



Navigating Health Through Wellness®

WINTER 2019

# weSPARK

CANCER  
SUPPORT  
CENTER

Navigating Health Through Wellness®

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 1



## Words from weSPARK

Playwright George Bernard Shaw once said that the true joy in life is in serving “a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one.” That’s what makes serving on the board of weSPARK such an honor and a “true joy.” weSPARK’s purpose is not only a mighty one, but also an absolute good. In a world filled with gray areas, it’s not often that we stumble upon a group of ordinary people committed to extraordinary acts of kindness and compassion. As cancer increasingly touches us all, directly or indirectly, the caring respite weSPARK provides to cancer patients and their loved ones is literally changing lives. And not just the lives of weSPARK’s guests, but also its supporters. There is no better feeling than hearing about the difference

weSPARK makes for people and knowing that you helped make it possible. Nancy, Marlene, Leela, the incredible staff, the selfless healing practitioners, my fellow board members, and a growing community of generous supporters have lifted the dream of our founder, Wendie Jo Sperber, to remarkable new heights. And since we plan to reach even higher this year, I ask and invite you all to share the wonder of weSPARK’s mission with everyone you know. Great things lie ahead for weSPARK, so please help us by spreading the word to anyone looking for “a mighty purpose” to champion. The world needs more of that. And you’ll be glad you did.

Warm regards,

Scott Williams  
Board Chair

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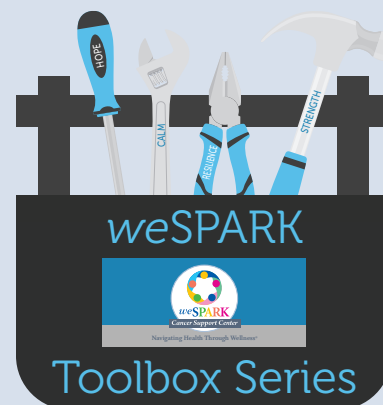
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## The Toolbox Series: Strategies for Coping & Building Strength

### Toolbox Series

Last year, Leila da Costa, MFT, created a workshop based on her work at weSPARK and made clear the connection between cancer and trauma. In November, Lauren Maher, AMFT led an evening talk on our physiological response to anxiety and ways to combat it. The response to both of these workshops was overwhelming and our Toolbox Series was born.

In 2019, the Toolbox Series offers monthly workshops that will focus on four issues common to our guests — Pain Management, Stress Reduction, Anxiety and Trauma. Each workshop will be interactive and educational. Join us for the chance to pick up strategies and practices to deal with these issues in a hands-on, 90-minute workshop. These workshops are open to all weSPARK guests.



apart? The Toolbox Series has been carefully designed so our guests have another way to tell their story, learn new techniques and feel empowered in their healing process.

We chose the areas of pain management, anxiety, trauma and stress reduction as a focus based on comments from the weSPARK community. By the end of the year, caregivers, patients and survivors will have a toolbox full of new strategies for coping and feeling stronger. The big goal is that guests will find the workshops relevant, engaging and above all, useful.

## OUR MISSION

weSPARK Cancer Support Center enhances the quality of life for cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones. weSPARK provides free programs and services, which alleviate the physical and emotional side effects of a cancer diagnosis.

(818) 906-3022 • [www.wespark.org](http://www.wespark.org)

## The Goal

A cancer diagnosis can leave patients feeling a loss of control, like cancer has the upper hand. How do you find peace when you’re dealing with high amounts of stress? What impact does chronic pain have on fatigue levels? How do you build resilience when it feels like things are falling

*Are you interested in the FREE services that weSPARK offers? Contact our office today to book your Welcome meeting with one of our counselors. Call (818) 906-3022.*

# May Contain Nuts! A Night of Comedy Honoring Larry King and Alonzo Bodden



**Honorees Alonzo Bodden & Larry King**

Photo credit: Marco Franchina



**Charlene Sperber, Jay Leno & Shawn Sperber**

Photo credit: David Sobel

It was a night of laughter and fun at the Skirball Cultural Center!

We were thrilled to honor the legendary Larry King with The Heart of weSPARK Award and comedian and evening host, Alonzo Bodden with The Commitment to Care Award. Our stellar lineup of comedians included Jay Leno, Wendy Liebman and James P. Connolly!

A special thank you to our amazing Executive Producer, Charlene Sperber, along with the Event Committee and Sponsors, Shawn & Richard Sperber, Entertainment Cruise Productions, Daphne and Spencer Velasquez, The Fitzgerald Family, Michelle Sperber/Lily Pearl Foundation, Terry Takeda, Zina & Steve Glodney, Jay Moriarty, Sharlene & Glenn Miyagishima, CBS, Wells Fargo and our other generous sponsors. We are so grateful to our guests, donors, volunteers and staff for helping us put on a wonderful evening! 🌈



**Nancy Allen, Scott Williams, Catherine Curry-Williams & Charlene Sperber**

Photo credit: David Sobel



**weSPARK Board of Directors: Steve Glodney, Allan Dietrich, Arthur Toretzky, Andy Zucker, Ilyanne Morden Kichaven, Christopher Dukes, Claudia DeCea, Scott Williams, Sharlene Miyagishima, Chad Fitzgerald & James Morris**

Photo credit: Michael Schwartz



## Cool Jazz on a Hot Summer Night



**Donny Most, Elijah Rock, Sandra Booker and Jay Jackson**

Photo Credit: Robert Le

It was a night to remember at the Catalina Jazz Club for Cool Jazz on a Hot Summer Night!

The stellar line-up included Sandra Booker and her 5tet Band along with Happy Days' actor and crooner Donny Most, vocalist Elijah Rock, an amazing horn section from Ron King & Friends and Parks and Recreation's Jay Jackson as our host. Mark Walberg and Nancy Allen led the night's special Fund-A-Need to raise critical funds for weSPARK programs!

We gratefully acknowledge our sponsors: Sharlene and Glenn Miyagishima, The Bolkin-Helene Family, Donovan Field, Zina and Steve Glodney, Charlene Gorzela and Catherine Curry-Williams and Scott Williams.



**Donovan Field & Friends**

Photo Credit: Robert Le

Thank you to our donors, volunteers and everyone who attended this event! 🌈



## Jason Alexander's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament

On behalf of weSPARK, we wanted to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who participated in Jason Alexander's 16th Annual Poker Tournament.

With close to 300 players participating, we raised over \$90,000!

This tournament would not have been a success without our host Jason Alexander, and Co-Chairs, Arthur Toretzky and Jay Moriarty! Another big THANK YOU to our event sponsors: City National Bank, Sharlene & Glenn Miyagishima, Gendler & Kelly APC, Scott Williams and Catherine Curry-Williams, Elaine Donley/Assisted Home Health & Hospice, Arthur Toretzky, Katherine E. Murray Scholarship Fund, The Bolkin-Helene Family, Magical GSH, Dukes Wealth Management and 10 Deuce Clothing!



**Jay Moriarty, Jason Alexander, Nancy Allen & Arthur Toretzky**

Photo Credit: Stanley Appleman



**Michael Monks, Morgan Steckler, Dealer, Rob Goldberg, Randy Kim, Ken Spero, Lawrence Rudolph, Jeff Willett, Johann Helf, Andy Hirsch & Tony Cosanella**

A special thanks to our Celebrity & Event Committee. See you on Sunday, March 17, 2019. 🌈

**Congratulations to tournament winner Lawrence Rudolph!**



# For Caregivers: Tips for Navigating an Unpredictable Path

By Cancer Treatment Centers of America®



Caregivers very often become so focused on the patient's needs that they neglect their own. Experts say this is the most common, and most concerning, mistake caregivers can make. "Caregivers need to make sure they're eating, getting enough sleep and keeping up with their own medical appointments, because they can't help anyone if they're not well," Alexandria Callahan, LCPC, BC-DMT, GLCMA says. "It's the same as an emergency on an airplane—when the oxygen mask comes down, you're supposed to put your mask on first. As caregivers, we jump at every single thing the patient needs and forget about ourselves. It's easier to focus externally than internally. It's cliché, but I tell people all the time to take a deep breath. It engages the diaphragm and forces you to focus on your breath and relaxes your body. You can take 30 seconds out of this crazy day and breathe while you're waiting for water to boil or you're at a red light or in the bathroom."

Read the full article at <https://www.cancercenter.com/community/blog/2018/09/caring-for-the-care-giver-tips-for-navigating-an-unpredictable-path> 🌈



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[www.cancercenter.com](http://www.cancercenter.com)  
(800) 227-3207

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### Legacy Circle | Planned Giving

Consider joining the Legacy Circle to ensure weSPARK's programs and services for the future.

If you've included weSPARK in your estate planning or would like more information about the program, please contact Marlene McGuirt, Director of Development & Strategic Partnerships at [marlene@wespark.org](mailto:marlene@wespark.org) or (818) 906-3022.



A warm up led by Natalie Joseph of Body Unlimited Fitness & Beat Cancer Boot Camp  
Photo Credit: Dima

## Run/Walk for weSPARK 5K/10K



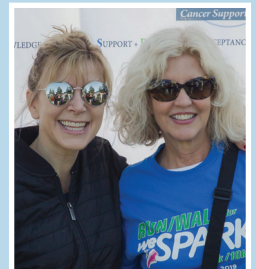
Board Members Sharlene Miyagishima & Steve Glodney  
Photo credit: Stanley Appleman

THANK YOU to everyone who came out for our Run/Walk for weSPARK on January 27 at Lake Balboa's Woodley Park!

We shared a beautiful, sunny morning with over 500 runners, walkers, volunteers and supporters. We want to thank our fantastic Master of Ceremonies, Lara Scott of K-Earth 101. A special thank you to Natalie Joseph and her team from Body Unlimited Fitness and Anita "Sarge" Kellman from Beat Cancer Boot Camp.

Another hearty thank you to our sponsors, UCLA Health System, The Bolkin-Helene Family, Mann Gelon Glodney Gumerove Yee LLP, Matt and Maryann Siegel, AMP Radio, K-Earth and Jack FM. Thank you to our partners Beat Cancer Boot Camp, Body Unlimited Fitness, Itz About Time and We Fit Moms.

From spirited outreach in peer-to-peer fundraising to volunteering and race participation, we couldn't have done it without you. weSPARK raised over \$100K to date. Wow! 🌈



K-Earth's Lara Scott & Nancy Allen  
Photo credit: Dima



The fastest bunny on the course, Jane Stephan.

"Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself." — George Bernard Shaw

# Thank you to our generous supporters in 2018!

We are grateful to have so many wonderful donors willing to contribute to weSPARK. You enable us to offer innovative and life-enhancing services every year, and it is thanks to you that we can offer them all free of charge.

🔥 Indicates a donor who is also a Torchbearer; a big-hearted individual who commits to giving a one-time or annually recurring gift of \$250 or more to weSPARK.

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Charlene Sperber 🔥

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## OUR MISSION

weSPARK Cancer Support Center enhances the quality of life for cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones. weSPARK provides free programs and services, which alleviate the physical and emotional side effects of a cancer diagnosis.

## WHAT WE DO

**Navigating Health through Wellness®** is our model of care offering an individualized treatment approach. All services are offered free of charge for our guests. The first step is a Welcome meeting with one of our counselors. At this meeting guests learn more about our wrap-around approach to care, which includes support groups, classes and workshops and individual services.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups are one part of the program that connects much of our community. We provide support groups for cancer patients at all stages, including specific groups for men, young adults, caregivers, children and those who are grieving. Groups meet weekly and are led by licensed clinicians.

## CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Classes and workshops are created for the weSPARK community. Regular classes include yoga, Tai Chi, Mindful Living and Guided Imagery. Workshops focus on education and creative arts. Many of our movement classes have been designed specifically to address side effects such as chronic pain, neuropathy and balance issues.

## INDIVIDUAL SERVICES

Healing therapies include Reiki, Qi Gong, Reflexology, Spiritual Counseling, Hypnotherapy, Ayurveda and Acupuncture. In addition, everyone is encouraged to meet with our Nurse Navigator and Nutritionist.

## WHO WE HELP

For anyone who has a diagnosis, has been through treatment or fills the role of caregiver, friend or family member, we welcome you to explore the services at weSPARK. También ofrecemos una serie de servicios en español.

*Are you interested in the FREE services that weSPARK offers? Contact our office today to book your Welcome meeting with one of our counselors. weSPARK offers services to cancer patients, survivors and loved ones. Call (818) 906-3022. 🌈*

# Navigating Health Through Wellness®



## Words from weSPARK Guests

"I was nervous when I first started coming to weSPARK, but I'm glad now that I did. I don't think I could have gotten through without this place. I am so grateful for the connections and friendships I've made, especially at the Post Treatment Group." — *Suzanne Eisenberg*



"weSPARK helps me deal with the personal stuff that I never feel comfortable talking about, but I feel comfortable sharing here." — *weeSPARK Children's Support Group*



"I am very recently widowed. I lost my husband of 17 years after a heroic, grueling battle. To be around others who have lost their loved ones and talk openly about our grief and challenges has been a source of calm and encouragement. I'm so grateful for weSPARK having all of these resources available to help patients and their loved ones during the most challenging and difficult times of their lives." — *Colleen John*



"Each week I give myself the present of going to weSPARK and the Mindful Living class. At weSPARK I've learned how to stay in the present." — *Barbara Herman* 🌈



# weSPARK by the Numbers

In 2018, weSPARK celebrated another successful year providing service and meeting goals! We continue to see increased guest participation with our wrap-around service model **Navigating Health Through Wellness®**. weSPARK continued to provide more than 11,000 services in 2018 with a steady number of new guests seeking services. Past and current guests as well as the medical community remain a consistent referral source for new guests. Outreach efforts resulted in an increase in building awareness in our community and established strong and solid partnerships with major hospitals, cancer centers and community organizations throughout Los Angeles.

Funding continues to come from diverse sources, including foundation grants, successful event fundraisers along with support from our Torchbearers and individual donors.

We're happy to report that our donor base has grown. In 2018 we saw a 10% increase in new donors and almost 200 former donors shared their generosity with us again. Overall we saw a 12% increase in the number of gifts we received. It is thanks to you and your commitment to weSPARK that we can offer more services and programs to cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones all **FREE** of charge.



## the Torchbearers

**Light the way. Become a Torchbearer today!**

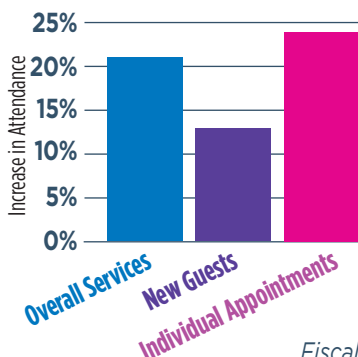
| GIVING LEVELS    |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| the Blaze level  | \$10,000 and up   |
| the Flame level  | \$5,000 - \$9,999 |
| the Glow level   | \$1,000 - \$4,999 |
| the Spark level  | \$500 - \$999     |
| the Ignite level | \$250 - \$499     |

- Recognition on the 2019 Torchbearer Commemorative Plaque displayed at weSPARK
- Recognition on the 2019 Virtual Torchbearer Plaque on website

*"weSPARK was an oasis in my hour of darkness. Thank you!"*  
— Lynn S.

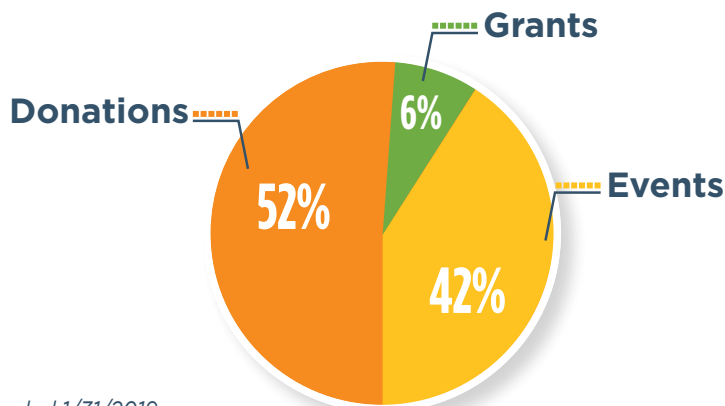
## PROGRAM GROWTH

- In 2018, we provided more than **11,000 services** and saw a **13% increase in new guests**.
- Attendance at support groups, classes, individual services and workshops **grew by approximately 21%**
- We saw an **increase in the number of individual appointments by 23%**
- Our talented, **dedicated team** grew to include **45 facilitators and practitioners** to accommodate our guests.



Fiscal Year ended 1/31/2019

## 2018-2019 FISCAL YEAR-END INCOME





Navigating Health Through Wellness®

13520 Ventura Blvd.  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

weSPARK Tax-Deductible  
ID: 95-4758462

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LOS ANGELES, CA  
PERMIT NO. 1494



Jason Alexander's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Texas Hold 'em

# POKER TOURNAMENT



Will you  
have the luck  
of the Irish?

**Sunday, March 17, 2019**

**\$140 Buy-in**

More details at [weSPARK.org/Poker](http://weSPARK.org/Poker)

REGISTRATION & LUNCH AT 11:30AM  
CARDS IN AIR AT 1PM

JASON ALEXANDER, Host & Event Chair

ARTHUR TOREZKY  
Co-Chair

JAY MORIARTY  
Co-Chair



1001 W. Riverside Dr.  
Burbank

PICKWICK  
~ GARDENS ~

**SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES  
ARE AVAILABLE!**

Contact Marlene at [marlene@wespark.org](mailto:marlene@wespark.org)  
or 818-906-3022

Proceeds to benefit **weSPARK Cancer Support Center**

[@weSPARKsupport](https://twitter.com/weSPARKsupport) [facebook.com/wesparkcancersupportcenter](https://facebook.com/wesparkcancersupportcenter) [@weSPARKsupport](https://instagram.com/weSPARKsupport)



## UPCOMING weSPARK EVENTS



**A Jazz Night**  
MAY 19, 2019



**May Contain Nuts!**  
Heart of weSPARK Award  
& Comedy Night  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2019



**Dressed to Kill...**  
**Cancer**  
Movie Screening  
OCTOBER 19, 2019

Questions on any of our events? Please contact Hillary Nadworny at  
[hillary@weSPARK.org](mailto:hillary@weSPARK.org) Updated to 818-906-3022