

Families ROC!

18th Year and Counting

The 2024 Families Run for Ovarian Cancer was held in beautiful Tower Grove Park on October 13. More than 1,300 participants gathered for the 18th annual Families Run for Ovarian Cancer ROC Star 5k and 1-Mile Run/Walk. Kristen Jorgensen emceed the Survivor Ceremony to honor the amazing ovarian cancer survivors in attendance. Every survivor was presented with a yellow rose donated by Mary Tuttle’s Floral and Gifts. Local musician Katarra Parson sang the National Anthem and the racers were off. Participants enjoyed Hello Juice smoothie samples, drinks from Travelin’ Tom’s Coffee Truck, sweet treats from Dunkin Donuts and Kona Ice, as well as hot dogs from K’s Unique Dogs and beer courtesy of Fallon’s Bar and Grill after completing the race.

This family friendly event raised an impressive \$110,000. SLOCA would like to thank all of those who participated and volunteered to help make this event a success! Special thanks to our sponsors including Merck, Team Aunt Debbie ROCs, Myriad Genetics, Onder Law, Immunogen, GSK, Team Jane, US Bank, Brett Palazzolo American Family and our event partners at Walgreens. SLOCA looks forward to continuing their mission with the annual FamiliesROC race scheduled for October 12, 2025 - consider putting together a team to join the event!

TEALTALK

2025

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Special thanks to **Melanie Clark** for her support in writing TealTalk articles.



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2024 Living Out Loud Gala & Auction

Celebrating SLOCA

SLOCA's annual Living Out Loud Gala & Auction was celebrated on Saturday, April 20, 2024, at Meadowbrook Country Club. This sold-out event was attended by a record 350 attendees who gathered to support the important work of SLOCA. The evening began with a cocktail hour featuring a signature teal drink as well as a silent auction. KSDK's Rene Knott served as the emcee for the evening and expressed that the gala is a dynamic night to celebrate survivors and raise funds to support SLOCA's mission. He also hosted the Fund-a-Need and live auction portion of the evening. Fund-a-Need raised much needed donations to continue SLOCA's valuable work in our community. The live auction showcased items including St. Louis Cardinals and Blues experiences as well as luxurious destination packages.

Jen Marks and Kim Carney were co-chairs of the Gala and shared their personal stories. Jen lost her mother to ovarian cancer and understands the benefit of the support SLOCA provides to survivors and their families. Kim is a ten-year ovarian cancer survivor and is dedicated to raising funds and awareness for SLOCA. They reminded everyone that the SL in SLOCA stands for St. Louis and SLOCA helps people you know, work with, and who live in your neighborhood.

Melanie Clark was the recipient of the 2024 Teal Spirit Award. She became involved with SLOCA when her mom, Marilyn Chappuis, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2015. Her family experienced first-hand the support that SLOCA provides to patients and families. Melanie accepted the award with her daughters Meredith and Anna who have volunteered alongside her at various SLOCA events. They all continue to volunteer in memory of Marilyn and to support all the brave women and families who face this devastating disease.

The Survivor Speaker for the evening was Louise O'Farrell. She has been living with ovarian cancer since she was diagnosed in 2015. Over the last eight years, she has learned about responsibility, resilience, patience, and strength. She has also learned the importance of raising awareness and funding by advocating in Washington DC, mentoring women across the globe, speaking to medical students, and starting support groups in Michigan and Florida. She has worked tirelessly to inspire hope and spread love. Louise says, "it's not our setbacks but our comebacks that define us".

Comedian Greg Warren closed out this enchanting evening. He is a Kirkwood native who travels around the country headlining comedy shows. He understands ovarian cancer as he lost his mother to this disease. Laughter really is the best medicine, and he entertained guests and served lots of laughs.

SLOCA would like to acknowledge and thank the sponsors as well as the generous supporters and volunteers who attended the event and helped raise an astonishing \$260,000. Save the date for the upcoming Living Out Loud Gala & Auction on April 26, 2025. As SLOCA's largest fundraising event of the year, all supporters are encouraged to get involved by attending, donating, and volunteering. For more information, visit Sloca.org or contact Susan Robben for sponsorship information.



Gala Shoutout

Join us for an inspiring evening celebrating and supporting SLOCA's mission to improve ovarian cancer survivorship through awareness, research funding, and survivor support.

Emcee and auctioneer Monica Adams will toast our Teal Spirit Award honorees, Jennifer Ahmad and Laura Banks, and featured Survivor Speaker Amy Hollyfield will share her powerful story.

St. Louis Ovarian Cancer Awareness
**LIVING OUT LOUD
GALA & AUCTION**
Saturday April 26, 2025



- The event sold out last year – don't miss out – get your tickets today at sloca.org!
- Support the event by donating an auction item directly via Target or Amazon
- Learn more about event sponsorship by reaching out to Susan Robben at srobben@sloca.org or 314-966-7562



Raise a Glass:

Toasting in Teal Brunch Celebration

SLOCA hosted ovarian cancer survivors and their guests for a survivor's brunch on Sunday, November 10, 2024. Executive Director and 40-year ovarian cancer survivor Susan Robben kicked off the event which gives survivors a chance to relax and enjoy each other's company. Board President and 20-year ovarian cancer survivor, Sandi Tolliver, talked about how SLOCA supports women, families, loved ones, and the medical community. Program Coordinator Robyn Hunter spotlighted several important SLOCA programs including:

- **Survivors Teaching Students:** This program involves ovarian cancer survivors speaking to the next generation of healthcare providers and sharing their personal stories of diagnosis, treatment and survivorship. Carmelina Mattera, who was diagnosed with ovarian cancer three years ago, stressed that this is a wonderful and important program that helps educate young medical students. She believes that "if I can help one woman be diagnosed earlier...then I've done my job".
- **Woman to Woman Peer Mentorship:** This program pairs ovarian cancer patients with trained survivor volunteers. It provides one-on-one emotional support and mentoring to women with ovarian cancer.
- **Ambassador Program:** This program provides infusion centers and gynecological oncology offices with Sister Boxes for newly diagnosed ovarian cancer patients. These boxes are filled with care items to help patients on their journey and serve as an introduction to SLOCA and their numerous support programs. Diane Maixner and Jane Spears spoke about being ambassadors for Siteman and said it is a "nice way to give back."
- **Together in Teal Patient Need Fund:** Established in 2020, this program provides financial support to patients who are currently undergoing treatment for ovarian cancer. Expenses that are covered include healthcare expenses, transportation costs, household bills, childcare, and more. This assistance of up to \$1,500 annually can relieve financial stress and allow patients to focus on what matters most which is healing.
- **SLOCA Gala:** Kim Carney, Gala co-chair and 10-year ovarian cancer survivor, spoke about the upcoming 2025 event which will take place on Saturday, April 26 at Meadowbrook Country Club. Carney is co-chair of this event again with Jen Marks and they hope to raise even more money this year. Please consider attending, volunteering, or donating to support SLOCA's largest fundraiser.

The event concluded with raffle prizes drawn for survivors in attendance.

To learn more about these programs or to get involved to help continue increasing awareness and assistance visit [SLOCA.org](https://www.sloca.org).



Par for the Cause

4th Annual Golf Tournament

It was a beautiful day to “Tee off in Teal” at the 4th annual Denise Nagel Memorial Golf Tournament. Forest Park golf course hosted a sellout crowd of 188 golfers on Saturday, July 20 for an 18-hole scramble. The morning began with a delicious breakfast along with a Bloody Mary and Mimosa bar. Each golfer was able to purchase mulligans and tickets for incredible raffle baskets. Contests included prizes for golfers closest to the pin and a putting contest along with A, B, and C flights.

The golf tournament, coordinated by the Nagel family in memory of their beloved Denise, was sponsored by Buildingstars International and raised an amazing \$14,500. Thanks to the golfers, volunteers, and sponsors who helped make this event a swinging success. Save the date for next year’s 5th annual tournament at Forest Park golf course on July 19, 2025. The coordinators of the tournament are continually looking for volunteers, donations, and sponsorships please reach out to SLOCA if you are interested in learning more.



Cardio that's Good for Your Heart



Orangetheory Fitness is a gym focused on building endurance, strength, and

power. They offer group personal training workouts based on high intensity interval training that blend cardiovascular and strength training. During the month of September, Orangetheory Fitness in both Des Peres and Rock Hill hosted a fundraiser with a goal of raising \$5,000 for SLOCA – which they met! There were a variety of ways members could support the fundraiser including a silent auction, charity classes, a tie dye event, and “Torture the Trainer” raffle. Members were also encouraged to make donations to SLOCA and check into company matched donations. According to the studio manager, Carol McGavic, SLOCA is a cause that resonates deeply with them and is one they are proud to support!



Blending Up Awareness



Hello Juice & Smoothie, is a health focused juice bar that specializes in cold-pressed juice and organic craft smoothie bowls.

During the week of September 30 through October 6, Hello Juice & Smoothie teamed up with SLOCA to raise awareness and funds for ovarian cancer. They created a limited-edition teal smoothie which was a blend of orange juice, coconut milk, blue spirulina, moringa powder, banana, pineapple, and passion fruit. Moringa powder is reported to potentially prevent and fight cancer. The limited time SLOCA smoothie was sold at both of their locations in Kirkwood and The Grove and \$1 from each smoothie sold was donated to SLOCA. Staff at both locations wore SLOCA shirts and hats to spark conversations with customers. Hello Juice & Smoothie also had a team and offered complimentary smoothie samples at FamiliesROC. Jen Maness, Owner of Hello Juice & Smoothie, lost a dear friend to ovarian cancer and has a current employee who is an ovarian cancer survivor. She says SLOCA is a cause that is near and dear to her heart and “we do this in honor of them and to those that fight the fight every day”.



Media Blitz

Raising Awareness in STL!

Part of SLOCA's mission is to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer – especially during September, National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

This year SLOCA partnered with Pattan & Co., a local boutique communications and PR firm, to facilitate an awareness campaign to include media and influencer outreach. We kicked off September with a Media Day, visiting many of the local media outlets to share our message and deliver some teal SLOCA swag!

Along with visits to outlets such as KSDK and St. Louis Public Radio, we were able to secure interviews that day at FOX and KMOX. Creating relationships and securing interviews with these outlets is crucial to continuing to amplify our message surrounding early awareness of signs and symptoms. Throughout the month of September, we were grateful to also appear on The Real Monica Adams Show, My Mom Club with Laura Hettiger, Show Me St. Louis with Mary Caltrider, and St. Louis on the Air with Miya Norfleet.



Support from the Lions Club



The mission of the Webster Groves Lions Club is to strengthen the community, improve the health and well-being of those in need, and support those less fortunate through humanitarian services, grants, and fundraisers. Sandy Halama, secretary and membership chairperson of the Webster Groves Lions Club, met a retired oncology nurse who was involved with SLOCA while she was on vacation. This prompted her to reach out to SLOCA and ask how

the Lions Club could support their mission. She invited SLOCA member and ovarian cancer survivor Joan Gummels to give a presentation to members at one of their meetings. At this meeting, they presented SLOCA with a \$500 check along with 10 gift baskets to support the Teal Toes event. These baskets featured items such as St. Louis Blues and Cardinals paraphernalia, spa services, wine, movies, and games. The Lions Club hopes to continue their support of SLOCA in 2025.

SLOCA Grant Advances Research, Treatment, and Prevention

SLOCA grant advances ovarian cancer research, treatment, and prevention

The Alvin J. Siteman Cancer Center at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine continues to lead in the advancement of gynecological cancer research, treatment, and prevention, thanks in part to ongoing support from SLOCA.

“We are tremendously grateful for the longstanding partnership we have with SLOCA,” says Dineo Khabele, MD, the Mitchell and Elaine Yanow Professor and head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at WashU Medicine. “The funding support we receive from private individuals and organizations such as SLOCA provides vital flexible resources that allow us to pursue new areas of research and to accelerate the pace of new discoveries.”

At Siteman, a large team of physician-scientists is dedicated to finding the next generation of methods to diagnose, treat, and ultimately prevent this challenging disease, and their work continues to expand.

Among those studying the disease is physician-scientist Andrea Hagemann, MD, MSCI, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, who also cares for ovarian cancer patients through their treatment and recovery. Her own research is broad based, and she is excited by her field’s current progress in examining the genetic and molecular underpinnings of ovarian cancer, seeking individualized vaccine therapies, and looking for ways to optimize chemotherapy regimens and address chemoresistance.

One of Dr. Hagemann’s passions is the use of genetic testing to guide decision-making around treatment and prevention. Key risk factors for ovarian cancer include having a family history of the disease and carrying certain genetic mutations in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes or other genes. BRCA1 and BRCA2 normally act as tumor-

suppressor genes, producing proteins that help repair damaged DNA. Inherited variants in these genes can prevent proteins from working properly, increasing the risk of cancers.

Ovarian cancer often presents with subtle symptoms and is diagnosed at late, metastatic stages, making genetic testing crucial to practitioners and patients to identify and quantify the risk probability before a diagnosis is made. Up to 25% of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer are found to carry a high-risk mutation, which means that with earlier genetic testing, possibly up to 25% of ovarian cancer cases could have been prevented.

Dr. Hagemann is looking for ways to tailor treatment to the individual based on their genetic profile. “If mutations in BRCA1 or BRCA2 are found in women diagnosed with ovarian cancer, we can better predict responsiveness of chemotherapy agents, and we now have targeted therapies that improve the long-term prognosis if added to their up-front therapy,” Dr. Hagemann said.

A critical area of her work is evaluating patients’ and their family members’ experiences with genetic testing and counseling. Her goal is to optimize the counseling and patient education experience to help patients affected by disease-linked mutations to understand their risks and to encourage their family members to get tested.

A special former patient, Sandi Essner, helped Dr. Hagemann with this effort. Essner was diagnosed with Stage IV ovarian cancer in 2016 and was found to have a BRCA1 mutation only after her diagnosis of advanced cancer. Sandi and her son — also a BRCA1 carrier — worked with Siteman to produce a video sharing the importance of family genetic testing.



“Ultimately, we’d like to be able to use genetic testing or other means to find out who is at risk, so we can take proactive measures to prevent disease or at least diagnose it early,” Dr. Hagemann said. Such measures can include lifestyle changes — such as diet, exercise, and stress management — as well as screening schedules, preventive medications, and surgery. Risk-reduction surgery can involve removal of the ovaries, the fallopian tubes, and sometimes also the uterus.

To guide decision-making for risk-reduction surgery, Dr. Hagemann has helped bring two national and international clinical trials to Siteman that are evaluating the effects of various surgical approaches on disease risk, evaluating which structures to remove, and at what age to remove them. Most importantly, these studies will examine factors that influence patients’ choices as they make these complex decisions with their doctors and help to promote shared decision making in cancer preventive care.

Dr. Hagemann’s research also extends to other gynecological cancers, including endometrial cancer. She leads a major study funded by a National Cancer Institute Specialized Program of Research Excellence (SPOR) grant looking at whether weight loss can prevent the development of endometrial cancer in women with endometrial hyperplasia, a precancerous condition in which the uterine lining becomes too thick.

In all of her work, she is passionate about promoting cancer prevention and early detection and about finding solutions that will improve outcomes and quality of life for her patients. On her desk, she keeps a photo of Sandi and often looks to it as a reminder of her “why.” Through Sandi’s six years of treatment, she became a friend, an advocate, and an inspiration. Although Sandi succumbed to ovarian cancer in 2022, her voice remains strong in Dr. Hagemann’s heart, providing motivation to never stop pushing for answers.

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“We are tremendously grateful for the longstanding partnership we have with SLOCA.”

-Dineo Khabele



Spotlight on Sisters

Jen Majzun has been involved with SLOCA since April 2013 when she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

She was given a Sister Box while receiving chemotherapy and she knew then that SLOCA was an organization she wanted to volunteer for. The first event she volunteered for was cookie baking that same year. Since then, she has volunteered for numerous events including the annual SLOCA Gala, Teal Toes, and Survivors Brunch. She has found all of the events she volunteers for to be uplifting and supportive. She is a mentor for the Woman-to-Woman Peer program to help those currently fighting ovarian cancer. Jen says, “it is wonderful to see so many people show up to make a difference in all of our lives”.

Brittany Majzun, Jen’s sister, also became involved in SLOCA when her sister was diagnosed in 2013. She became an ambassador for the Sister Boxes because she saw firsthand with her sister how the items in the box can comfort newly diagnosed women. The Sister Boxes help women know that SLOCA cares and is there to support them. In addition, Brittany also volunteers at various events including the annual SLOCA Gala and cookie baking. She often volunteers side by side with her sister. They both volunteer to make a difference in the lives of women fighting ovarian cancer.

Mark Your Calendars!



Living Out Loud Gala & Auction April 26, 2025

Celebrate SLOCA and supporters at the annual Living Out Loud Gala & Auction. The Gala is SLOCA's largest fundraiser and supports our programs and initiatives. The evening will feature a silent and live auction, cocktail hour, and seated dinner. We will honor our Teal Spirit Award recipients, Jennifer Ahmad and Laura Banks, and hear an inspirational speech from our Survivor Speaker, Amy Hollyfield. Tickets are now available online at sloca.org/gala.



Denise Nagel Memorial Golf Tournament July 19, 2025

Tee off for the fifth annual Denise Nagel Memorial Golf Tournament! This scramble style event will be held at Forest Park Golf Course. Registration includes 18 holes of golf, a cart and a catered breakfast and lunch. All proceeds will benefit SLOCA. This event will sell out, register online now at sloca.org/golf.



SLOCA Night at Busch Stadium September 6, 2025

Help us turn Busch Stadium teal at our 24th annual Ovarian Cancer Awareness Night! Our St. Louis Cardinals will be taking on the San Francisco Giants. Grab your tickets and help us cheer on the home team. Survivors of ovarian cancer receive up to two free tickets to this event.



Teal Toes for SLOCA September 16, 2025

Pamper yourself for a good cause at the 13th annual Teal Toes for SLOCA at Nail Pro in Des Peres. Attendees are encouraged to paint their toes teal to honor National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. Raffles and treats are also provided; gather a group and enjoy! Teal Toes for SLOCA was founded by friends and family of the late Shawn Blaes.



Families Run for Ovarian Cancer ROC Star 5k October 12, 2025

Register to ROC with us for a 5k run/ walk or a one-mile fun run! Return to our new home in Tower Grove Park as more than 1,300 participants participate in the area's largest event devoted to raising ovarian cancer awareness. The event is family friendly and will include music, visits from Louie and Fredbird and of course the Bubble Bus. All funds raised support crucial ovarian cancer research and ongoing awareness programs locally. Registration will open on May 8, World Ovarian Cancer Day.



Toasting in Teal Survivor Celebration Brunch November 9, 2025

Raise a glass for the 6th annual Toasting in Teal Survivors Celebration Brunch at the Hilton Frontenac on Sunday, November 9. Mingle with fellow survivors and caregivers and toast to the inspiring women in attendance. A complimentary brunch buffet will be served along with Bloody Mary and Mimosa bars, a photo booth, and musical entertainment.

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Night at Busch Stadium

Join us for our 24th annual Ovarian Cancer Awareness Night at Busch Stadium as our Cardinals take on the San Francisco Giants on **Saturday, September 6, 2025 at 6:15pm**

Tickets are available for \$35 each and include a voucher for a FREE jumbo hot dog and soda. Ovarian cancer survivors are eligible for up to two complimentary tickets to this event! [Register now sloca.org/baseball](https://www.sloca.org/baseball)





St. Louis Ovarian Cancer Awareness

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Mission Statement

St. Louis Ovarian Cancer Awareness is committed to impacting ovarian cancer survivorship by promoting awareness of early warning signs and standards of care, funding ovarian cancer research, and supporting survivors.



Send Donations

SLOCA is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization. Donations may be made at www.sloca.org/donate or by mailing a check to 12015 Manchester Road, Suite 130, Des Peres, MO 63131. Please note if the donation is in memory or in honor of someone.



Stay in Touch

We publish Teal Talk once a year and send e-mail blasts intermittently. We hope you'll share your e-mail address at www.sloca.org/newsletters so that we can stay in touch.

To be removed from the mailing list, e-mail newsletter@sloca.org

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