

BREAST
CANCER
ACTION

Why Our Work Matters



2016 – 2017
ANNUAL REPORT



“Breast Cancer Action is important because they have never allowed their vision to get fuzzy. They **maintain focus on achieving systemic changes** that will prevent breast cancer, whether those changes address prevention or help patients to live longer. As a patient, I reject the cheery pink static. I want advocates who demand more for their buck.”

—JULIE GIBEAU

Dear Friends and Supporters



As a radical cancer activist organization, Breast Cancer Action has worked since our founding in 1990 to make sure that women's health doesn't get sidelined and breast cancer is recognized as a public health crisis and social justice issue. Our long-standing role as an independent rapid-response watchdog is an essential part of the larger movement working right now to address the current threats from an administration that's targeting women and vulnerable communities, challenging established science, and bolstering corporate control of our regulatory protection agencies. Thanks to your support, we don't ever have to choose between loyalty to our funders and taking a stand for women's health.

Highlights from 2016–17 include: our fight against relentless attempts to overturn healthcare legislation; challenging corporate-heavy cabinet appointments who put profit before public health; and resisting the nominations of industry executives to key decision-making positions in our regulatory agencies. We also produced and distributed a new brochure on the facts that link fracking and dangerous drilling practices to breast cancer risk. This year, our annual Think Before You Pink® campaign demanded that two companies that were using pink ribbons to sell their products stop irrigating our food with oil wastewater. And, as we continue to do, we analyzed and reported on the latest breast cancer research and provided one-on-one information and resources, free of charge, to anyone who needed it.

We know that we're at a critical moment in history, when what we do, or don't do, will not only define who we are as a country, but also whether, and how, we will work to address and end the breast cancer epidemic.

Breast Cancer Action was made for times like these. The truth is, if Breast Cancer Action wasn't doing this work, no other organization would be doing it. And we could not do the 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. We can only do this work thanks to the generous support of our grassroots membership.

Thank you for making our work possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karuna Jaggar". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Karuna Jaggar, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karen Klein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Karen Klein, Chair, Board of Directors

Rapid Response, Watchdog for the Breast Cancer Movement



After the election results were in, we wrote about what the Trump administration would likely mean for our work and our members. Our blog post **"What a Trump Presidency Means for Our Work"** emphasized our ongoing commitment to social justice and reenergized our members who share our values. It inspired people to step in and take action.

We didn't hesitate to speak out, rapidly responding to breaking news, mobilizing our members to fight corporate-heavy cabinet appointments, the nomination of industry executives to key decision making positions in our regulatory agencies, proposed budget cuts, and the relentless attempts to overturn healthcare legislation. We encouraged our members to take action to oppose the **nomination of Tom Price to lead the Health and Human Services Department; Scott Pruitt to lead the Environmental Protection Agency; and Scott Gottlieb to lead the Food and Drug Administration.**

From the Executive Director: What a Trump Presidency Means for Our Work

POSTED ON NOVEMBER 9, 2016

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By Karuna Jaggar, Executive Director

I won't lie. There were tears shed in the Breast Cancer Action the morning after the 2016 election. My own, and those of the strong, smart, tireless team of women I work with. Like many people working for social justice and women's health, we feel fear and apprehension deep in our guts about what a Trump presidency means for our communities, and the larger world. More than one person has said she feels like our work has been set back decades by last night's election of Donald Trump.



Each year around this time I write about system change and the long arc of Breast Cancer Action's work to change the breast cancer movement and achieve health justice for women at risk of and living with breast cancer. I always remind myself and our community that meaningful change takes time, that there are steps forward and set-backs, and the undeniable necessity of this work. It feels harder today to say all of that. It's hard to celebrate the wins we did see last night, like a ban on fracking in Monterey County, when President-elect Trump has said that he will "cancel" the Paris Climate Agreement within 100 days of taking office. The pull of hopelessness is palpable. But it also feels even more necessary.

It's not just fracking and other forms of dangerous drilling at stake here. Donald Trump's vision for this country is fundamentally opposed to the values that I and Breast Cancer Action



We also published a member story **"The Republican Healthcare Bill Will Hurt Me as a Breast Cancer Patient and Poor Working Class Woman"** that was well received and created **a vision statement on universal healthcare.**

Carrying the voices of women living with and at risk of breast cancer is fundamental to our work. This year we placed op-eds written by our Executive Director, Karuna Jaggar, in *The Washington Post*, *EcoWatch*, and *The Huffington Post*. Our work and our expertise also received coverage by *NPR's Here & Now*, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, *Bitch Media*, *WBAI*, *Philadelphia Magazine*, *Democracy Now!* *Voice of America*, and *Stupid Cancer*.

We published ***The Tradeoffs of Ten Years of Aromatase Inhibitors: Lower Risk of Breast Cancer Recurrence but No Better Odds of Survival, and Worse Bone Loss*** on our blog, which was read and shared widely on Facebook, reaching more than 10,000 people.

We work hard to make sure every action our members take has the deepest impact. That's why this year we secured a **new advocacy software platform called Phone2Action**. Using this new tool, our members contacted Senate and Congressional representatives to demand they address issues of universal healthcare, pass the Lymphedema Treatment Act, and oppose cabinet appointees who might jeopardize the health and safety of women living with and at risk of developing breast cancer.

"Unlike other organizations, Breast Cancer Action doesn't take corporate money. Hence they can provide women with **independent and reliable information concerning breast cancer.**"

—GRAZIA DE MICHELE

Making the Connection: Root Causes of Breast Cancer

Breast Cancer Action is committed to reducing our involuntary exposure to toxins that are linked to breast cancer. We also know breast cancer is **a social justice issue and a public health crisis**. That's why individual action alone, whether in terms of lifestyle or behavioral choices, isn't enough to tackle the root causes of the breast cancer epidemic.

We are a leading voice in the national movement to ban fracking. Along with more than **10,000 people in Philadelphia**, Breast Cancer Action marched in the Clean Energy Revolution calling for an end to toxic energy sources that use chemicals linked to breast cancer. Speaking at the Summit prior to the march, our Executive Director Karuna Jaggar joined Sandra Steingraber and Diane D'Arrigo of Nuclear Information and Resource Services to lay out the health effects of dirty energy extraction.

As part of the Protect California Food campaign we delivered a petition with **350,000 signatures** to Gov. Jerry Brown in Sacramento calling for an immediate end to oil wastewater irrigation. We also worked to get big oil money out of California politics and mobilized our members to tell Gov. Brown to stop taking oil money. Executive Director Karuna Jaggar spoke about why dangerous drilling, and specifically fracking, is a breast cancer issue at the **Oil Money Out, People Power in: The Science Behind the Movement in California** event in Oakland, CA. Sandra Steingraber presented on the science behind this "Oil Money Out, People Power In" campaign.

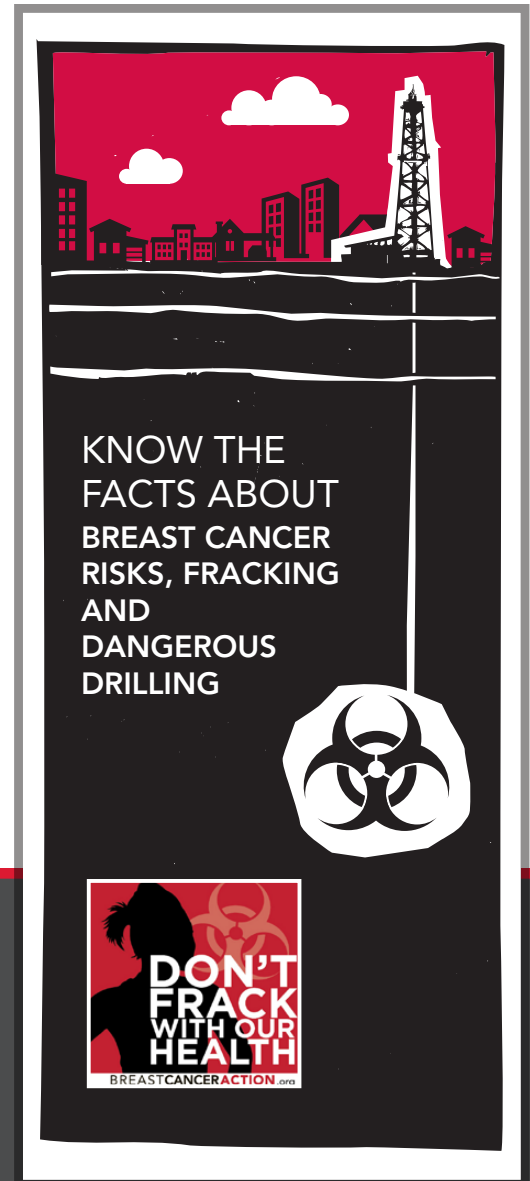


“Not only does Breast Cancer Action open up important dialogue about breast cancer prevention, causes, and treatment, but they also take action in an effort to **stop the hidden injustices surrounding the disease.**”

—BRIEANN DEORNELLAS

In our ongoing work to educate people about environmental root causes of breast cancer and the anti-fracking movement, we developed a new brochure, **Know the Facts About Breast Cancer Risks, Fracking and Dangerous Drilling.** We distributed this to our network, as well as 82 different organizations located across 43 states, and to 135 state and federal legislators across 29 states involved in anti-fracking initiatives.

We sat on panels and led strategy meetings alongside prominent organizations working on oil and gas issues. In collaboration with a number of health based organizations in California, we moderated a health forum in Sacramento, **“Drilling Down Into Health Impacts: The effects of oil and gas on California’s Communities,”** which highlighted the health harms of fracking. We live streamed the event, which included local legislative staffers.



Bringing the Voices of Women to the Breast Cancer Conversation



We took action for change across the country at the federal and state level. **We submitted vision statements to legislators and strategy proposals to federal agencies** on issues ranging from anti fracking, drug and device approvals, protecting and improving toxic chemical regulation, affordable healthcare, cabinet appointments, safe cosmetics, wastewater irrigation, and food safety. We also participated in health summits, conferences, steering committees and round tables across the country.

We continued our role as a thought leader, participating in important conferences including:

- “Ensuring Safety, Efficacy and Access to Medical Products in the Age of Global Deregulation,” hosted by the Yale Collaboration for Research Integrity and Transparency, a new collaboration between the law, medical and public health schools at Yale that brought together researchers, regulators, patients, and clinicians.
- New York Academy of Sciences’ “The Need to Accelerate Therapeutic Development — Must Randomized Control Trials Give Way?”
- 69th Annual **Conference on World Affairs** at University of Colorado - Boulder, where our Executive Director, Karuna Jaggar, sat on nine panels.

Karuna was also an “Activist in Residence” for the Women and Gender Studies (WGST) program at CU Boulder, speaking and leading an interdepartmental workshop titled “Why and How to Think Before You Pink.”

We represented the patient perspective at the **San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium**, the largest breast cancer conference in the world, and reported back to our members about new research and developments in breast cancer treatment and diagnosis.

Our **Community Leaders for Change** played a vital role leading, organizing, and taking action — both locally and nationally.

- Prior to the Philadelphia March for a Clean Energy Revolution, Community Leaders galvanized members to get involved and join the march.
- Marie Garlock worked with other partners to bring ecologist, anti-fracking activist, and author Sandra Steingraber to University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill to present “Creative Resistance: Fighting Toxins and Fossil Fuels.”
- In New York, Jeanette Koncikowski and Bridget Hallock gave a presentation at the University of Buffalo titled, “Moving Beyond Awareness to Action.”
- In Maryland, Kyrra Engle tabled at a “Survivorship Day” event on her campus at John Hopkins University.





Thanks to the increasing success of our Think Before You Pink® campaign, pinkwashing is a household word. We are known for our refusal to allow corporations and organizations to slap a pink ribbon on a product containing carcinogens, and we continue to insist they do something to end this epidemic.

Our 2017 Think Before You Pink® campaign, “Toxic Isn’t Tasty,” pressured Bee Sweet Citrus and Wonderful Citrus to stop pinkwashing by watering their citrus with oil wastewater. Along with our friends at Center for Food Safety, we delivered nearly 13,000 letters to these citrus companies. Our Community leaders provided critical feedback and supported campaign outreach, and multiple generations of Breast Cancer Action members, cancer fractivists, and farmers created memes and wrote blog posts.



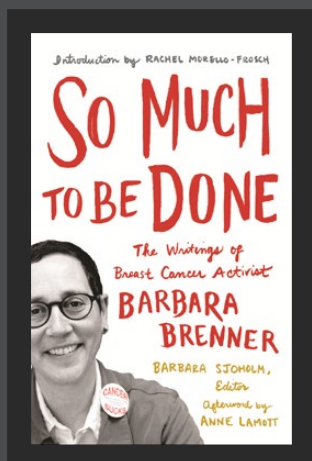
Challenging Pink Ribbon Culture & Marketing

Nine organizations endorsed our campaign, and we published op-eds in *EcoWatch* and *The Huffington Post*. Our “Orange You Sick of Pinkwashing?” meme reached 271,000 people and garnered 640 shares — we believe it was our best performing post of all time.

We continue to demand increased accountability and transparency in breast cancer marketing and fundraising across the U.S. and abroad. To this end we launched a new educational resource on breast cancer walks titled “**4 Questions to Ask Before You Walk for Breast Cancer.**” It received 10,508 unique online views (4,758 from social media).

We were proud to publish a member’s perspective on living with metastatic breast cancer amidst pink ribbon culture. Written by Beth Caldwell, it reached more than 15,000 people on Facebook.

Pink Ribbons Inc., the film featuring Breast Cancer Action’s work and former Executive Director, Barbara Brenner, continues to draw crowds and change the conversation — members held screenings across the country.



Barbara Brenner was a hellraiser of the first order. As Breast Cancer Action’s executive director for 15 years, she was a powerful advocate for 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 celebrated the publication of ***So Much to be Done: The Writings of Breast Cancer Activist Barbara Brenner***, edited by Barbara Sjöholm (University of Minnesota Press), at the Mission Cultural Center in San Francisco with over 100 current and former Breast Cancer Action members and friends. Barbara’s partner of 38 years Susie Lampert, along with other panelists, read from the book and spent the year since, traveling across the US and Europe giving talks and readings on university campuses, community bookstores, and libraries.

Taking collective action for systemic change



Now more than ever, our work for systemic change to create health justice for all women takes us acting, collectively. Working strategically in coalitions and with our partners and allies strengthens our ability to make real-world change. In doing so **we continue to elevate the public health perspective and to make the breast cancer connection where it would otherwise be overlooked.**

Lymphedema is a common and debilitating side effect of breast cancer, the treatment of which is not covered by Medicare and some private insurers. We continued to mobilize members to keep the pressure on members of Congress to co-sponsor the **Lymphedema Treatment Act**. Unfortunately, the bill did not move through Congress, despite the unprecedented public support. We continue to support the Lymphedema Advocacy Group's work to get the bill passed.

We Opposed the 21st Century Cures Act, which would weaken safety and efficacy standards for drug and device approval at the Food & Drug Administration (FDA).

As a public health watchdog, we analyze breast cancer screening, healthcare access, and drug and device approval from a patient perspective. This year, as a member of the **Patient, Consumer, and Public Health Coalition** we voiced substantial concerns about the weaknesses of the regulations regarding medical devices.

We urged 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.

We were a partner organization in the **March for Science**, which was a series of rallies and marches held in Washington, D.C. and more than 600 other cities around the world on Earth Day, April 22. The marches and rallies emphasized the importance of science upholding the common good, and called for evidence-based policy that reflects the public's best interest.

We continued to be an active watchdog by:

- Supporting the food additive petition to amend or revoke food additive regulations regarding food processing and packaging involving specific phthalates, **urging the FDA to ban the use of ortho-phthalates** in the production, storage, and packaging of food;
- Supporting the **Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEAA)**, which is a comprehensive, broadly-supported legislation to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in healthcare access and outcomes;
- Supporting **Cosmetics Regulation Reform** legislation and directing our members to contact their Senators about cosmetic safety when appropriate.





One-of-a-Kind, Unbiased, Patient-Centered Resources

Breast Cancer Action provides evidence-based information and education so all women can make informed decisions about their health, diagnosis, and treatment. To that end, this year we **revised and updated our mammography brochure** to reflect the most up to date data.

Our **free, interactive, educational webinars** continue to bring experts, health professionals, activists, patients, and community members together. This year our topics ranged from whether the “C” in DCIS is really cancer, grassroots fundraising with integrity, the case for universal health coverage, activism and the Lymphedema Treatment Act, and confronting pink culture and marketing through Think Before You Pink® campaigns. Our webinars consistently received excellent ratings.

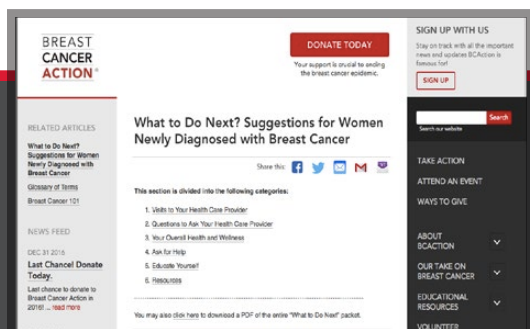
For women recently diagnosed with breast cancer and their loved ones, Breast Cancer Action’s **free Information and Resource Service** continues to be a port in the storm. This year, we served nearly 300 people on topics that included concerns about over-diagnosis, clinical trials for brain mets, resources for elders, environmental toxins and de-regulation of public safety nets, fracking, and questions about doctors who follow surveillance of DCIS (as opposed to treating breast cancer more aggressively). We also addressed concerns about how the Trump administration would impact women’s health and reproductive rights.



“As a caregiver, I appreciate the work that Breast Cancer Action does to **educate people about the realities of breast cancer**, and to reject the hypersexualization and marketing of cancer. Women are more than their breasts, and Breast Cancer Action sees patients as whole human beings.”

bcaction.org/resources

—DANNYN QUALLS-GIBEAU



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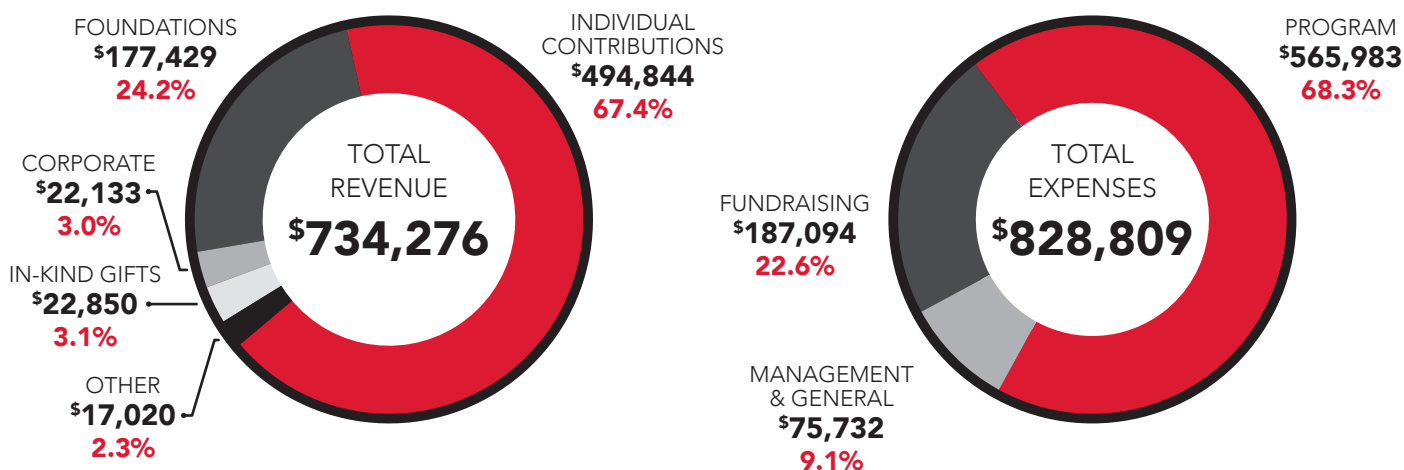
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We refuse corporate funding from any company that profits from or contributes to breast cancer. **Your gift is essential** to supporting our work to achieve health justice for all women at risk of and living with breast cancer. Thank you!

MAKE A DONATION:

By phone:

Please call us at
415-243-9301 or
877-2STOPBC toll-free
(877-278-6722)

By mail:

Breast Cancer Action
275 Fifth Street, Suite 307
San Francisco, CA 94103 *

Online:

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

* Our new address as of March 1, 2018

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 BCAAction's activism by including us in your estate plans through the Elenore Pred Legacy Circle.

Barbara Brenner Rapid Response Fund: Support BCAAction'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 BCAAction in your honor instead.

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

Susan Claymon Advocacy Fund:

Support BCAAction's ability to advocate for systemic change.

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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Toll free 877-2STOPBC (877-278-6722)

bcaction.org
thinkbeforeyoupink.org

* Our new address as of March 1, 2018



Support our work at **bcaction.org/donate**

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◦ served until this year + joined this year