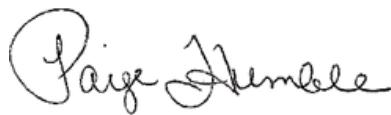
DEAR FRIENDS,



As I reflect on the past year at Lung Cancer Initiative, I am deeply grateful for the strength of this community. In a time marked by uncertainty in research funding and shifting healthcare landscapes, your steadfast support ensured that progress did not pause. Together, we completed a rigorous three-year strategic plan built through an intentional “outside-in” approach — shaped by survivors, caregivers, healthcare providers, industry partners, and donors. Their voices, and yours, are guiding our next chapter and strengthening our resolve to keep critical research, education, access and hip programs moving forward.

Because of your generosity, we also expanded our impact in meaningful ways. We launched a pilot program of our Screening Saves program in partnership with ECU Health, bringing lifesaving early detection efforts to more communities, and introduced new survivorship programming in South Carolina. We celebrated a record-breaking Evening of Hope at the Angus Barn Pavilion — a powerful reminder that when our network comes together, hope grows stronger and our mission advances further.

There is real progress to celebrate. Advances in research and early detection continue to improve outcomes, and lung cancer mortality rates have declined significantly in recent years as innovation reaches patients. Yet our work is far from finished. Your partnership fuels discovery, expands access, and strengthens survivorship. Thank you for standing with us and for making this progress possible — we move forward with gratitude and with determination.



**PAIGE HUMBLE**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
**LUNG CANCER INITIATIVE**



Left to Right: LCI staff gathered for a service project to benefit Dress for Success in Durham. LCI and ECU Health hosted a kickoff for the Screening Saves program in Greenville and invited local providers and media. Survivors gathered on stage at the annual Evening of Hope at Angus Barn Pavilion in Raleigh.

## ABOUT US

### Our Mission

Our mission is to advance survivorship and provide support to those affected by lung cancer through research, education and access programs.

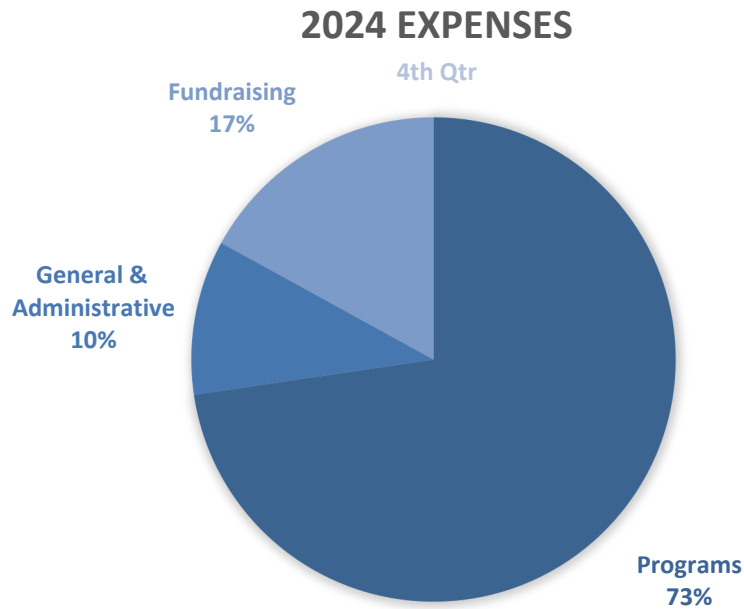
### Our Vision

To improve life for everyone affected by lung cancer.

### Our Core Values

- Passionate support of survivorship and caregivers
- Building community
- Compassion
- Empathy
- Transparency
- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Responsible stewardship

## Expenses for Fiscal Year 2024\*



\*2024 Audited Financials (view our [audited financials](#) and [990](#) online)

## RESEARCH

**\$4.2 million**

Research Funded Since 2008

**\$350,000**

Grants Awarded in 2025

### Research Fellowship Program

The purpose of the Research Fellowship program is to further the development of local lung cancer care and research programs across the state of North Carolina. Each fellow receives a \$25,000 grant for a one-year project. By funding research activities of fellows, our goal is to help to further their careers and encourage their continued involvement in the field of lung cancer.

### 2025-26 Research Fellows



**Laura Alder, MD, Duke University School of Medicine**

Project: "CNS Progression After Targeted Therapy and Effect of Radiation in NSCLC" (Mentor: Jeffrey Clarke, MD)



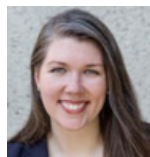
**Darien B. Davda, MD, FACP, Wake Forest University Health Sciences**

Project: "Catching the cache: Examining lung screening eligibility and cancer risk factors amongst incidentally detected and diagnosed lung cancers" (Mentor: Brent Heideman, MD)



**Abner A. Murray, MD, PhD, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

Project: "PREDICT-MPE: Profiling Responses and Dysfunction in Immune Cells to Correlate with Therapy in Malignant Pleural Effusions" (Mentor: Benjamin Vincent, MD)



**Jenny A. O'Brien, MD, PhD, Duke University School of Medicine**

Project: "CAR-T cells targeting citrullinated vimentin in cancer and tumor-promoting cells in NSCLC" (Mentor: Scott Antonia, MD, PhD)

## 10 YEARS OF IMPACT

In 2025, LCI celebrated 10 years of impact through the Research Fellows Program.

"Now is such a critical time for us to support young researchers and their work. Often LCI's Research Fellows grant is the first funding that a researcher may receive in their career. We hope that this support allows them to continue to grow in their careers to ultimately become leaders that will drive progress in lung cancer research and care," said Neal Ready, MD, PhD, Duke Cancer Institute and LCI Chief Scientific Officer.

- **\$1.2 million** funded for fellows since 2015
- **49 fellows**
- **97%** of fellows remaining in the field of lung cancer

*Learn more about the impact of the LCI Research Fellows Program below.*



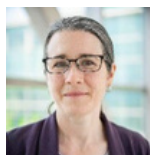
## Vicky Amidon Innovation in Lung Cancer Research Award

Through the Vicky Amidon Innovation in Lung Cancer Research Award, LCI aims to recognize and provide research funding for innovative lung cancer projects that will improve the lives of those diagnosed with lung cancer in North Carolina. Annually, LCI awards up to two one-year \$25,000 grants.



**Thomas Lycan, DO, Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist**

Project: “IMPLEMENT – Lung: Mixed Methods Creation of a Patient Registry for Lung Cancer Biomarker Profiling”



**Trudy Oliver, PhD, Duke Cancer Institute**

Project: “Hillock-Like Cells as Drivers of Chemotherapy Resistance in Lung Squamous Cell Carcinoma

## Career Development Award

Through the \$150,000, two-year Career Development Grant, LCI supports emerging research leaders who plan to continue their careers in the field of lung cancer. Each researcher’s project must be focused on basic scientific research with the goal of impacting lung cancer care, including lung cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment, or survivorship.



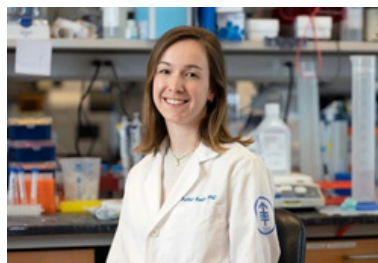
**Jeffrey Jensen, MD, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center**

*Project: Attacking Lung Cancer Non-Canonical PRAME Epitopes with Artificial Intelligence Generated Polypeptides*

A previously funded LCI Research Fellow, Dr. Jensen’s current work utilizes AI to develop novel polypeptides aimed at specific lung cancer targets. This project bridges the gap between cutting-edge technology and clinical application.

“Dr. Jensen is a promising, young physician-scientist, and mentoring him is a top priority for me,” said Jared Weiss, MD, Section Chief of Thoracic and Head/Neck Oncology at UNC School of Medicine. “Awards like this will continue arming Dr. Jensen with the resources necessary to publish high-impact papers, compete for other funding, and more importantly, bring new treatments to lung cancer patients in desperate need of new modalities and options.”

## Research Partnership



In 2025, LCI renewed a partnership with **LUNgevity Foundation** through their Career Development Award program to co-fund **Esther Redin, PhD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center** and her project on “Identification of Epigenetic Drivers of Drug Tolerance in EGFR mutant LUAD.” EGFR gene alterations are found in 15-30% of lung adenocarcinomas (LUADs) and are most effectively treated with targeted therapies. These treatments are initially effective at killing most of the tumor cells, but drug tolerant persister cells remain alive, adapt to the presence of the drug, and begin to grow again, leading to tumor

recurrence. Dr. Redin’s project aims to understand how these persister cells survive treatment and how to effectively eliminate them. By identifying resistance factors, developing eradication strategies, and providing the scientific foundation for clinical trials, this research project lays the groundwork to overcome drug resistance in patients with EGFR-positive lung cancer.

On World Lung Cancer Day, LCI also teamed up with LUNgevity Foundation for a follow-up event on **“Lung Cancer in Young Adults: Translating Biology into Clinical Practice.”** Jenni Danai, LCI Chief Mission Delivery Officer, Gwen Orilio, survivor, Updal Basu Roy, PhD, MPH, LUNgevity Foundation, and Jaclyn Lopiccoco, MD, PhD, Dana Farber Cancer Institute, led the discussion.

#### Scientific Leadership Committee

Neal Ready, MD, PhD, Chair & LCI Chief Scientific Officer

Ed Kim, MD, MBA

Jeff Clarke, MD

Paul R. Walker, MD, FACP

Amy Cipau, MBA, MA

Kathryn Mileham, MD, FACP

Jared Weiss, MD

Chad Pecot, MD

Jeff Petty, MD

#### Scientific Review Committee

Christina Bellinger, MD

Jeff Clarke, MD

Neal Ready, MD, Chair

Patti Pozella, PhD

Daniel Haggstrom, MD

Emily Harrison, PhD

Kathryn Mileham, MD, FACP

Praveen Namireddy, MD

Shetal Patel, MD

Li Yang, PhD

Thomas Lycan, DO, MHS

Elissa Doty, PA

Lilling Warren, PhD

Laura Alder, MD

Christopher Pallas, MD

Misbah Qadir, MD

#### External Scientific Review Committee

Ed Kim, MD, MBA

Laurie E. McLouth, PhD

Jacob Kaufman, MD, PhD

John Minna, MD

Amy Cipau

Mike Soike, MD

The graphic is a blue rectangular banner with the LUNGEVITY logo in the top right corner. Below the logo is a dark blue bar with the text "MEET THE PANELISTS" in white. The banner features four circular portrait photos of the panelists arranged in a 2x2 grid. Each photo is accompanied by the person's name and title in white text. At the bottom of the banner is a dark blue bar with the text "FRIDAY, AUGUST 1 · 12 PM ET" in white.

**GWEN ORILIO**  
Patient Advocate

**JACLYN LOPICCOLO, MD, PHD**  
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

**Jenni Danai**  
Lung Cancer Initiative

**Upal Basu Roy, PhD, MPH**  
LUNgevity Foundation

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 1 · 12 PM ET**

## ACCESS

LCI is dedicated to assisting those affected by lung cancer through our access programs, designed to support patients in accessing appropriate education, screening, biomarker testing, treatment and clinical research.

### Access to Care Gas Card Program

The Tomma Hargraves Access to Care Gas Card Program supports patients in accessing appropriate care and treatment, including clinical trials. Patients may receive up to three \$50 gas cards annually.

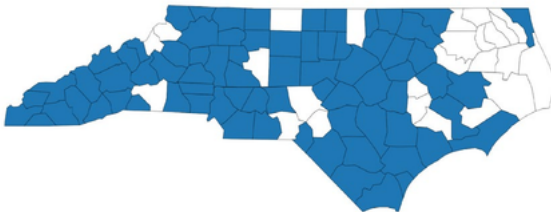
<b>500</b> \$50 gas cards distributed in 2025	<b>474</b> Patients served in 2025	<b>78</b> Counties in North and South Carolina
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“  
*We have limited income and are on disability, with the additional cost of needing to get to appointments and treatment and medical bills, any financial assistance is helpful.*  
”  
GAS CARD RECIPIENT

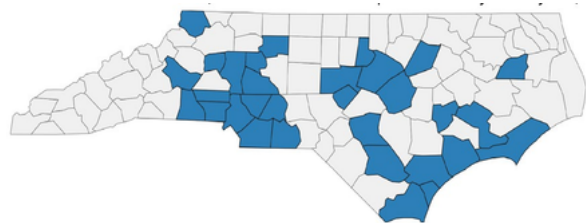
### Patient Emergency Fund

To support lung cancer patients who were financially impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, LCI established the [Patient Emergency Fund](#) in 2020 to help lung cancer patients stay healthy and to meet their basic needs. Recognizing the continued financial burden of a cancer diagnosis, LCI has continued to offer the program. In 2025, **100 patients across 31 counties (pictured below) each received a \$100 stipend to assist with the cost of basic needs, such as utility bills, transportation, and food.**

Counties Served in 2025 - Gas Card Program



Counties Served in 2025 - Patient Emergency Fund



### REACH Community Grant Program

The REACH Community Grant Program annually awards up to three \$10,000 grants to support community-based organizations and non-profit institutions in their collaborative efforts to holistically assist the entire lung cancer community, particularly those who are uninsured, underinsured, and most impacted. This program began in 2016 and has collectively awarded more than \$230,000 to 19 community organizations. The REACH Community Grant Program funds the creation of new programs or expansion of existing programs that reach a community with demonstrated need, promote lung cancer education and awareness, improve access to care, support complementary healthcare, or advance health equity for North Carolinians.

In 2025, LCI awarded three \$10,000 REACH Community Grants to the following organizations:

### **Ease Your Energy**

*Project: Heart-Brain Resilience Workshops*

Ease Your Energy will deliver a series of Heart-Brain Resilience Workshops throughout 2026, designed specifically for lung cancer survivors, thrivers, caregivers, and families. Built on over 20 years of research from the HeartMath Institute, the workshops teach practical, science-backed techniques to shift the nervous system into heart-brain coherence—a state of clarity, calm, and emotional balance. “Our goal is simple: give people facing lung cancer and their loved one’s tools to feel more in control, at peace, and better equipped to navigate whatever comes next,” said Lori Ives-Godwin, President of Ease Your Energy.

### **Scotland Memorial Foundation** *Project: Low-Dose CT (LDCT) Screening Access*

Scotland Memorial Foundation will provide free, low-dose CT scans to help detect lung cancer in patients who may not otherwise have access due to financial barriers. “The prevalence of lung cancer is high in the communities we serve, and these funds will ensure some of our most vulnerable citizens receive this potentially life-saving screening,” said **Misty McMillan, Executive Director of Scotland Memorial Foundation**. “LCI is a great partner in our effort to bring safe, high-quality, and compassionate healthcare to our friends and neighbors.”

**FirstHealth of the Carolinas** *Project: FirstHealth Lung Bus Expansion* FirstHealth of the Carolinas will expand access to lung screening through its mobile imaging unit, the FirstHealth Lung Bus. The Lung Bus provides free low-dose CT screenings to eligible individuals across the health system’s service region and raises community awareness about early detection. “This generous funding allows us to bring life-saving early detection services directly into underserved communities and remove barriers so more North Carolinians have access to low-dose CT screening when they need it most,” said Mickey W. Foster, CEO of FirstHealth of the Carolinas.

### **Access Committee**

Aundrea Oliver, MD, Chair

Kenisha Bethea, MPH

Kimberly Alexander Bratcher, MPH

Tammy Hood

Angela Hopper

Matt Lindsly

Susan Moore, PhD

Aurita Menezes, PhD

Jess O’Malley

Mellisa Wheeler, MHA

Jenni Danai, MPH

Paige Humble, MBA

## EDUCATION

LCI is dedicated to furthering education about lung cancer through community and provider education initiatives. Throughout 2025, educational opportunities were designed in partnership with experts and organizations from across our region on topics including lung screening, updates in treatment, radon awareness and research, and clinical trials. LCI also hosted our first educational program in South Carolina.

### Community Education

LCI partnered on five community education events with 187 attendees in 2025. Programming included the following:

**Radon & the Environment (virtual)** led by Phillip Gibson, MD; Joan H. Schiller, MD; Keith Bamberger, MPA

**Updates in Lung Cancer (Charleston, SC)** led by Mariam Alexander, MD, MUSC; Jim Bulak Advocate; Sue Wing, Advocate (*pictured at right*)

**Lung Cancer 101 (Wilmington, NC)** led by Tiffany Morgan, MD, Novant Health; Sandy Rowe, Survivor

**Updates in Lung Cancer Research & Treatment (Raleigh, NC)** led by Scott Smith, MD, Duke Raleigh Cancer Center; Maria Xu, MD, Duke School of Medicine; Jane Poole, Survivor

**Lung Cancer Awareness Month Update (Charlotte, NC)** led by Kathryn Mileham, MD, FACP, Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute; Drew Jolly, Survivor



### Advocacy Summit: “Community of Hope”

Eighty-seven, advocates, caregivers and providers gathered on September 25 and 26 in Charlotte, NC, to discuss how to build connections of support to be more effective advocates. Keynote speaker, Upal Basu Roy, LUNGevity Foundation, spoke to the power and critical importance of communities of collaboration and how they have impacted progress in lung cancer patient advocacy and research. See the virtual recording of the Summit below:

[Summit  
Part 1](#)

[Summit  
Part 2](#)

[Summit  
Part 3](#)

[Summit  
Part 4](#)



Left to Right: Upal Basu Roy, LUNGevity Foundation, as the keynote presenter at the 2025 Advocacy Summit. Survivors joined a special breakout session led by Dr. Kathryn Mileham, Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute. Several panel discussions included thought leaders from across North Carolina.

## Provider Education



In May, Lynne S. Rosenblum, PhD, FACMG, Christopher Giauque, PhD and Thomas Lycan Jr., DO, MHS, Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist led a program about **current and future lung cancer testing** in their health system. Dr. Lycan provided perspectives about how he uses biomarker testing to guide his treatment decisions for his patients. *(pictured at left)*

In June, Daniel Haggstrom, MD, Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute led a discussion about updates from the **American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)** annual conference in May with 10 local providers in attendance. In November, Shetal Patel, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center and Jeffrey Clarke, MD and Laura

Alder, MD, Duke Cancer Institute led the **“Battle of the Blues: Thoracic Updates from ASCO, World Lung and Beyond”** discussion with 21 community providers in the Triangle *(pictured right)*.



In August, 25 providers came together for a virtual summit focused on “A Comprehensive Approach to Treating Lung Cancer.” Thought leaders from across North and South Carolina presented information to community oncologists on topics including lung screening, disparities in lung cancer care, advancements in treatment, surgical treatment of lung cancer and comprehensive biomarker testing. This program is available for viewing online.

### Provider Education Committee

Jason Akulian, MD, MPH

Jared Weiss, MD

Lynn Bowlby, MD

Hiren Mehta, MD

BJ Peterson, DNP

Louise M. Henderson, PhD

Jimmy Ruiz, MD

Trey Shelton, MD

Aundrea Oliver, MD

Mellisa Wheeler, MHA

## SCREENING SAVES

### 2025 Highlights



In 2025, LCI launched the Early Detection Advisory Committee to guide the organization’s Screening Saves program and activities supporting lung screening awareness, education and access initiatives. New programmatic milestones included the following:



- Four region-wide navigator meetings supporting more than 100 professionals with topics including billing and coding challenges, incidental nodules management, smoking cessation best practices, and the utility of telehealth;
- LCI’s first in-person Lung Screening Navigator Summit in Durham, NC;
- Development of materials in Spanish, including the Lung Screening Risk Assessment Tool;
- Presentation at the American Public Health Association (APHA) National Conference, Smoky Mountain Primary Care Conference, NC Primary Care Conference in New Bern, Health Equity Research Symposium, and the NCAFP Winter Meeting;
- And, an exhibit in partnership with Lilly Oncology and Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute at the Black Health Matters Summit & Expo in Charlotte, NC with more than 300 attendees.

### ECU Health Pilot

LCI’s Screening Saves program expanded with the launch of a pilot program with ECU Health that focused on provider education and community awareness. Thus far, measurable outcomes from the pilot program have included the following:

- Provider Education: Eastern NC luncheon series targeting primary care providers in Greenville (25 attendees); Roanoke Chowan (17 attendees); Edgecombe (16 attendees) and Beaufort (18 attendees)
- Community Outreach: Initiatives including the ECU screening clinics and public awareness campaign with two billboards and paid social media advertising reaching 22,500+ individuals in eastern NC with lung screening education and resources
- Public relations and earned media campaigns in local markets including Greenville with coverage of the kickoff event in spring 2025
- Grassroot efforts to display health risk assessments in primary care exam rooms and at local vendors including tobacco and vape shops
- LDCT screening growth: 6,533 LDCT screenings completed in 2025 — a 9.3% increase from FY2024 and a 22.1% increase since 2023.
- Free LDCT access: 32 eligible community members received completely free lung cancer screening in 2025 through ECU Health’s monthly free LDCT clinic.





Left to Right: ECU Health kicked off the Screening Saves pilot program in March 2025 with a media event; Macy McFarland, Program Manager, and Jenni Danai, Chief Mission Delivery Officer, at the NCAFP Winter Conference; Lung Screening Navigators from across North and South Carolina gathered for the first annual in-person Lung Screening Navigator Network Summit.

LCI is a partner in the **North Carolina Advisory Committee on Cancer Coordination and Control** where Jenni Danai, Chief Mission Delivery Officer, serves as the co-chair of the early detection subcommittee. In addition, LCI is a collaborator on the **Promising Interventions in Lung Cancer** collaboration that includes local health systems, advocacy organizations and industry partners. Lung Cancer Initiative is a member of the **National Lung Cancer Roundtable** and an active participant in the State-Based Initiatives Task Force.

## SURVIVORSHIP & CAREGIVER SUPPORT



20

In-person and virtual networking events

250

Survivors engaged in networking events

From monthly **Virtual Survivor Lunches** to in-person gatherings across North Carolina and South Carolina, these programs created consistent touchpoints for survivors to find community and trusted information. Virtual lunches alone engaged dozens of survivors throughout the year, with strong participation and special guest speakers ensuring patients could connect regardless of location.

In-person **Survivor Lunches** in Charlotte, Charleston, Greensboro, and Asheville brought together survivors, caregivers, and healthcare professionals for education and peer support in local communities. These gatherings connected survivors directly with medical experts and one another and provided education on topics including air quality, updates in lung cancer research and patient navigation.

Additional community-building events, including **Family Day** and the **Spring Remembrance** in Raleigh in partnership with Transitions Lifecare, provided space for both celebration and reflection—honoring the many families engaged with LCI and remembering loved ones.

The **Survivors Day Celebration** in Durham welcomed 43 attendees for an uplifting “Sunshine and Self-Care” garden party focused on wellness and joy (*pictured above and at right*). The annual **Survivor Wellness Retreat** at Camp La TeDa offered an immersive, restorative weekend for survivors—an experience one participant described as “life-enhancing,” creating empowerment, and renewed hope. Additionally, LUNGe Forward 5K events in the Triangle, Charlotte, Greenville, and the Triad engaged more than 75 survivors across the series.



## Reflections from the 2025 Wellness Retreat



This past year I was privileged to attend the annual LCI Wellness Retreat. What a life-enhancing experience! A devastating lung cancer diagnosis was a prerequisite, bringing this amazing group together, quickly creating a bond of shared experiences. This retreat allowed us to relax in our common reality of living with lung cancer; sharing quality time with people who completely understand the journey. There were tears of sadness and of joy. There were stories of tragedy and of triumph. It was a unique, fun-filled, enriching, activity-packed weekend of loving support and compassionate care, overflowing with stressbusting and relationship-building techniques.

Our dazzling hosts, also cancer survivors/thrivers, gathered us at picturesque Camp LaTeDa, where nature and nurture meet. Their intention to create an impactful, meaningful event was evident throughout the entire weekend in every detail. The seven participants quickly bonded. Our busy days included yummy organic food, delightful “sassy water”, and fragrant coffee and teas. We enjoyed healing touch, Tai chi, acupuncture, drum circles, singing bowls, botanical gardens, labyrinth walking, forest bathing, treasure hunting, painting, meditation, journaling, sharing and caring with laughter and hugs.

Several of us arrived with heavy hearts and just a few retreat-rich days later, we all left with hearts filled to the brim and woven tightly together in love and hope and possibilities. We were showered with gifts as we journeyed home with new tools and skills to address the overwhelming stress that comes with cancer. I feel empowered and blessed beyond measure, grateful to LCI, our brilliant hosts and practitioners, and each beautiful, authentic participant. I have been fortunate to attend many retreats in my life. This one, by far, was my absolute favorite!

*—Infinite Love and Gratitude, Sharon Faw, retreat attendee*

“  
*It was a unique fun-filled, enriching, activity-packed weekend of loving support and compassionate care, overflowing with stressbusting and relationship-building techniques.*  
”



Left to Right: Angela Hopper and Cheryl Lecroy, Survivor Liaison, at the Asheville in-person luncheon; survivors gathered in Greensboro for a networking luncheon; Cheryl Lecroy and Jen Balme at the Family Day Celebration.

### Survivor Steering Committee

Paula Adams  
Teri Barron  
John Eagleton  
Glenn Holland

Angela Hopper  
Sonia Irusta  
Ginny Kloepfer  
Meredith Lundy

Judy Noble  
Jane Poole  
Emily Walthall

## AWARENESS

Through community health fairs, events and partnerships with organizations like FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies, Medical University of South Carolina and the Greensboro Grasshoppers, LCI raised awareness of lung cancer throughout the community.

### Community Awareness



13

Outreach events across  
North and South  
Carolina

1,300

Individuals engaged

From hospital campuses to corporate settings, statehouses to sporting arenas, LCI ensured that lung cancer remained visible, urgent, and human in 2025.

Events at WakeMed, the Murdoch Developmental Center, the Cape Fear Cancer Collaborative Resource Fair at Zimmer Cancer Center and Shine A Light at MUSC Hollings Cancer Center connected us directly with patients, providers, and families. These settings allowed for high-visibility education and one-on-one engagement—creating opportunities to share screening information and distribute educational materials. Corporate and civic presentations, including Fujifilm Diosynth Biotechnologies and the Charlotte SouthPark Rotary Club (*at left*), further extended our reach to business and community leaders, generating thoughtful dialogue and new advocates for the cause.

LCI also elevated awareness through high-profile community events during Lung Cancer Awareness Month. At the South Carolina State House in Columbia, survivors and advocates gathered to share their stories and underscore the importance of public policy and funding for lung cancer research. Events such as Hockey Fights Cancer Night with the Carolina Hurricanes at the Lenovo Center, the NC American Indian Heritage Celebration at the North Carolina Museum of Art, and the Pack Cancer Pickleball Tournament at NC State brought lung cancer education into large, diverse public spaces—reaching hundreds of individuals who may not otherwise encounter these critical messages.



## Lung Cancer Initiative Events & Celebrations

### LUNGe Forward/Jodi 5K Walks & Runs



**2000+**

Supporters across all five 5K events

**\$500,000**

Nearly raised among all five 5K communities

From record-breaking fundraising milestones to growing participation year over year, the impact was felt statewide. The Triangle LUNGe Forward 5K Run, Walk & Celebration, presented by Duke Health and held at the Koka Booth Amphitheatre in Cary, welcomed 429 participants and raised more than \$125,000.



In Charlotte, the LUNGe Forward event at McAlpine Creek Park—co-presented by Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute and Charlotte Radiology—attracted 404 participants and raised a record-breaking \$119,000. Greenville’s third annual event at Boyd Lee Park saw 196 participants and a record \$52,500 raised, while 187 supporters in the Triad gathered at Country Park to contribute over \$90,000.



The year concluded with another record-breaking showing at the Jodi 5K Run & Walk at Forest Hills Park in Durham, where 797 participants raised more than \$100,600 in memory of Jodi Koviach. Together, these events demonstrate the extraordinary generosity of our donor and volunteer community and the tangible momentum building behind our mission.



### Swinging for a Cure

Held in October at Lonnie Poole Golf Course, the **Lung Cancer Initiative Golf Classic in memory of Susan C. Hicks** brought together dedicated supporters for a memorable day of purpose on the course. Set against a beautiful backdrop, the tournament once again combined fellowship and philanthropy—raising more than **\$57,000** to advance critical lung cancer research and education initiatives. We are deeply grateful to event co-chairs Elizabeth Hefner and Anderson Garrett for their outstanding leadership and commitment to making a meaningful impact on patients and families facing lung cancer.

At left: Anderson Garrett and Elizabeth Hefner with their father and former member of the Board of Directors, Gary Hicks.



### Evening of Hope: Boots and Bling

Kicking off Lung Cancer Awareness Month, Evening of Hope: Boots & Bling brought together survivors, families, and dedicated supporters for an unforgettable celebration at the Angus Barn Pavilion. The evening was filled with inspiration and gratitude, highlighted by a heartfelt tribute to Dr. Douglas Hammer delivered by Van Eure, owner of The Angus Barn. The program beautifully reflected the strength of the lung cancer community and the shared commitment to advancing research and support.



Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our donors and sponsors, the event raised a record-breaking \$262,680 to further our mission. These critical funds are fueling lifesaving research, expanding education, and delivering meaningful programs that bring hope to individuals and families impacted by lung cancer.



### Level Up for Lung Cancer

Supporters gathered in the Cargo District in Wilmington for Level Up for Lung Cancer, an energizing evening dedicated to advancing awareness, education, and survivor support. From the welcoming venues and generous raffle donors to the inspiring speakers and committed sponsors, the event reflected the strength and unity of a community determined to make a difference. We are especially grateful to Dr. Tiffany Morgan and the team at Novant Health for serving as education partners, and to Sandy Rowe for courageously sharing her lung cancer journey during the opening program at Azalea Station.

Thanks to the generosity of our attendees and partners, the event raised more than \$10,000 to support lung cancer awareness initiatives, educational outreach, and survivor programs. It was a meaningful evening filled with connection and purpose—demonstrating the powerful impact that local engagement and philanthropic support have in standing alongside survivors and advocating for change in our community.



### All-In to Fight Cancer

LCI was honored to be the beneficiaries of the fourth annual Raleigh **All-In to Fight Cancer Charity Poker Tournament** in November at the Ritz Raleigh along with another amazing non-profit supporting mothers with cancer, the Helene Foundation. It was an incredibly hopeful and fun celebration, and we met so many wonderful people impacted by cancer.

## COLLABORATIONS

LCI works closely with other patient advocacy organizations and partners through collaboration and participation in community associations including:

- LungCAN (Lung Cancer Action Network)
- Health Research Alliance
- NC Advisory Committee on Cancer Coordination & Control Health Research Alliance
- National Lung Cancer Roundtable
- NC Center for Nonprofits
- Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
- South Carolina State Cancer Plan Workgroups



Top Left: Dr. Bradley Icard, LCI Board of Directors shares updates in lung screening at FirstHealth of the Carolinas during the National Lung Cancer Roundtable State Based Initiatives panel discussion. Top Right: Paige Humble shares perspectives from LCI during a patient advocacy panel at the LungCAN annual summit. Bottom Left: Susan Kjellqvist and Dr. Icard represent LCI and North Carolina at the Go2 Voices Summit. Bottom Right: Paige Humble and Dr. Neal Ready, Chief Scientific Officer celebrate Dr. Eziifa Oduah, LCI Career Development Award winner during her poster presentation at the ASCO Annual Meeting in Chicago.



## LCI GIVING HOPE SOCIETY

**The Giving Hope Society recognizes the generosity and impact of individuals and families who are sustaining donors to LCI. Society members contribute a minimum of \$1,000 annually in unrestricted cash gifts to the organization.** Donations can be in memory or in honor of a loved one, made toward a LCI event, or a special gift directed toward the Society. The care and kindness of our Society members fuels critical research, education, awareness and access programs across the state. Click the link in the image to the right for more information about LCI's Giving Hope Society.

At last year's Giving Hope Society VIP Reception, Dr. Hiren Mehta, LCI Board of Directors spoke about the life-saving importance of LCI's Screening Saves program. His remarks highlighted how this innovative initiative is not only increasing awareness, but actively improving access to lung cancer screening and helping drive measurable increases in screening rates across North Carolina — ultimately leading to earlier detection and better outcomes for those at risk.

Dr. Jennifer Garst, LCI's founding board chair was also recognized at the event for her passionate leadership and commitment to lung cancer patients. LCI's Healthcare Professional of the Year Award has been named in her honor.



Left to Right: LCI Founder and Board Chair Amy Cipau is pictured with Jack Sendlinger, Dr. Jennifer Garst, Board Chair Emeritus and Carla Berryann at the GHS reception in October.



## Thank you to our 2025 Giving Hope Society Members

Glenn and Suzanne Andrews  
Joyce and Ad Andrews  
Tivis and Brian Angelo  
Anonymous (2)  
Polly Armsby and James Morlando  
Bob and Pat Barker  
Evelyn & Eddie Barnes  
Lauren and Jared Batson  
Jackie Beaver  
Carla and Don Berryann  
Juliet Black  
Mara Bloom  
Dr. Jeff Blum  
Shannon Brady  
Hope and Doug Brown  
Jim Bulak  
Kelli Calcutt  
Amy and Gabriel Cipau  
Maria and Christopher Clark  
Dr. Jeffrey and Shannon Clarke  
Lee Coffey  
Diep Cohen  
Elizabeth Collins  
Jennifer and Steve Colon  
Anthony and Brooke Contini  
Isaac Cordero  
Zev Crawley  
Donald Daniel  
Tracy and Casey Delahunz  
Elissa Doty and Matt Hellgeth  
Beth and Mathew Dougherty  
Shirley Dupree  
Beth and John Dyson  
John Eagleton  
Steffanie Easter  
Sharon Faw  
Paul and Lucy Fedorkowicz  
Rob Fowler  
Dean Frauenholtz  
Samantha Freiberg  
Cassidy Fry and Brice Games  
Matthew Fry  
Anderson and Adam Garrett  
Dr. Jennifer Garst  
Fred and Cindy Gehrke  
Cecilia Gonzales  
Melissa Greer  
Hall Foundation, Inc.  
Lam Hamilton  
Elizabeth and Tyler Hefner  
Hendrick Family Foundation  
Elizabeth Hess  
Gary and Lynne Hicks  
Patricia and Doug Hicks  
Patricia and Kenneth Holloway  
Heather and James Hooper  
Paige and Tim Humble  
Katie and Nick Hynson  
Liz Hynson  
Dr. Bradley and Kimberly Icard  
Sonia Irusta  
Patricia M. Jackson  
Thaura and John Jeffreys  
Dan and Nancy Johns  
John and Cece Kennedy  
Tom and Sara Kleinknecht  
William and Ginny Kloepfer  
Krause Family Foundation, Inc.  
Teresa and Aaron Lawhorn  
Dr. Julia Lawrence  
Raychelle Leonard  
Kelli Liles  
Dr. Jason Long and Lauren Mills-Long  
Susan and Chuck Longacre  
Meredith and Clyde Lundy  
Mack D. Foundation, Inc.  
Chad Mastny  
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Christopher and Jessica Mauney  
Erik and Christine Mazzone  
Erika and Tom McArtor  
Betsy Gaskins McClaine and Russell McClaine  
Amanda McClure  
Jean and Cary McDonald  
Nancy McFarlane  
Thad McLaurin  
Dr. Hiren and Dr. Nisha Mehta  
Aurita Menezes  
Susan Michel  
Dr. Kathryn and William Mileham  
Louise Miller  
Mark and Karen Montgomery  
Susan Moore  
Kirk Morrow  
Tom Moser  
Catreliia and Eric Moylan  
Don Namm  
Marc Nevin  
Angela and Justin Brian Nicholson  
Sandy and Gary Nickel  
Katie and Joe Nifong  
Paige Nighland  
Curt and Judy Noble  
Andrew and Kevin Nunnery  
David Young Oh  
Dr. Aundrea Oliver and Paul Perkovich  
Brian and Meredith O'Neal  
Gwen and Justin Orilio  
Raj and Anuradha Pajjur  
Emily Parks  
Khaki Parks  
Sissy Parks  
Stuart Carter Parks  
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Pam Warren  
Megan and Brad Weddington  
Dr. Jared Weiss  
Mary Frances and Keith White  
Roberta Wilder  
John Wright  
Glenn Wrisley  
Zoe Finch Groves Family Trust

## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

### Guidestar 2025 Seal of Transparency

LCI earned a 2025 Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of recognition offered by GuideStar, the world's largest source of nonprofit information. By sharing metrics that highlight progress Lung Cancer Initiative is making toward its mission, the organization is helping donors move beyond simplistic ways of nonprofit evaluation such as overhead ratios.

### LCI Annual Awards Update & Celebration

In March, LCI held our Annual Awards Update and Celebration where we looked back at our accomplishments in 2025 and honored the following award recipients for their commitment to LCI and to the lung cancer community.

#### HONOREES

##### Volunteer of the Year

This award recognizes the impact, dedication and generosity of someone who gives their time freely to support the mission of Lung Cancer Initiative.

##### Fred Gehrke



Fred is an incredibly dedicated volunteer who selflessly gives his time and energy to support LCI's mission. He is frequently out in the community, raising awareness about lung cancer and promoting LCI's events. His contributions to the Triad LUNGe Forward 5K Run, Walk & Celebration committee were instrumental to the event's success. Whether talking to people in passing cars on street corners or engaging with people in the drive-through line at Chick-fil-A, Fred's grassroots efforts brought awareness and hope to the community. His tireless dedication, combined with his remarkable ability to connect with anyone, helped raise over \$10,000 for the Triad LUNGe Forward event. Fred's efforts are deeply personal, as he honors his son, who was diagnosed with lung cancer. He shared his son's story during the on-stage program at the event, creating a powerful moment of connection and inspiration. Fred's unwavering commitment and passion perfectly embody LCI's mission, and he stands as a shining example of an exceptional volunteer.

##### Junior Volunteer of the Year

This award recognizes the impact, dedication and generosity of a young adult who gives their time freely to support the mission of the Lung Cancer Initiative. Health fair volunteers, community presenters, grassroots event planners, and other volunteers may be nominated.

##### Bailey Skeen



Bailey exemplifies the true meaning of volunteerism. Her support for LCI's mission has been invaluable to the lung cancer community. Her hard work and dedication to the Greenville LUNGe Forward 5K Run, Walk, and Celebration were truly admirable. On campus, she promoted the event, rallied others to join her team, and successfully raised funds for the cause. Her input and influence on event planning and decision-making were crucial throughout 2024. Even on a rainy event day, Bailey's upbeat attitude inspired those around her to persevere through the challenging conditions.

## Impact Awards

This award recognizes the impact, dedication and generosity of people who give their time freely to support the mission of the Lung Cancer Initiative.

### Jodi 5K Run & Walk Committee



The Jodi 5K Run & Walk began in 2021 as a memorial to honor Jodi Koviach who passed away from lung cancer. Organized by Jodi's husband, Sanjay Premakumar, along with her running group the "Forehead Flyers," and Kim Page of Bull City Running, the first event brought together more than 220 participants, raising nearly \$25,000. Each year since, the Jodi 5K has continued to celebrate Jodi's life and legacy while supporting LCI. Held in her neighborhood, the event honors Jodi's love of running and the sense of community it creates. Over time, it has grown significantly, selling out registrations and gaining the support of individual and corporate sponsors. The 2024 event drew more than 700 participants and raised nearly \$90,000, bringing the total funds raised since 2021 to more than \$250,000! We are deeply grateful to Sanjay and the Jodi 5K committee for partnering with us to support those facing lung cancer in our community while honoring Jodi's memory.

### Anderson Garrett & Elizabeth Hefner



Anderson and Elizabeth have made a lasting impact on the lung cancer community and have been integral to LCI for many years. In 2024, they led the Lung Cancer Initiative Spring Golf Classic in memory of their mother, Susan C. Hicks. Through this heartfelt effort, they raised awareness and funds for those affected by lung cancer while honoring their mother's legacy. They recruited and managed a dedicated committee, secured sponsorships and auction items, and exceeded their fundraising goal by raising over \$50,000. Their efforts brought their community together and honored others by creating in-memory of and in-honor of signs for families impacted by lung cancer. Elizabeth and Anderson's commitment, passion, and leadership in memory of their mother have profoundly impacted LCI and the many patients and families we serve.

## Survivor of the Year

This award recognizes someone who has been diagnosed with lung cancer and who has used their journey to support others as a source of inspiration and hope.

### Sonia Irusta



Sonia is more than just a lung cancer survivor—she is an incredible friend, a steadfast source of support, and an invaluable volunteer. She constantly encourages other survivors to persevere through tough times, offering strength and hope when it's needed most. Her passion for giving back and supporting others is truly inspiring, making her a guiding light for those facing their own challenges. Sonia is a dedicated supporter of several cancer organizations, including LCI. Over the past year, she contributed her time and talents to the Charlotte LUNGe Forward 5K planning committee and shared her powerful story during a Lung Cancer Awareness Month community education program at Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute. Sonia's energy and commitment to the lung cancer community know no bounds.

## Caregiver of the Year

This award is given in recognition of the compassion and devotion of someone who takes care of or has taken care of an individual diagnosed with lung cancer.

### Pam Warren



Pam is a passionate and tireless advocate for lung cancer awareness. After the loss of her husband, Jim, she has dedicated herself to raising awareness and funds to support lung cancer research and education. Through her efforts to preserve and share Jim's legacy, Pam has provided support and hope to others facing similar challenges. For three consecutive years, she has led the top fundraising team for the Charlotte LUNGe Forward 5K, Jim's Jammin Joggers, securing multiple sponsorships and organizing a post-event social at Vaulted Oak Brewing. Pam was also featured in Tryon Medical Partners' blog article, "When Non-Smokers Get Lung Cancer: Jim and Pam's Story," where she highlighted her involvement with LCI. Her unwavering dedication and passion inspire us all to keep moving forward and spreading hope, even in the most difficult times.

## Committee Member of the Year

This award recognizes the time, energy, and support given by a committee member who is exceptionally dedicated to supporting the Lung Cancer Initiative's mission. Volunteers serving on the Evening of Hope Gala committee, Marketing committee, Access Grant committee, or any of the LUNGe Forward 5K committees may be nominated.

### Tom Kleinecht



Tom is an incredibly dedicated committee chair who played a pivotal role in the success of the Greenville LUNGe Forward 5K Run, Walk, and Celebration. Several years ago, Tom envisioned creating a 5K event to bring the lung cancer community together in the greater Greenville area. That vision became the Greenville LUNGe Forward, and his tenacity and positive attitude have inspired supporters, volunteers, runners, and walkers alike. Tom also secured critical sponsorships for the event, including a partnership with Grady White Boats. This accomplishment not only contributed to the success of the Greenville LUNGe Forward but also supported LCI's growing network and impact across North Carolina and beyond.

## Healthcare Professional of the Year

This award recognizes an oncologist, nurse navigator, or any other healthcare professional that goes above and beyond in an effort to provide supportive and patient centered care to lung cancer survivors. Primary care physicians, oncologists, nurse navigators, clinical social workers, and other healthcare professionals may be nominated.

### Jennifer Tenhover



Jennifer is an exceptional healthcare provider who has a remarkable ability to put patients at ease during incredibly challenging times. She consistently goes above and beyond to spread hope and offer help in any way she can. As a supporter of LCI since its earliest days, Jennifer has been deeply involved in the organization for many years, engaging in provider education events, the Evening of Hope, and other programming. She often recommends LCI's programs and resources to her patients, encouraging them to attend events and connect with other survivors. Jennifer excels at linking survivors to the support, resources, and community they need.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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