

2018
Community
Report



Jan Wilking

A Message from Our CEO and Board Chair



Sandy Obodzinski
President and CEO

Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee celebrated a momentous year in 2018 with the help and support of our community and friends. We opened a new location in Williamson County and held a smashing 20th Anniversary Bash – voted Best Anniversary Party by readers of *nFocus* magazine. And those are just two of the big headlines from this special year!

Twenty years after forming, Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee is supporting people diagnosed with cancer and their friends and families in a variety of ways at two welcoming locations. We know from experience that one person's visit to a Gilda's Club clubhouse could mean a difference in the lives of many, many people. When communication and coping skills are shared in a judge-free environment, stress lessens. At our cooking classes, tools for nutrition are shared. At yoga sessions, people move and strengthen their bodies. In our groups, participants simply gather to listen and walk with each other through the hard stuff. People who want to start individual counseling are provided the necessary resources and connections to start sessions. The empowering results ripple far and wide.

We hear stories of how Gilda's Club has made a difference for our members every day... "I didn't know I needed Gilda's Club until I came here." "I wasn't a support group person, but I'm so grateful to have found people who understand." "We can laugh together." "I have a good life with cancer." "At Gilda's Club, I found hope."

Our mission includes ensuring all Middle Tennesseans know about Gilda's Club, so whenever cancer touches their lives, or someone they love, they know they won't have to face it alone. Gilda's Club is a community where you can come as you are and receive support – at absolutely no cost!

We should all be encouraged by advancements in clinical trials, cancer therapies, and increasing survivorship for those who have undergone treatment. But we know cancer isn't going away...yet. With Middle Tennessee growing so rapidly, Gilda's Club must keep pace to meet the emotional needs of people impacted by cancer. Treatment adherence and outcomes are better when people have support, which is proven by data at Gilda's Club and elsewhere. Stress and depression are reduced. Emotional and social support are an essential complement to medical treatment, and we are committed to expanding these vital services to our community.

As you read this report, thank you for being part of the journey with Gilda's Club – in the past, today, and going forward. On behalf of our entire board and great staff, we ask you to make sure your loved ones know we're here for them. Bookmark gildasclubmiddletn.org. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Sign up for the GildaGram newsletter and forward opportunities you see to your friends.

Together, we can ensure no one faces cancer alone.

Sandy and Jim

p.s. Read on to learn more about some of what we accomplished in 2018, including a countdown of our top five most memorable moments.



Jim Brown
Chairman of the Board

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Gilda's Club Members Join Former VP Biden for Cancer Conversation

On April 11, 2018, four members of Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee were among a small group of cancer patients and advocates invited to sit down with former Vice President Joe Biden to share their unique experiences with the disease. The intimate "Sundae Session" was part of a trek across the United States by Joe and Jill Biden to learn more about the challenges facing all people living with cancer – an effort of the Biden Cancer Initiative, which strives to develop and drive implementation of solutions to accelerate progress in cancer prevention, detection, diagnosis, research, and care, and to reduce disparities in cancer outcomes.

"I don't want to lose sight of what can help patients now, so that when they put their heads on the pillow at the end of the day, they can fall asleep with peace of mind," says former Vice President Biden, a leading cancer advocate and founder of the Biden Cancer Initiative, of which Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee affiliate Cancer Support Community is a partner.

"I'm a huge fan of Joe and Jill Biden and the amazing work they're doing to improve cancer outcomes. There aren't words to describe how meaningful it was for me to spend time with Joe, hearing firsthand how much is going on behind the scenes," says John Williamson, a Gilda's Club member who participated in the event. "I love knowing that the work continues and that the door is open for cancer patients and survivors to contribute to the effort. I'm grateful to have been included in such a cool event."

A special "thank you" to everyone who shared their time, experiences, and insights with former Vice President Biden, including Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee members Dr. Pete Bartels, Katherine Broadway, Jaden Fox, and John Williamson.



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Board Leaders Honored for Their Service to Our Cancer Community

In 2018, not one, but two former Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee board leaders were recognized for their service to our cancer support program and, in turn, the people of Nashville and beyond.

On July 25, 2018, Franklin Tomorrow honored former Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee Board Chair and long-time friend Brian Marger with the Corporate Individual Award - a part of its 12th annual Exemplary Community Volunteer Awards program.

"We were fortunate to have had Brian on our Board of Directors for six years, including three years as Board Chair. During this time, Brian's leadership influenced board governance and nominating practices; the launch of expanded individual and major gift fundraising practices; and the establishment of an investment policy - all supporting the long-term growth and stability of our organization," says Gilda's Club President and CEO Sandy Obodzinski. "Brian is a wonderful person and a gifted leader, and we are proud to call him a friend."

On October 9, 2018, Gilda's Club was in the spotlight again - this time as The Center for Nonprofit Management hosted its Salute to Excellence awards at the Omni Nashville Hotel. It was at this prestigious annual event that former Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee Board Chair and ongoing supporter Harriet Karro received the KraftCPAs Board Member of the Year Award.

"Harriet served our Board of Directors for six years, providing essential leadership during a time of significant transition," says Sandy. "As Board Chair, she grew involvement with new board members, building a leadership pipeline that will benefit the organization for years to come. Her love and drive for philanthropy also resulted in a nearly \$500,000 funding opportunity to support the organization's expansion and brand change. Harriet's dedication and graciousness have made an immeasurable difference for Gilda's Club."



2018 By the Numbers

Fueling Our Mission

1.7M

Cancer diagnoses
across the U.S.

~37,000

Cancer diagnoses
in Tennessee

46th

Tennessee's national
ranking in cancer
deaths

+7%

Increase in cancer deaths in
TN since 1990 (vs.
nationwide decrease of 5%)

47%

Diagnosed and at risk
of clinical depression

53%

Impacted by cancer and
worried about the future

Serving Adults, Children, and Families Throughout Middle Tennessee

12,100+

Clubhouse
visits

3,265

Individuals
served

150%

Increase in new
members vs. 2017

331

New
members

245

New members
in Nashville

86

New members
in Williamson County



2018 By the Numbers

Providing Social and Emotional Support with an Evidence-Based Program

67%

Increase in individual member plans created vs. 2017

516

Emotional support counseling sessions

472

Support and networking group gatherings

570

Healthy lifestyle classes and workshops

2,210

Clubhouse "hangouts"

Growing with a Strong Base of Community Support

135%

Increase in Red Door donors (\$1,000+) vs. 2017

62

Corporate and foundation partners

1,897

Volunteer hours in service to Gilda's Club

100%

Participation in giving by Board of Directors



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Emotional Support Counseling and Nutrition Coaching Make Debut

In 2018, Gilda's Club expanded its program offering with the addition of emotional support counseling and customized nutrition coaching. Both were created in response to identified gaps and piloted before being integrated into the Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee program, says Program Director Felice Apolinsky, LCSW.

"Distress screenings – for both those facing a cancer diagnosis and caregivers – have long been a part of our free membership process. Again and again, these screenings were showing that people wanted and needed access to affordable individual, family, and couples counseling to unpack the emotions of a cancer diagnosis," she says. "Similarly, our distress screening data indicated a huge need for support with overall health and wellness, specifically nutrition."

Gilda's Club piloted emotional support counseling for almost a year beginning in 2017. In addition to pre- and post-evaluation feedback that validated the need for and value of the offering, pilot participants were clamoring for more.

"Today, we are able to offer members six counseling sessions – completely free to the member and subsidized by Gilda's Club. Whether that means couples counseling, family counseling, or one-on-one counseling, we enable what serves the member best," Felice says. "As our network of community psychotherapists continues to grow, we're also able to make this offering more accessible. We currently have counseling partners in Nashville, Brentwood, and Murfreesboro, among other areas."

Gilda's Club's customized health/nutrition coaching was also piloted in 2017 – and with such an incredibly positive response that it, too, became a regular offering in 2018.

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“Along with anxiety, depression, and sleeplessness, nutrition and overall wellness are leading causes of distress for those facing cancer,” says Felice. “Strong scientific data correlates obesity and cancer prevalence, so learning easy, affordable, individualized strategies for better nutrition and overall health is vital.”

Gilda's Club's customized health/nutrition coaching is facilitated by Certified Health Coach Danielle Gilbert and comprised of both in-person visits and virtual “check ins” over a period of three months. After completing the individual program, members can then transition into our “What Feeds You” group or alumni group to help ensure new habits aren't lost. Recurring movement classes at both of our locations are also great supplements to overall health and wellness.

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A Red Door Opens in Williamson County, Improving Access for Many

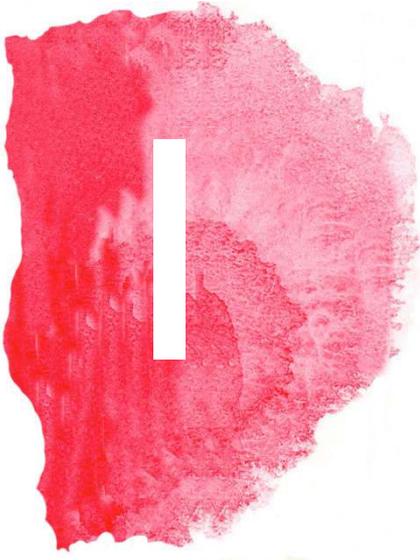
On May 15, 2018, Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee and nearly 250 community leaders, members, and guests celebrated the grand opening of a Williamson County location - Gilda's Club's first satellite location. From Day 1, the new facility, located within the Provision CARES Proton Therapy Center at 4588 Carothers Parkway in Franklin, has played an important role in helping Gilda's Club better serve the needs of Middle Tennessee's growing population.

"In the eight months since we opened our red door in Williamson County, we've continued to grow our membership base, expand our program offerings, and build community," says Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee Program Director Felice Apolinsky, LCSW. "We began with no members and just a few offerings on our program calendar each week. Today - many, many conversations and Information Sessions later - we have a growing group of active members and a robust schedule of monthly offerings, ranging from art classes and nutrition workshops to support groups and special events for kids and teens."

"The number of volunteers and community partners supporting our Williamson County location is growing, too," adds Lorraine Yeomans, front desk and member relations at the location. "We started from scratch with very few volunteers from this area. Now we have a growing team helping us with community outreach, as class and workshop facilitators, as greeters, and more. We're beginning to receive more support from local businesses as well, which is so vital."

What's up next for our Williamson County location? "We'll continue to shape our program to meet the needs of our members," says Felice. "Our members are at the heart of everything we do across our organization. They always have been and always will be."





Gilda's Club Celebrates 20 Years of Free Cancer Support in Middle TN



On October 30, 2018, Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee celebrated two decades of free cancer support with a 20th Anniversary Bash. Held at the Omni Nashville Hotel and lauded by *NFocus* magazine as one of Nashville's Best Parties of 2018, the event had more than 500 guests in attendance and raised more than \$200,000 to benefit Gilda's Club's mission.

The evening was filled with a number of lovely and memorable moments, including a "member moment" in which John and Annie Williamson (top right) shared their Gilda's story, and an award presentation by Gilda's Club Worldwide Founder Joanna Bull (second from top) to long-time Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee Program Director Felice Apolinsky, LCSW (third from top), who received the Nancy Saturn Award of Inspiration. Other highlights included the celebration of Nashville Wine Auction President and CEO Holly Hearn Whaley with the inaugural Red Door Champion Award and The Sprintz Family/Sprintz Furniture with the inaugural Dr. Gail Addlestone Community Building Award.

A special "thank you" to our Co-Chairs Anthony Barton of CMT and Keri McInnis of Pinnacle Financial Partners (bottom right), and sponsors and partners The Omni Nashville, Zander Insurance, Ankura, CMT, Dale & Associates, HCA/TriStar Health, Provision Cares Proton Therapy, Gary Musick Productions and Lipman Brothers, among others.



A Heartfelt Way to Give to Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee: Create a Legacy Through Planned Giving

With a planned gift, you'll help ensure the future of Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee and the ongoing delivery of our free cancer support program – while providing valuable tax benefits to your family.

Anyone can make a planned gift.

Some common options include:

- Wills or revocable living trusts
- Life insurance policies
- Charitable gift annuities
- IRA beneficiary / charitable rollover
- Endowed gifts

Why Choose a Planned Gift?

By including a gift to Gilda's Club as part of your overall estate and financial planning, you can:

- Feel secure about your assets
- Receive substantial tax benefits
- Inspire similar generosity in others
- Support what's meaningful to you

Please contact us to learn more about planned giving at:
Hayley@gildasclubmiddletn.org or 615-329-1124.





www.gildasclubmiddletn.org