



Words from weSPARK

I have had the privilege of being at weSPARK since the doors opened in 2001. Every year we continue to grow the number of individuals and families we serve. I attribute that to the unique quality and quantity of the programming weSPARK offers. This year, we have expanded our services, offering more than 40 unique programs a week and serving over 1,000 people annually.

I must thank you—our Torchbearers, donors, sponsors and grantors—for your continued support and partnership. Your generosity has made it possible for weSPARK to present unparalleled programs free of charge. I would also like to thank the entire weSPARK staff who work tirelessly and with great enthusiasm to bring the best services to our community. Finally, I

would like to express my gratitude to the weSPARK Board of Directors for their guidance and support.

We have always prided ourselves in offering a diverse calendar of fundraising events and this year is no different. We hope you will find one, if not a few, events that you can enjoy and of course support. Keep an eye out for our annual “May Contain Nuts” Comedy Show later this year as well!

Keep reading to find out what we’ve been up to and what weSPARK has in store for 2017!

With love and gratitude,

Nancy Allen
Executive Director

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What is weSPARK?



weSPARK is a **healing community**. Established 16 years ago as a place to provide support for cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones, weSPARK has evolved into a versatile healing space, offering free, wrap-around services for anyone affected by a cancer diagnosis.

Our model of care is Navigating Health through Wellness (NHTW). While participation in specific programs or services through the weSPARK NHTW model is not mandatory, our staff and practitioners encourage and support all of our guests to follow the model so that they can receive the maximum benefit of all the wrap-around services available.

In 2016, weSPARK was supported by several community partners who empowered us to expand our programming and reach a much larger population

in need. **Cancer Treatment Centers of America** and **QueensCare** provided us with the funding necessary to expand our reach.

“Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world.” — Howard Zinn

We now provide over 100 programs per month including **14 weekly support groups** and **6 weekly yoga classes**. weSPARK also offers individual healing therapies including reiki, medical qi gong, reflexology, integrative healing touch and many more!

With these funds we were able to increase the frequency and accessibility of our free services while also strengthening our Spanish language programming.

OUR MISSION

weSPARK Cancer Support Center is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones by providing free healing and therapeutic services tailored to alleviate the physical and emotional side effects of a cancer diagnosis.

(818) 906-3022 • www.wespark.org

*Are you interested in the **FREE** services that weSPARK offers? Contact our office today to book your brief intake appointment with one of our clinicians. weSPARK offers services to cancer patients, survivors and loved ones. Find out more today! Call 818-906-3022.*





Ray Romano, Wendy Liebman, & Kevin Nealon

Photo credit: Michael Schwartz

weSPARK Celebrates Our 15th Anniversary with a Comedy Night!



It was a night to remember as weSPARK celebrated its 15th Anniversary and honored Wendi Jo Sperber with a comedy show! The **"May Contain Nuts" Comedy Show** raised more than **\$240,000** and featured an all-star cast of comedians, which included Alonzo Bodden, Ray Romano, Kevin Nealon, Wendy Liebman, Carol Leifer, Jimmy Brogan, Bob Gale and Bobby Tessel.

A special thank you to Charlene Sperber and our Co-Chairs, Shawn & Richard Sperber, Ellice Sperber, Michelle Sperber, Spencer Velasquez and Daphne Velasquez. We are so grateful for Cancer Treatment Centers of America, Supercuts, our other committed sponsors and Event Committee along with our guests, donors and volunteers! 🌈



Event Co-Chairs Daphne Velasquez & Spencer Velasquez, Charlene Sperber, Amy Holland & Michael McDonald

Photo credit: David Palmer



MC Alonzo Bodden

Photo credit: David Palmer



L to R: Heriberto & Laura A., Hilda G., Isabel C., Claudia B., Susana Stewart LCSW, Maria Christina G., Mirna S.

weSPARK en Español

In October, weSPARK began offering a **weekly Spanish-speaking yoga class** led by Erica Rey. We host a **monthly Spanish-speaking potluck** and a **variety of Spanish-speaking workshops** educating our guests on the powerful impact of

acupressure, ayurvedic practices, yoga and meditation. Due to the popularity of these new programs, weSPARK has forecasted one Spanish-speaking workshop every other month in 2017. In doing so, we are establishing weSPARK as a community resource for a rapidly expanding population in need here in Los Angeles. This is another way in which weSPARK continues to be a leader and forward-thinking organization that is inclusive and addresses the needs of an under-served population. 🌈



Monthly Potlucks

"We're all just walking each other home."

— Ram Dass

These were the words we spoke before our first monthly potluck at weSPARK. This monthly event began with a simple idea — **"let's break bread with one another."** Over 40 guests signed up for our first monthly potluck. Each guest brought a family-style, home cooked meal and loving intentions. The conversation, connection and community that was formed over this delicious banquet has inspired us to **host this event each month**. We are looking forward to using our beautiful outdoor space this summer for food, fun and friends under the stars! 🌈

Special Fundraising Events in Support of weSPARK



Hardcore Fitness Northridge owners, Dawn and Tori Langham and their members raised \$1,000 to weSPARK in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month!

Third party events are an important part of our fundraising efforts. These activities provide an opportunity to introduce businesses to a new audience, while highlighting the weSPARK mission. We appreciate the fundraising efforts of Body by Paolo, Brighton Collectibles, Hardcore Fitness Northridge, Phyllis Solomon, Linda Rosen, Crank Addictive Cycling & Fitness, BLVD Kitchen, and Women in Corporate Growth. **Interested in hosting your own third party event to support weSPARK?** Please contact Cheryll at Cheryll@wespark.org. 🌈

Director of Development Marlene McGuirt, Brighton Representative Julie Lindsey, and Executive Director Nancy Allen.



How to Relax in 5 Minutes

1. Sit on the edge of your chair, with your feet parallel and hip distance apart. Rest your palms on your thighs, and allow your shoulders to relax. Lengthen from the crown of your head.
2. Close your eyes and begin to breathe long and deep through your nose. Begin to lengthen your exhale to be a bit longer than your inhale. Take 5 complete breaths.
3. Inhale and sweep your arms out to the sides and over the head, lightly touching the fingertips. Exhale and sweep your arms back down your sides. Repeat 5 times.
4. Inhale the arms up, and take hold of your left wrist with your right hand. As you exhale, stretch the body towards the right. Hold for 3-5 breaths. Inhale at center, and repeat on the other side. Release the arms. Roll the shoulders up and back several times.
5. Keep the hands on the thighs and inhale, stretching the heart forward and drawing the shoulders back. Exhale and round the spine backwards towards your chair, allowing the shoulders to roll forward.
6. Sit tall and inhale. As you exhale, twist your body to your right. Rest your left hand on your right thigh and place your right hand on the back of your chair. Look towards the right. Hold for 3 breaths. Inhale back to center and repeat on the other side. Come back to center and take several breaths, noticing any shifts in your breathing or in your body. 🌈



7th Annual 5K Run/Walk



**RUN/WALK Participants
Gabriel & Lori Legarreta**
Photo credit: Johanna Siegmann

Our annual Run/Walk was back and better than ever this year at the legendary CBS Studios Lot. We had over 350 participants running and walking past iconic sound stages and current television productions. Our MC Randy Jackson kicked off the morning with Coach Anita "Sarge" Kellman who led participants in a warm up.



**Nancy Allen, MC Randy Jackson and
Scott Wellman from CTCA**

Photo credit: Stanley Appleman

Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor, Cancer Treatment Centers of America and our sponsor The Bolkin-Heline Family. We would also like to acknowledge our top fundraising teams The Bickel Family, Team Toretzky, Team Fitzgerald, Team Nancy Allen, Justine's Warriors as well as all of our amazing fundraising teams. Thanks to our media sponsors, 97.1 AMP Radio & LA Parent, vendors, runners/walkers, race ambassadors, photographers and volunteers who participated in this year's race! 🌈



**weSPARK Guest Willow Wood & Coach Anita
'Sarge' Kellman** Photo credit: Stanley Appleman

40th Anniversary "Carrie" Screening



**Sissy Spastik and
Bryan Fuller**

Photo credit: David Sobel

On October 14th, weSPARK partnered with Screen Factory to host the 40th Anniversary screening of the cult classic film "Carrie" at Theatre at Ace Hotel in Downtown Los Angeles! A thousand fans came from as far away as Texas, dressed to impress in their favorite Carrie costume and prom attire. The Q&A was moderated by writer producer Bryan Fuller, which featured our very own Nancy Allen, Piper Laurie, P.J. Soles, Academy Award-winning editor Paul Hirsch and LA Entertainers, Jackie Beat and Sissy Spastik joined in the fun. It was a blast and **we raised over \$35,000!** 🌈



**weSPARK's Executive Director Nancy Allen, Piper Laurie
and P.J. Soles** Photo credit: David Sobel

Look Good...Feel Better

Join us at weSPARK for a night of beauty and fun, plus a make-up kit provided by the American Cancer Society.

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in Sherman Oaks.



Space is limited,
must call to sign up.
Call Carlin at

(818) 906-3022



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cancer, every day.®

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Thank You to our generous supporters in 2016!

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 donating an annual gift of \$250 or more to weSPARK.

INFERNO (\$40,000 +)

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**Donors who have passed away*

This list includes all supporters who gave \$180 or more from 2/1/2016 through 1/31/2017. **Thank you to all our donors!**

WHO WE ARE

weSPARK Cancer Support Center is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for cancer patients in all stages of treatment, as well as their families and friends. weSPARK is staffed with experienced and licensed practitioners whose services are specifically tailored to alleviate the physical and emotional side effects of a cancer diagnosis. These healing programs provide comfort, strength, and support and are all **free of charge**.

WHAT WE DO

weSPARK offers over 100 FREE services each month delivered by expert facilitators to empower our guests with tools to navigate their cancer experience. Our approach to healing is summarized by our acronym SPARK (Support, Prevention, Acceptance, Recovery, and Knowledge). Using this approach, the weSPARK treatment team works collaboratively to ensure that each guest is offered the benefits of working individually with a Master's-level clinician, an oncology-nurse navigator, an oncology nutritionist, and a variety of healing providers, as well as working within a group dynamic through our many support groups, integrative healing therapies, workshops, and events. As always, all services are completely free of charge to all our guests.

SUPPORT GROUPS

- Facilitated by a master's level clinician
- Held in a comfortable, homelike setting for 90 minutes
- Groups provide a safe space for patients, survivors and their loved ones to connect with others who are navigating a cancer diagnosis
- We provide specific groups for caregivers, children, teens, men, and en Español!

INDIVIDUAL HEALING THERAPIES

- Individual appointments are made for our guests to work on-on-one with specialized practitioners.
- Healing therapies include Reiki, Qi Gong, Reflexology, Hypnotherapy, and Acupuncture.

CREATIVE COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

- We provide a variety of programs and workshops that are designed to be both inspirational and informational.
- Our community based programming includes monthly potlucks, talent shows, drum circles and so much more!

Are you interested in the FREE services that weSPARK offers? Contact our office today to book your brief intake appointment with one of our clinicians. weSPARK offers services to cancer patients, survivors and loved ones. Call 818-906-3022. 🌈



Words from weSPARK Guests

SUPPORT + PREVENTION + ACCEPTANCE + RECOVERY + KNOWLEDGE

"weSPARK has been a blessing for my family. The **kids group** has allowed my children to deal with the loss of their mother. The environment of the kids group encourages them to interact with other children who are in a similar situation and builds their inner strength and self-confidence. I myself have used the **spouse support group** at weSPARK. It has helped me express some of my inner feelings that I would otherwise keep to myself. Thank you weSPARK!" — *Isabella, Preston & Giovanni Dumani*



"I am so grateful for the **Spanish classes** weSPARK provides. The **Spanish support group** provides a safe place where we can all heal and talk about our feelings and experiences with cancer in a comfortable environment. The **weekly yoga class** has strengthened by mind, body and soul by introducing me to meditation and self-care." — *Carmen Sanchez*

"Where do you go when you don't know where you're going? Who do you call when there are no words to say what you're feeling? What do you do when the dreams of your life have left you in the dark? You look for the light. I found my direction, my voice, I reclaimed the dreams for my life and I **rediscovered the future at weSPARK**.

Life: AMAZING" — *Sandra Booker*



"Going to the **weekly men's support group** has provided me with a safe place where I feel supported and comfortable to share my thoughts and feelings in a group environment. It has been essential in guiding me through my self-care journey." — *Bobby Tessel*

"Throughout my journey with cancer I have consistently turned to the **support groups** hosted by weSPARK. In these groups I have been able to connect and learn from others with similar experiences. The support and guidance I received from the women in my groups helped to make even the most difficult days manageable." — *Willow Wood*



Meet our Reiki Practitioner Brian Kukan!



What is your role at weSPARK Cancer Support Center?

I provide individual reiki treatments for guests and facilitate the group reiki circles.

What have you learned through your work with cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones?

One thing that I've learned is the importance of finding balance in life and how that comes into play during and after cancer treatment. I see weSPARK guests finding the balance between receiving the support of others, and giving back by providing support to those in need.

What inspired you to become a reiki practitioner?

As embarrassing as it is to admit it, at first I thought reiki would make me "cool" and a more interesting person. As soon as I started practicing reiki though, I recognized it as a powerful way to improve the quality of life for myself and others.

How do you practice self-care?

The foundation of my self-care begins with my morning routine. When I wake up, I give myself reiki for 10 minutes before I get out of bed, and then after making the bed I drink 12 ounces of water mixed with either fresh squeezed lemon juice or apple cider vinegar to flush and alkalize my body. Following that, I meditate for 20 minutes and write in my Morning Pages or The Five Minute Journal. The routine takes about 60-90 minutes and prepares me to handle anything that comes up during the day.

What is one thing about you that we may not know?

I play bass guitar for various groups around Los Angeles.

Are you interested in a reiki session? Contact our office today to set up your FREE appointment! Call 818-906-3022. 🌈

Financial Year in Review



In 2016, weSPARK Cancer Support Center allocated almost 85% of our funds raised to support our vital programs, ensuring that we continued to offer diverse, wrap-around services for those affected by a cancer diagnosis.

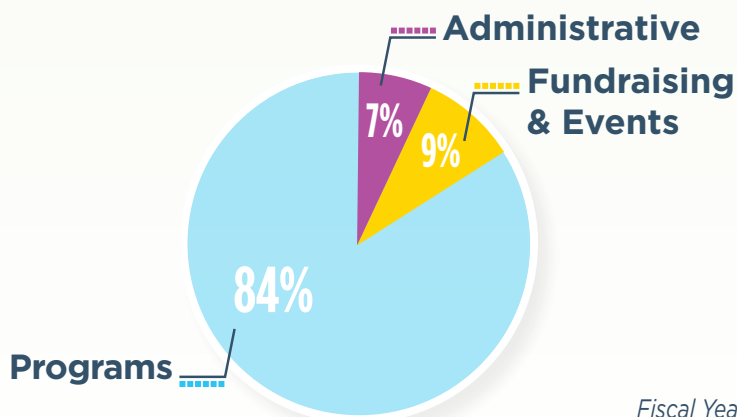
weSPARK is the beneficiary of a number of foundation grants. Our fabulous and fun events make up a significant portion of our financial support. However, we would not be where we are today without the generous ongoing support of our donors and Torchbearers. It is thanks to you and your commitment to weSPARK that our doors remain open. Your partnership in 2017 will allow weSPARK to offer more services to cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones. weSPARK is there for those who need us and YOU, our supporters, are there for weSPARK. Thank you!



For Every Dollar You Donate:

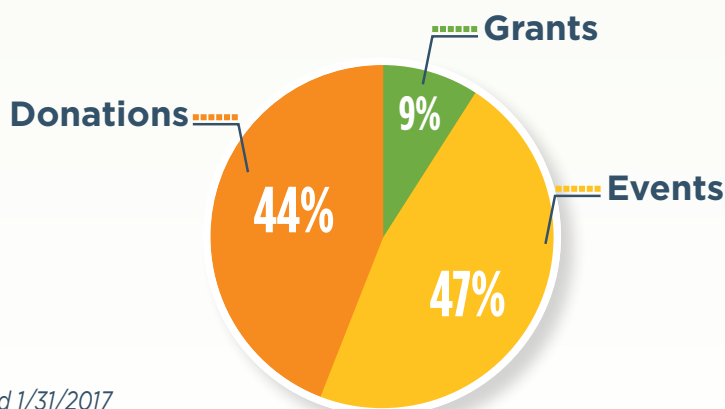
- 84¢ is allocated to fund all of weSPARK programs
- 9¢ allocated to fundraising costs
- 7¢ allocated to management and general expenses

ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES



Fiscal Year ended 1/31/2017

2016-2017 FISCAL YEAR-END INCOME





weSPARK
Cancer Support Center

SUPPORT • PREVENTION • ACCEPTANCE • RECOVERY • KNOWLEDGE

the Torchbearers

living in wholeness...building hope for tomorrow

YOU keep the spark alive at weSPARK

***Join our annual giving program...
be a Torchbearer!***

weSPARK Cancer Support Center is a special healing place that offers **FREE** Support Groups, Monthly Workshops, Group Classes and One-On-One therapeutic and holistic services to cancer patients, their families and friends. Our guests gain the necessary tools to cope with the mental, physical and emotional side effects of their cancer diagnosis and treatment. Through our services, guests feel empowered, connected to our community and feel a sense of hope and belonging.

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



SUPPORT + PREVENTION + ACCEPTANCE + RECOVERY + KNOWLEDGE

13520 Ventura Blvd.
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

weSPARK Tax-Deductible
ID: 95-4758462

NON-PROFIT ORG.
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LOS ANGELES, CA
PERMIT NO. 1494

Jason Alexander's 15th Annual Texas Hold 'em



POKER TOURNAMENT

You're Invited...

MARCH 5, 2017

\$125 Buy-in

Get all the details at weSPARK.org/poker

11:30 am – Lunch and Registration Open

PICKWICK
~ GARDENS ~

1001 W Riverside Drive
Burbank

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE!

Contact Marlene at marlene@wespark.org or 818-906-3022

Proceeds to benefit weSPARK Cancer Support Center

To Buy-In go to weSPARK.org/poker

Exciting prizes
and trophies for
top finishers!



UPCOMING weSPARK EVENTS



May Contain Nuts!

Heart of weSPARK Award
& Comedy Night

SEPTEMBER 2017



Dressed to Kill...Cancer

Movie Screening

OCTOBER 2017



8th Annual

weSPARK RUN/WALK

JANUARY 2018

Questions on any of our events? Please contact
Cheryll Puyot at cheryll@weSPARK.org / (818)906-3022.