Karmanos Cancer Institute honors inspirational individuals and organizations at 2011 Heroes of Breast Cancer Awards, Oct. 11

DETROIT– Since 1995, the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute has recognized individuals, corporations and organizations for their demonstrated leadership in raising awareness of breast cancer through education, research and the promotion of early detection, treatment and stories of survivorship. Continuing this tradition and to celebrate National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the Karmanos Cancer Institute honored 12 awardees at its 17th Annual Heroes of Breast Cancer Awards on Oct. 11. More than 200 guests attended the event at the Max M. Fisher Music Center. Emmy Award-winning television personality Lila Lazarus, served as emcee.

"At the Karmanos Cancer Institute, research is the foundation of everything we do and the surest path to eradicate all cancers," said Gerold Bepler, M.D., Ph.D., president and CEO, Karmanos Cancer Institute. "Although we work year-round to advance treatments for all cancers, this month we recognize those who continue to help us in the fight against breast cancer – whether it’s advancing science or rallying co-workers, friends and community to be a part of something greater than all of us. Together, we are making progress and saving lives. We congratulate this year’s honorees and ask for everyone’s continued support as we work to end this disease."

Dr. Bepler also paid tribute to the late Angelika Burger, Ph.D., professor of Pharmacology and Oncology for the Wayne State University School of Medicine and director of the Translational Research Laboratory at Karmanos Cancer Institute. A gifted researcher, Dr. Burger was the recipient of the 2009 Heroes of Breast Cancer Scientific Distinction Award. Dr. Burger was being treated for a rare ear cancer as she continued her research in the treatment of triple-negative breast cancer, one of the most aggressive forms of the disease. After a courageous battle, she passed away in May 2011.

"It’s a privilege to honor this year’s Heroes awardees and to recognize the 2.5 million breast cancer survivors in the United States," said Maureen Keenan Meldrum, director, Breast Cancer Special Programs at Karmanos and chair of the Susan G. Komen Detroit Race for the Cure®. "There is no doubt, great progress has been made. But as long as there are women and men being diagnosed with late-stage disease due to lack of awareness, insurance or other resources, access to care or fear, our work is not done. We must do all we can to bridge the gap to help save lives. We invite everyone to join us and help defeat this disease."

About the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute
Located in Midtown Detroit, Michigan, the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute is one of 40 National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer centers in the United States. Caring for nearly 6,000 new patients annually on a budget of $216 million, conducting more than 700 cancer-specific scientific investigation programs and clinical trials, Karmanos is among the nation’s best cancer centers. Through the commitment of 1,000 staff, including nearly 300 physicians and researchers on faculty at the Wayne State University School of Medicine, and supported by thousands of volunteer and financial donors, Karmanos strives to prevent, detect and eradicate all forms of cancer. Its long-term partnership with the WSU School of Medicine enhances the collaboration of critical research and academics related to cancer care. Gerold Bepler, M.D., Ph.D., is the Institute’s president and chief executive officer. Karmanos is southeastern Michigan’s most preferred hospital for cancer care according to annual surveys conducted by the National Research Corporation. For more information call 1-800-KARMANOS or go to www.karmanos.org.
LEADERSHIP AWARDS

For helping to bring about a society that now encourages people to speak out about their illness, a society where funding for breast cancer research is improving each year, and a society where more and more people are learning about breast cancer.

- **Organization: Wayne State University, in Detroit**
  Wayne State University President Allan D. Gilmour accepted the award.

*By leading in the fight against breast cancer Wayne State University has united its students, faculty and the community to “aim higher” to defeat this disease.*

Wayne State University is a nationally recognized metropolitan research institution offering more than 400 academic programs to almost 32,000 students through its 13 schools and colleges. Its mission is to discover, assess, examine, transmit and apply knowledge that contributes to the positive development and well-being of individuals, organizations and society. No where has this been truer than in the area of breast cancer advancements.

At the Karmanos Cancer Institute, Wayne State researchers are working toward groundbreaking discoveries. Here are just a couple of examples:

- a DNA vaccine that appears to eliminate drug-resistant HER2-positive tumors in mice without toxic side effects, and
- a collaborate project, funded by Susan G. Komen for the Cure, to find new therapies for triple-negative breast cancer, an aggressive form of the disease, often resistant to standard treatments and with a particularly high incidence among African-Americans.

Wayne State’s School of Medicine is the nation’s largest single-campus medical school and has the most M.D. graduates each year in our state. Professors hold dual faculty positions at Karmanos, drawing medical students into its labs and clinics, teaching them how state-of-the-art medicine is practiced at a leading cancer center.

A sponsor of the Susan G. Komen Detroit Race for the Cure®, the Wayne Cares team annually has the largest team in its category, including 684 members this year alone who raised $19,000. Wayne State students and faculty also assist as volunteers, capturing the Detroit Race on video, helping to create a communal memorial art project to honor loved ones, and increasing year-round breast cancer educational programs and fundraising opportunities.

For 143 years, Wayne State has encouraged students to aim higher and leave a legacy that can change the world. For all of this and more, Karmanos recognized Wayne State University with the Heroes of Breast Cancer Leadership Award.

*“Wayne State is humbled to receive the KCI Heroes of Breast Cancer Leadership Award. Breast cancer has touched the lives of too many people. I am proud of the work our researchers do, which may one day cure this disease; proud of the education our faculty provide to School of Medicine students who will treat patients with this disease; and proud of our staff who have brought more awareness about this disease to the workplace. I look forward to the day when we no longer have to have ‘heroes’ to help eradicate breast cancer, because I look forward to the day when we have a cure.”* — Allan Gilmour, President, Wayne State University

- **Individual: Nick Smither, of Novi**
  Group Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Ford Motor Company

*As corporate champion of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, Nick Smither has galvanized thousands from the Ford Motor community, and through his example, drives others to help end breast cancer forever.*

For 17 years, Ford Motor Company has been the National Series Sponsor of Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. Since 1995, Ford has dedicated more than $110 million to drive us toward Komen’s vision of a world without breast cancer. More than 80,000 Ford employees have run or walked in Races across the country to support the cause, and thousands of Ford Dealers across the nation have gotten involved. For those achievements, Ford, as a company, has been honored by Karmanos with a one-time-only Heroes award.
However, this year, Karmanos honors an individual from Ford whose leadership has made such a distinctive mark.

Nick Smither is the corporate champion for Komen Detroit Race for the Cure, in addition to other worthy causes Ford supports. As Group Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Smither’s plate is already extremely full. Yet, year after year, he asks Ford employees to step up and join him and his family on Race day. He challenges everyone to join the crowd; the excitement and the momentum that will help lead to a cure. He asks his colleagues to bring all of that energy they use every day to make Ford the car company Detroiters are so proud of, and he encourages them to make a difference through cash donations and purchases of Warriors in Pink items. Smither has done this through some of the hardest times the auto industry has seen. Yet, he connects to the mantra shared by Race supporters: “Times are tough, but breast cancer is tougher. And metro Detroiters are the toughest of all.”

This year, Ford brought a team of more than 2,500 members decked out in their Ford T-shirts. Behind the scenes, inspired by Smither’s reminders of the strength and courage it takes to fight breast cancer 365 days a year; those Ford Warriors raised $46,000. Surrounded by many survivors working at Ford, and a powerhouse of dedicated volunteers, Smither is quick to give credit to others.

“What a great surprise and honor, thank you! However, the real heroes are our fantastic Ford team and volunteers who show up in increasing numbers each year to support the fight against breast cancer.” – Nick Smither.

MEDIA AWARD
For media work that communicates important messages about breast cancer.

- Patricia A. Ellis, of Grosse Pointe
  Director of Media Relations, Karmanos Cancer Institute, and Volunteer Media Chair, Susan G. Komen Detroit Race for the Cure®

A tireless advocate, Patricia Ellis has built enduring relationships in the Detroit media market, ensuring that compelling and life-saving information is shared with metro Detroiters and beyond.

Patricia Ellis is always promoting stories and it’s rare to see her without her camera. When news directors, reporters, producers or editors hear from Ellis, they know they’ll be hearing about the latest work going on at Karmanos, whether its innovative research, providing expert comment related to breaking cancer news, or compelling stories that demonstrate the advancements in cancer care and the determination of the human spirit. Detroit is a competitive media market and news comes at the media in stunning quantity. Ellis finds ways to differentiate the stories so each benefits the particular media outlet, while making a difference across the community. Media go to work to find time or space to tell the story she’s pitching.

Her job is to publicize the cancer work going on at Karmanos. If that isn’t enough, Ellis volunteers countless hours as the Media Chair for Komen Detroit Race for the Cure.

She is prepared with the answers before the media asks the questions; she is ready with compelling patient stories, with accurate messages from researchers and clinicians, and she is armed with facts that refute confusion and offers a steady beat of reliable information that lets southeastern Michigan know about the exciting progress happening right here in our community – that can also impact the world. With countless follow-ups, she manages all of the detail with each story and arranges for all of the interviews.

There simply aren’t enough hours in the day but, somehow, Ellis carves them out. She’s passionate about the cause and those she is advocating for. She engages media who also get excited about informing, educating and sharing compelling stories that impact all of us. She values her relationships with media and is always finding ways to enhance them. She believes that each person can make a difference in his or her own way, and when we come together as a community, the possibilities are endless.

“I am truly humbled and honored to be recognized among the Heroes of Breast Cancer. Having lost my mom to breast cancer and knowing several other loved ones who have battled this disease and other cancers, I feel that each time I share someone’s story and help educate others about prevention, early detection and cancer breakthroughs, I’m honoring them. Everyone has a story and each life impacts another, sometimes in ways we
may not always realize. I feel blessed and continue to be inspired by the many survivors, co-survivors and supporters who have trusted me to tell their amazing stories of strength, determination and gratitude; by my friends in the media who continue to listen and agree that this story of cancer survival, struggle and triumph is one that needs to be told again and again; by my fellow volunteers on the Susan G. Komen Detroit Race for the Cure Committee who are my extended family; by my colleagues at the Karmanos Cancer Institute and the exceptional physicians, researchers and medical staff whose steadfast persistence and commitment to eradicate cancer is helping to save lives every day; by my husband, family and friends who have supported me through the years so that I can do what I do – help tell the story by engaging the media and community in our mission to save lives; and lastly, by my parents, who both died of cancer, who by their example taught me to love and give with all my heart. They are my heroes. I gratefully accept this award in their memory. For in honoring me you are honoring them. Thank you.” – Patricia A. Ellis

PHILANTHROPY AWARDS
For dedication of resources and talents to benefit the cause of breast cancer.

• Organization: Plymouth Whalers
  Ontario Hockey League, playing out of Compuware Arena

Tough players, with heads of pink and hearts of gold. The Plymouth Whalers found a way to combine their passion for hockey with their commitment in the fight against breast cancer.

The Plymouth Whalers began their Pink Out! For Breast Cancer Awareness campaign in 2008. Raising funds for breast cancer research at the Karmanos Cancer Institute, the campaign continues to grow in stature and excitement every year. Last year’s “Coaches Campaign” during the Pink Out! raised over $18,000 as General Manager and Head Coach Mike Vellucci, and Associate Coach Joe Stefan, both dyed their hair pink. Several Plymouth alumni, now playing in the National Hockey League, wanted to show their support and did it in the best possible way; cash donations! It takes a whole lot of people – players, staff, corporate partners, and especially the fans – and a whole lot of pink to pull this off. The Whalers have raised more than $30,000 since starting the Pink Out! That doesn’t include this year’s fundraising which the Plymouth Whalers are doing through a number of events, starting with the Lucky Hair Salon on Oct. 11 when a bunch of tough guys pinked out their hair. Yes, real men wear pink hair, especially if they're the Plymouth Whalers, winners of the 2011 Heroes of Breast Cancer Philanthropy Award.

"Like a lot of awards, we share this with many people. I thank our players, for dying their hair pink early in the week and then wearing it that way all week, no matter where they go. We thank our fans for making the Pink Out a special night. The event grows every season. We thank Karmanos Cancer Institute for recognizing our efforts.”
– Plymouth President, General Manager and Head Coach Mike Vellucci

• Individual: Carol Richie, of Clarkston
  Kid Rock Foundation

Carol Ritchie’s personal generosity has inspired others, resulting in significant support of breast cancer research at the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute.

Carol Ritchie, like many breast cancer survivors, knows that research makes a huge difference. It did for her and it does to others. The Kid Rock Foundation, where Richie works, raises funds and awareness for local and regional charities helping disadvantaged children, victims of war and natural disasters, and those suffering from illness.

Breast cancer certainly got her attention and she brought Karmanos Cancer Institute to the Foundation’s attention. Richie recognized the outstanding quality of research at the Karmanos Cancer Institute. She’s also keenly aware of the cost associated with cancer research, so she rolled up her sleeves – like the iconic Rosie the Riveter – and went to work. Richie created the “We Can Do It!” tank shirt to raise vital research funds for breast cancer. That shirt is part of the Made in Detroit series and is available throughout October to help fund breast cancer research at Karmanos.

At the Foundation’s website its philosophy appears: “Can't stop the war, shelter homeless, feed the poor. Can't walk on water. Can't save your sons and daughters. Can't change the world to make things fair. The least that I
can do is CARE.” That’s what this Hero does. She reaches into her own pocket, and uses her voice among friends and fans to bring in the dollars.

She’s been called, “The woman behind the man; the detail lady; the problem solver.” Her kid brother is Bob Ritchie – better known as Kid Rock.

For creative fundraising for breast cancer research, the Karmanos Cancer Institute proudly honors Carol Ritchie with the Heroes of Breast Cancer Philanthropy Award.

“This is such an honor to be recognized by one of the top cancer institutes in our country. Having experienced this disease in May 2010, I know how important it is to inspire, help and comfort others who are faced with this disease. Working with Karmanos Cancer Institute this past year and knowing how dedicated they are to eradicating this disease has focused me on becoming a voice to those who may not have one. We are all in this disease together. No one is alone. Remember, once you choose hope, anything is possible.” – Carol Ritchie

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS
For assisting in efforts to reach the community with the importance of breast cancer early detection, cancer care, and/or survivorship at large in a volunteer capacity.

- Organization: Binson’s Home Health Centers, Inc., Center Line
  Long-time supporter of patients and families through Karmanos Cancer Institute and Susan G. Komen Detroit Race for the Cure®

Binson’s family members and employees have contributed time and talent. They recognize the terrible burden of breast cancer and work in countless ways to make things better and more bearable.

From humble beginnings in 1953 as the corner pharmacy in Warren, Binson’s service to patients and families went far beyond store hours. Their rich legacy of community service has been known around southeast Michigan since the 1960’s, when they began helping the Michigan Cancer Foundation, now known as the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute. The cancer loan closet was established, helping thousands of patients. President and CEO Jim Binson, whose mother was a breast cancer survivor, knows that families are devastated by cancer and other serious diseases. He makes it clear every day and in every way, that Binson’s is a company that will do whatever it can to help. If you’re a family member, employee, partner or supplier, you’re in the fight.

Lady Binson’s Boutiques provide a warm welcome and top quality breast care products, helping every woman feel beautiful, despite the ravages of breast cancer. For ladies without means, Binson’s connects survivors to more community resources, by working closely with the “Helping Hands” program at Karmanos’ Walt Breast Center, and the statewide Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program that provides free cancer screening to uninsured women.

Binson’s also provides generous cash gifts through fundraising activities, such as its hot dog lunches, ice cream socials and chili cook-offs, raising thousands of dollars. Binson’s is the Official Truck and Survivor Café Sponsor for the Komen Detroit Race for the Cure. It lends warehouse, meeting and office space; and advocate for enhanced breast cancer public policy by visiting Congress and calling State officials.

Turn around any time and you’ll see Binson’s doing something good for the community. Binson’s customers have gotten used to top-notch treatment, but what the family and employees do as volunteers is the true measure of their character.

“Thanks to improvements in treatment and early detection, breast cancer patients have a much better chance of survival than they did just a short time ago. Though we have made progress, there is still more to be done and Binson’s is very proud of our involvement with the Karmanos Cancer Institute and the Susan G Komen Race for the Cure.” – The Binson Family

- Individual: Sean C. Keenan, of Bloomfield Hills
  Volunteer Photography Chair, Susan G. Komen Detroit Race for the Cure®, and Past Board President, Michigan Association of CPAs
Sean Keenan led a team of artists to create thousands of photographic images that were useful in many ways, but above all, brought treasured memories and comfort to grieving families.

Sean Keenan is a CPA so he’s used to working with numbers. A picture is worth a thousand words. So how do we measure the value of nine years, countless volunteer hours and 50,000 photographic images? That’s a rough estimate of Keenan’s legacy. Pursuing a hobby from college, he started taking photographs of his family at the Komen Detroit Race for the Cure. His sister Maureen Meldrum, chair of the Race, asked for more and then used the pictures to thank volunteers, teams and sponsors, inspiring them to do more. He produced DVDs and tailored photo books highlighting each Race. Photos celebrated the panorama of excitement and helped honor achievements. The photos were evidence of metro Detroit’s progress in the battle against breast cancer.

It’s been these photos that document and help the problem-solving process for the following year’s Race. Most importantly, they become treasured mementos for a grieving family when breast cancer steals another life.

Keenan uses his skill, Irish powers of persuasion and his camera honoring his two survivor sisters. That combination, plus his willingness to put in the time and ask others to help, have made for an invaluable contribution. As past board chair for the Michigan Association of CPA’s, he used his talents and turned “a couple of copies of DVDs” into 500. A leader who respects the talent of others, Keenan turned to Bill Kern, another volunteer photographer. Kern turned to the Ford Photo Club, an organization of Ford employees who shared a passion for photography. That collaboration created the Photography Committee that Keenan and Kern co-chair, coordinating the work of 30 professional-quality volunteer photographers who come back to the Race every year, documenting 7,000 new memories of Detroit’s best party.

"I share this award with all of the volunteer photographers whose efforts resulted in the Detroit Race being the most thoroughly photographically documented across Komen’s series of 130 events. They created photos that are beautiful, poignant, and provide our community with tremendous memories. Within our collection are many depictions of survivors who are struggling with their disease, and friends lost to breast cancer for whose families we can provide treasured images. I cannot adequately express my gratitude for the photographers’ wonderful dedication, skills, and unique perspective."

– Sean Cassidy Keenan

- In Memory: Jill Smith, formerly of Detroit
  Karmanos Cancer Institute Volunteer

As Jill Smith battled her own disease, she continued to support and sustain others in meaningful ways that allowed her to soar.

Jill Smith was one of Karmanos Cancer Institute’s volunteer patient navigators – the smiling face who welcomes cancer patients and their concerned families, and escorts them to where they need to go. Smith did that before and during her own cancer journey. When chemotherapy took her energy and her beautiful long braid, she still volunteered and still calmed the fears of new patients. Patients intuitively knew Smith understood what they were facing and felt if Smith could do it, then they probably could too.

When Smith lost her job, she took it as an opportunity to put in more volunteer hours. We are all given different gifts. Not everyone could do what Smith did, facing down disappointments with others in mind, rarely feeling sorry for herself.

In spring 2011, Smith was dealing with her own health challenges. She astonished her friends and family by heading down to Comerica Park at dawn on May 21, the day of the 2011 Komen Detroit Race for the Cure. With her best friend Yolanda, she got her photo snapped at the Ford Warriors in Pink booth. During the Race Opening Ceremony, she pulled off her oxygen tubes, threw aside her cane, and took to the stage, smiling at 40,000 friends and holding the sign representing thousands of survivors just like her.

It was one of Smith’s proudest moments. A week later, she passed away.

 Compared to many, Smith lived a quiet life, but the impact she made was huge. She is greatly missed and treasured by those who knew her – all those who still feel her compassionate spirit.

Jill’s brother Harry Smith accepted the award.

"You are closer to glory leaping an abyss than upholstering a rut." – James Broughton.
COMPASSIONATE CAREGIVER AWARD
A health care professional whose treatment of breast cancer patients has been marked by exceptional technical skill, combined with sensitivity and compassion.

- Elizabeth Min Hui Kim, M.D., of Royal Oak
  Surgical Oncology, Karmanos Cancer Institute and Wayne State University School of Medicine

A gifted surgeon, Dr. Kim looks into the eyes of her patients, listens to their words and what is behind them, then applies her skills to begin the healing process.

Imagine you have just been diagnosed with breast cancer. That first appointment with a surgeon can be terrifying. No woman ever forgets it. But if you're a patient of Dr. Elizabeth Kim, it's transformative.

Cancer rarely follows a safe, straight path. Dr. Kim finds ways to overcome the obstacles in that journey, reaching above and beyond for solutions to complex problems. Because breast cancer is often very complex, especially in a community where it's prevalent and where so many patients may be diagnosed at later stages, resources can be stretched to the limits and needs can seem insurmountable.

Dr. Kim is a gifted surgeon who embodies the essential combination of skill and compassion, deserving of this year's Heroes of Breast Cancer Compassionate Caregiver Award.

Admiring some other well-known people, Dr. Kim believes, “The purpose of human life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others.” (Albert Schweitzer)..."To love at all is to be vulnerable...God doesn’t require us to succeed, he only requires that we try.” (CS Lewis)..."Seek always to do good, even if it’s a little thing for those that need help, something for which we get no pay but the privilege of doing it, and it is in the little things that our strength lies and can turn what is impossible to possible with God’s help.” (Mother Teresa)–Elizabeth Kim, M.D.

THE GERI LESTER COURAGE AWARDS
An individual whose battle with breast cancer has been an inspiration to family, friends and community.

Geri Lester was one of the leaders of the Komen Detroit Race for the Cure® since its 1992 inception, and was integral to the development of the Heroes of Breast Cancer Program. Geri dedicated herself to bringing supportive and educational services to the metropolitan Detroit cancer community. She was a founding member of Gilda’s Club of Metro Detroit. A 2002 Heroes of Breast Cancer Courage awardee, Geri always saw the good in others, the gifts of everyday living and the hope in every situation. Geri lost her 20-year battle to breast cancer in May 2003, but her brave and cheerful attitude in the face of her disease remains an inspiration to us all.

The Courage Awards were presented by Geri’s son Matt Lester.

- In Memory: Farida Hatem, formerly of Dearborn
  ACCESS: Arab Community Center for Economic & Social Services

Farida Hatem carried messages about her own disease with tremendous grace, leaving a legacy of hope in a community hard hit by breast cancer.

Farida Hatem’s connection to breast cancer began in 2006. The frightening change in her breast turned out to be benign; however, the following year she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She dealt with her disease as with everything else in her life – she was practical, efficient and positive. Hatem took every opportunity to communicate hope, not fear and never shame, becoming a role model in the Arab community. She joined the genetics counseling team at ACCESS, researching the strong family history of breast cancer in the Arab community. In her work, Hatem made over 500 home visits, engaging in one-on-one educational interviews informing Middle Eastern families about breast cancer. When she told her own story of survivorship, everyone listened. There is no doubt she saved lives.

Farida Hatem died in February 2011, leaving family, friends and colleagues who loved and respected her, and a community who learned from her. One who learned from Hatem’s example was a young neighbor named Niveen...
who played with Hatem’s daughter and would sometimes turn to Hatem for help with her schoolwork. Niveen wrote that Farida Hatem made her feel “. . . like I have to be strong about everything in life. She was a very strong woman to feel what she felt and did not give up on her family and herself. I have learned that you should never give up.”

Hatem’s example is encouraging to her friends who are continuing her work and who will never forget her. Although we grieve Hatem’s passing, we celebrate her life, the gifts she shared and the mission that continues in her memory.

“I am honored to accept this award on behalf of our sister Farida Hatem, a hero who made a difference in people’s lives. She was a woman of great courage and perseverance. Her memorable last words to us were: “I am going to get better and come back to ACCESS to do the work I use to do”. We promise Farida we will honor her by continuing the tradition of cancer education, early detection, and treatment at ACCESS Community Health & Research Center. May Farida rest in peace and she will always be remembered as one of our Cancer prevention heroes.” – Adnan Hammad, Ph.D., Senior Director, ACCESS Community Health & Research Center

- **In Honor: Sandy Schwartz, of Franklin**
  Co-Founder, Cancer Thrivers Network for Jewish Women

*With strength and dignity, Sandy Schwartz has been a motivating force who has worked to bring comfort and understanding to women in metropolitan Detroit’s Jewish community, where breast cancer can take a great toll.*

Sandy Schwartz and Geri Lester were friends. They shared some common traits: love of family, commitment to community, and courage in the face of breast cancer.

Schwartz is one of the founders of the Cancer Thrivers Network (CTN) for Jewish Women, a group that was established in 2008. "Thrivers" is a word describing the celebration of life. The mission is to enrich and empower Jewish women through activities, friendship, resources, education and humor. The Network welcomes women who have been diagnosed with any kind of cancer at any time in their lives. The CTN is a program of the Jewish Community Center of Metro Detroit.

Along with her husband Alan, vice chairman and partner of Honigman, Miller Schwartz and Cohn, and Karmanos Cancer Institute board chair, Schwartz’s commitment to her community, and especially to Karmanos, is exemplary. She and her husband recognize that, despite economic challenges, the war on cancer never stops.

Schwartz’s strength and dignity as a survivor have been steadfast, serving as an example to others and a reminder that each of us must do what we can – and everyone can do something.

“I am most honored to receive the Geri Lester Courage Award. Geri and I worked together on many projects and she was a genuine role model for me and for all who had the privilege to know her. I think she would agree that courage is simply moving forward in the face of a cancer diagnosis by putting one foot in front of the other every day, and making it the best day that it can be. So, when I heard that I had received an award created in Geri’s memory, I was both delighted and overwhelmed. In that brief phone call, my mind was flooded with memories of my feelings at the time of diagnosis, going back 34 years. I have never felt courageous, but I am still very proud to join the roster of the Karmanos Heroes of Breast Cancer, and to have the opportunity to remember and celebrate Geri Lester.” – Sandy Schwartz

**DR. MICHAEL J. BRENNAN SCIENTIFIC DISTINCTION AWARD**
For demonstrated leadership in breast cancer research. This award was presented by Gerold Bepler, M. D., Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of Karmanos Cancer Institute.

Dr. Michael J. Brennan served as President of the Michigan Cancer Foundation, the forerunner of the Karmanos Cancer Institute. Dr. Brennan died on Sept. 22, 2010 at the age of 89. He was a nationally-renowned oncologist when he took the helm of Michigan Cancer Foundation in 1966, serving as its president until 1991. Under his leadership, MCF became the country’s 20th comprehensive cancer center in 1978. Dr. Brennan was a pioneer in cancer research, a mentor and inspiration, who helped put Karmanos on the map as a leader in compassionate and comprehensive cancer care.
Peter J. Littrup, M.D., of Bloomfield Hills
Director of Interventional Radiology/Radiology Research, Karmanos Cancer Institute, and Professor of Radiology, Wayne State University School of Medicine

The work of Dr. Littrup and his team brings distinction to Karmanos Cancer Institute. The impact will be felt around the world

Peter Littrup, M.D., is professor and full-time affiliate of Radiology, Urology and Oncology at Wayne State University School of Medicine, and director of Interventional Radiology and of the Clinical Imaging Research Core at the Karmanos Cancer Institute. Dr. Littrup was recognized for his work with cryotherapy, as well as for co-creating a breast cancer screening device called SoftVue.

Cryotechnology refers to the freezing of cancer tumors. Cryotherapy related to breast cancer involves the freezing of breast tumors. The innovative outpatient procedure is done with a clear view of the tumor being frozen, involves very little pain for the patient, and offers excellent healing with minimal scarring.

Dr. Littrup produced the first reported study of the successful freezing of breast cancer without patients having to undergo surgery. This optional treatment method holds widespread promise for the nearly 200,000 women who are diagnosed with invasive breast cancer annually in the United States. While current treatments can be highly effective, they often require invasive options such as surgery. Dr. Littrup’s work opens the door for potential cures, providing safe and effective breast conservation with minimal discomfort. The potential impact of this option versus a more invasive surgery is significant.

In addition, Dr. Littrup is the co-creator of the breast cancer imaging device SoftVue, with Neb Duric, Ph.D., a Heroes of Breast Cancer past honoree. SoftVue uses ultrasound tomography to image breast tissue. It produces high quality, three-dimensional detailed images, similar to that of an MRI but less expensive.

Unlike mammography, SoftVue uses no radiation or compression and each exam takes approximately one minute. It has shown to be very effective for women with dense breasts who have a higher risk of developing breast cancer.

Clinical studies continue to validate preliminary findings and demonstrate that this technology can detect breast cancer at an earlier stage when it is most curable. The potential is to accurately differentiate cancer from normal tissue and benign disease, which could decrease unnecessary biopsies. Ultimately, this means women may be more likely to participate in a breast cancer screening process that is comfortable yet accurate, with no compression or radiation. This could result in more cancers being caught early which will improve survival rates.

These are two examples of the innovative work of Dr. Littrup, offering tremendous hope and helping move us closer to ending breast cancer.

"I am very proud to receive this award on behalf of both my own family and my extended Karmanos families. I want to share this award with both of my KCI families involved with breast cancer: from the diagnostic side with the ultrasound tomography team, to the treatment side in delivering minimally invasive cryoablation of breast cancer with the ablation team. It is only through the combination of revolutionary changes in breast cancer diagnosis and treatment that we will make a paradigm shift in reducing the suffering from breast cancer." – Peter J. Littrup, M.D.