BREAST CANCER ACTION

25 years of putting women's health first



2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT



"You are one of the few organizations that provides a vital, critical approach to breast cancer as an epidemic, and that rightfully attempts to shift the focus from "awareness" and consumption to **social change and evidence-based practice**. Thank you and keep up the pressure, research, and activism."

—SHAWNA DIFILIPPO



Dear Friends and Supporters

We're honored to share with you highlights from Breast Cancer Action's work over the last fiscal year.

Breast Cancer Action is the only organization in the U.S. that addresses the breast cancer epidemic at the intersection of breast cancer, the environment, social justice, and feminism. We are also one of very few patient advocacy groups in the U.S. that refuse funding from pharmaceutical and biotech companies, and any other industry that profits from or contributes to cancer. This independence is absolutely vital to our role as an outspoken and unapologetic watchdog for women's health.

Our independence from industry funding means we don't ever have to choose between loyalty to our funders and taking a stand for women's health. We will never be silent on the high cost of cancer drugs, the approval of unsafe or ineffective cancer treatments, environmental toxins linked to breast cancer, or other issues critical to addressing and ending the breast cancer epidemic.

Highlights from 2015–16 include being an outspoken watchdog on a number of treatment-related issues affecting breast cancer patients; deepening our involvement and leadership in the movement to end fracking and other forms of dangerous drilling; a new Think Before You Pink educational resource; and a whole lot more.

2015 was our 25th anniversary year, and we celebrate the many accomplishments of this feisty, powerful grassroots organization as we recommit to all the work that remains to truly address and end the breast cancer epidemic. The truth is, if Breast Cancer Action wasn't doing this work, no other organization would be doing it. And we could not do this work if we took money from the industries polluting our bodies with toxic chemicals linked to breast cancer, or the pharmaceutical companies making the drugs whose safety and efficacy we evaluate, or the very corporations slapping pink ribbons on everything from drill bits to handguns.

In deepest gratitude for your ongoing support and for making our work possible,

Karuna Jaggar, Executive Director

Karen Klein, Chair, Board of Directors

Carrying the voices of women to change the breast cancer conversation

theguardian

We **push back on the pinkwashing status quo** and our independent, patient-centered perspective on breast cancer issues is frequently covered by the national media. This year we were quoted or featured in a number of outlets including *The New York Times, USA Today, Jezebel, NPR*, and *The Week*. BCAction Executive Director Karuna Jaggar has a regular column in *EcoWatch* and regularly publishes op-eds in national outlets like *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian*.



Carrying the voices of women living with and at risk of breast cancer is fundamental to our work and this year we were proud to place op-eds written by our members in *Bitch Magazine* and *Truthout*.

The New York Times



The Washington Post



We carry our patient-centered perspective to conferences, forums, and community engagements across the country, including the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium, the largest breast cancer conference in the world, and report back to our members about new research and developments in breast cancer treatment and diagnostics.





"Thank you for being a **responsible, trustworthy voice** of reason and information in this terror shitstorm of breast cancer and breast cancer information."

—LYDIA LANGFORD

Taking collective action for systemic change

Breast Cancer Action is a leading voice for public health in national and state efforts to ban fracking and other forms of dangerous drilling because these processes expose people to endocrine disruptors and carcinogens, some of which can increase our risk of breast cancer. This year the Americans Against Fracking coalition, of which we are a founding member, submitted more than 100,000 comments to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), calling on the agency to tell the truth about its findings on drinking water contamination from fracking. Executive Director Karuna Jaggar testified at the EPA's Scientific Advisory Board's public teleconference regarding the Agency's assessment of fracking's impacts on our drinking water. We also mobilized our members to tell their representatives to co-sponsor the Protect Our Public Lands Act, which would ban fracking on public lands, and as part of the Americans Against Fracking coalition, we submitted more than 350,000 petition signatures urging Congress to co-sponsor this Act. We have also taken a lead role in the Californians Against Fracking coalition; California is a key state in the movement to end dangerous drilling.



Lymphedema is a common and debilitating side effect of breast cancer, the treatment of which is not covered by Medicare and several private insurers. This year we mobilized our members to correct this injustice by demanding their legislators co-sponsor the **Lymphedema Treatment Act**, which would close this coverage gap. Our staff also met with Senator Dianne Feinstein's office to urge her to co-sponsor the bill, which she did. We continue to push for passage of this important legislation.

Reforming our country's **outdated and weak chemical regulations** to better protect public health has also been a priority for us for many years. Through legislative visits and member actions, this year we worked to ensure that reforms of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) prioritized public health over the interests of the chemical industry. In June, President Obama signed the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act into law. This new law is the first major update to the TSCA in 40 years. The bill is not as strong as we would like it to be, but it's a testament to the strong opposition from us and many others that the legislation is not worse than it is.





For many years we have been advocating for stronger regulation of personal care products, which is one of the least regulated industries in the country and many of which contain toxic chemicals linked to breast cancer. This year we mobilized our members to contact their Senators pressuring them to adhere to the highest standards of safety as they consider the recently-introduced Personal Care Products Safety Act.

We were also an active watchdog on a number of other issues, including:

- Opposing the 21st Century Cures Act, which would weaken safety and efficacy standards for drug and device approval at the Food & Drug Administration (FDA).
- Opposing the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf as the next Commissioner of the FDA due to his strong ties to the pharmaceutical industry.
- Urging Congress to reject the Trans-Pacific
 Partnership (TPP), an international trade deal that
 would threaten access to affordable treatments
 and limit regulation that protects the public from
 exposure to toxic chemicals.



"Breast Cancer Action is one of my favorite organizations, because they acknowledge and talk about the political, environmental, and economic **context that impacts all of us**."

—LAUREL

"It's one thing to put carcinogens into the world, quite another to **slap a pink ribbon on that crap**. I love that Breast Cancer Action doesn't let them get away with it."

-MALENA MARVIN



Thanks to the increasing success of our Think Before You Pink® campaign, **BCAction has become** synonymous with calling for accountability and transparency in breast cancer marketing and fundraising.

Our 2015 October corporate campaign, "Poison Isn't Pretty," pressured the American Cancer Society and the Personal Care Products Council to refuse to allow companies that make toxic cosmetics to participate in their Look



Good, Feel Better program, which holds free workshops that give beauty tips and complimentary make-up kits to women in cancer treatment. Nearly a dozen of our partner organizations shared our campaign with their networks, nearly 3,000 people signed letters protesting the hypocrisy of the program, and many of our members shared stories about their experiences with Look Good, Feel Better. Media coverage included Jezebel and New York Daily News and op-eds published in The Guardian, The Huffington Post, and EcoWatch.





This spring, we published a new educational resource, "4 Questions to Ask Before You Walk for Breast Cancer" to help people think as critically about breast cancer walks and runs as they do about pink ribbon products in the store. Nearly 12,000 people viewed this resource in the first three months after we released it.



Unique, Unbiased, Patient-Centered Resources

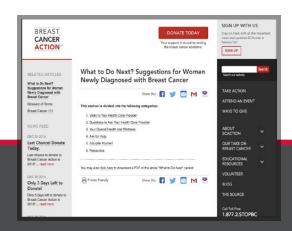
For women facing an initial breast cancer diagnosis or a recurrence, our **free Information and Resource Service** continues to be a port in the storm. This year we served nearly 300 people on topics including long-term aromatase inhibitor use, clinical trials for triple negative breast cancer, resources for newly diagnosed shut-ins, radiation vs. no radiation following lumpectomy, and many calls from people concerned about pink ribbon marketing and environmental toxins linked to breast cancer.

Our free interactive, educational webinars bring together topic experts and our unique perspective on breast cancer issues. This year's webinars covered the politics of breast cancer walks and runs, windows of vulnerability to environmental toxins, communities affected by fracking and other forms of dangerous drilling, cancer-linked toxins in cosmetics, and the Lymphedema Treatment Act. 100% of survey respondents rated the webinar they attended as excellent or good.

"Breast Cancer Action is a great organization that **helps to educate people** with breast cancer and to fight the things that cause breast cancer like chemicals in our water and food sources."

—ROSALIE HEWINS





Grassroots Education and Organizing

Our work is powered by the collective energy of our members and supporters across the country. Our **Community Leaders for Change** connect with other members in their area, give presentations, attend conferences, and speak on panels. Community Leader Marie Garlock in North Carolina said: "Everyone at community events has loved BCAction's materials on fracking and breast cancer, and I'm all out of 'Cancer Sucks' pins because they are being worn around town and at all town hall meetings."

This year we also launched a pilot program, **California Cancer Fracktivists**, to engage our members to speak out about the connection between fracking and breast cancer. fifty members volunteered at our first call for enrollment in February.



OPFAS



Public education is an important part of our work to challenge the systemic injustices at the heart of the breast cancer epidemic. Last fall, we **co-hosted a public lecture with renowned biologist and activist Sandra Steingraber**. And this spring, we **co-hosted and moderated a public forum on the health harms of fracking** in Sacramento, "Drilling Down Into Health Impacts: The Effects of Oil and Gas on California's Communities." Nearly 100 health professionals, activists and legislative aides attended. We also live-streamed the event for those who couldn't attend in person.

"A visionary like Barbara Brenner comes along so rarely, and when such a person has left a wealth of insightful commentary filled with brilliant analyses and trenchant wit, we are doubly fortunate. Barbara Brenner's writing is a treasure trove of tools and ideas for making the world a better place for all."

—JUDY NORSIGIAN, CO-FOUNDER, OUR BODIES, OURSELVES

BRENNER

Editor

ANNE LAMOTT

BARBARA SJOHOLM.



women living with and at risk of breast cancer.

Before Barbara's diagnosis and untimely death from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) in 2013, her retirement plan was to write a book about her experiences as a health activist and gadfly of the breast cancer industry. We are thrilled that So Much to Be Done: The Writings of Breast Cancer Activist Barbara Brenner, edited by Barbara Sjoholm, was published this May by University of Minnesota Press.

We hosted a book launch event in San Francisco and BCAction members have also hosted book launch events across the U.S. and in several European countries.

Thank you Donors & Supporters

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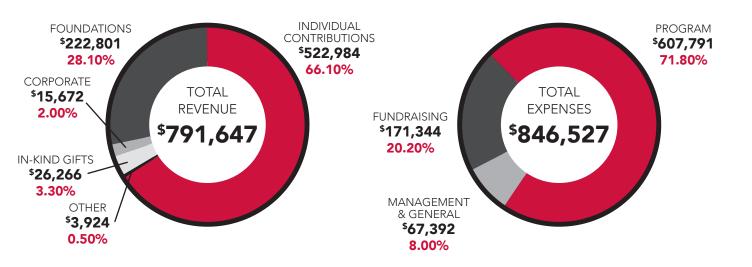
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We refuse corporate funding from any company that profits from or contributes to breast cancer. **Your gift is essential** to supporting our work to achieve health justice for all women at risk of and living with breast cancer. Thank you!

MAKE A DONATION:

By phone:

Please call us at 415-243-9301 or toll-free at (877) 2STOPBC

By mail:

Breast Cancer Action 657 Mission Street, Suite 302 San Francisco, CA 94105

Online:

Go to **bcaction.org/donate** to make a secure online donation.

OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR WORK

bcaction.org/ways-to-give

Monthly Giving: Join the Susan Stone Circle of monthly donors to sustain our work over the long haul.

Planned Giving: Invest in BCAction's activism by including us in your estate plans through the Elenore Pred Legacy Circle.

Barbara Brenner Rapid Response Fund: Support BCAction's ability to quickly respond to emerging issues in breast cancer. Start a "Don't Pink for Me"

Page: Tell your friends and family "Don't Pink for Me" and ask them to make a donation to BCAction in your honor instead.

Stock Donation: Transfer a gift of stock or other securities to BCAction.

Susan Claymon Advocacy Fund: Support BCAction's ability to advocate for systemic change.

Breast Cancer Action is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our tax identification number is 94-3138992.

Get Involved with Breast Cancer Action



TAKE ACTION

Breast Cancer Action works on a range of issues, including advocating for less toxic, more effective, more affordable treatments for women living with and dying from breast cancer; ending our exposures to toxic chemicals linked to breast cancer; and taking a stand against corporate pinkwashing. We work to see that every woman has access to evidence-based, affordable, culturally-competent healthcare and we work to eliminate the social inequities in breast cancer outcomes. Our power is in our members. Take action on our campaigns at **bcaction.org**.

GET UPDATES

Make sure you don't miss any of our action alerts on important campaigns to help address and end the breast cancer epidemic. Sign up for updates at **bcaction.org/signup**.

BECOME A COMMUNITY LEADER FOR CHANGE

Our members are our strength and we deeply value the involvement of grassroots activists throughout the country and around the world to further our mission. Learn more about our Community Leaders for Change program at

bcaction.org/communityleaders.

WEBINARS

We host free webinars featuring topic experts who offer independent, unbiased information on important breast cancer issues, including mammography screening, health inequities, and environmental links to breast cancer. Register for our free webinars at

bcaction.org/resources/webinars.

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

Get your daily dose of truth-telling news and analysis about the latest issues in breast cancer. Follow us on Facebook at **facebook.com/BCAction** and Twitter at **twitter.com/bcaction**.

MAKE A DONATION

Breast Cancer Action will never take corporate funding from any company that profits from or contributes to breast cancer. Your support makes our work possible and keeps us independent.

Donate online at bcaction.org/donate.

BREAST CANCER ACTION

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