

Breast Cancer Banquet Raises Awareness, Touches Home

By **KERI ANN FLACCOMIO**
Staff Writer

Omega Phi Chi Sorority, Inc., with the help of the Women's Center, sponsored the 4th Annual Breast Cancer Banquet at Ramapo College on Oct. 27.

The purpose of the event was to spread awareness about breast cancer and to raise funds for the Susan G. Komen Cure Foundation, a non-profit organization to which all of the evening's proceeds were donated.

"The Susan G. Komen Cure Foundation was chosen in connection with this event," said Somairy Reynoso, public relations officer for Omega Phi Chi, "because it is the world's largest network of breast cancer survivors and activists that work together to save lives, empower people, ensure quality for all and energize science to find cures."

According to the American Cancer Society, 2.4 million women living in the U.S. have been diagnosed with and treated for breast cancer. An estimated 40,610 breast cancer deaths are anticipated this year, of both men and women.

Many people think they know enough about breast cancer, but there are still some



photo by Keri Ann Flaccomio

Omega Phi Chi and the Women's Center teamed up to spread the word to Ramapo regarding one of the nation's leading causes of death.

who are not aware of the early detection process, or the significance of clinical screenings.

"The best way for prevention and early detection," Reynoso said, "is for women to begin having a clinical breast exam at the age of 20, at least every two to three years. Women age 40 and older should have one every year."

The banquet began with opening remarks from Jasmine Cuebas of Omega Phi Chi. Evangelos Bardossas was then invited to the lectern to speak in memory of his grandmother Dorothy Bergin.

Bardossas gave advice to people about how to provide the best support to one suffering from breast cancer: "Don't worry about your suffering, try to alleviate theirs. You'll have plenty of time to grieve."

Sarah Costello, graduate assistant for the Women's Center, then spoke in memory of her mother. "I tell you this story not to make you sad, but to put a face to this disease."

The banquet then took a brief intermission,

while members of Omega Phi Chi served hot food, assorted cookies and drinks to participants. During this time, an informational slideshow, set to music, was played. One fact it revealed was that more women are diagnosed with breast cancer every year than with any other cancer, except for skin cancer.

Danielle DeLucia, a junior at Ramapo and a survivor of breast cancer for a little more than a year, stressed that "breast cancer doesn't discriminate." Sharing her story with a public audience for the first time, she said, "There's a reason I didn't wear mascara."

Last to speak was Andrew Leibman in honor of his mother Arlene Leibman, a breast cancer survivor of 10 years. He discussed how mothers are under a lot of stress, and do not always take enough time to ensure that they are healthy. As a result, Leibman said, more and more children today are growing up without their mothers.

He urges both men and women to "be

smart and get checked," rather than wishing they had gone to that checkup before it was too late.

After Leibman concluded, Vanessa Alonso of Omega Phi Chi spoke briefly in memory of Gladys Lester, a breast cancer patient who spoke at last year's banquet, and who died in May. A moment of silence was held as a photograph of Lester with Omega Phi Chi members was posted on the screen at the front of the room.

The banquet ended with a series of trivia questions and the distribution of prizes to those who answered the multiple choice questions correctly.

Information tables provided awareness pins and helpful materials that one could use to learn the correct way to perform a breast exam.

Members of Omega Phi Chi and the Women's Center hope the event has encouraged people to develop a community support system in order to fight and cure breast cancer.

"Death leaves a heart ache that no one can heal, but love leaves a memory that no one can steal," Costello said.



photo by Keri Ann Flaccomio

Andrew Leibman's mother battled breast cancer for ten years.

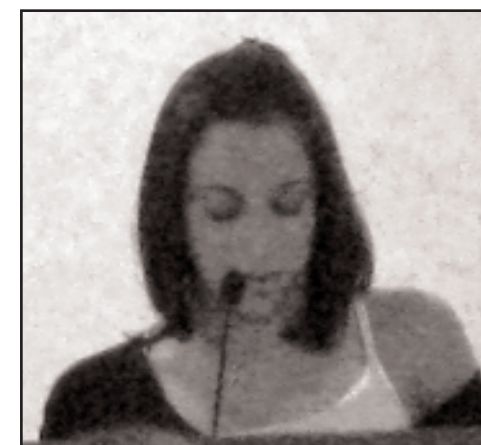


photo by Keri Ann Flaccomio

Danielle DeLucia, junior, survived breast cancer for over a year.

THE RAMAPO NEWS: STAFF, CONTACT & POLICY

A publication by the students for the Ramapo College community

Cortney Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Charlie LaPlaca
News Editor

Joey Lewandowski
Sports Editor

Dan Sforza
Technical Advisor

Katie Sobko
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Daniel Rist
Business Manager

Kimberly Ciocon
Photo Editor

Contact us at:

The Ramapo News
Robert A. Scott Student Center
505 Ramapo Valley Road
Mahwah, NJ 07430

Telephone: (201) 684-7842
Advertising: (201) 684-7842
Fax: (201) 684-7939
E-mail: rcnjnews@ramapo.edu

Staff: Lianna Albrizio, Megan Anderle, Michelle Angelino, Natasha Arena, Morgan Balog, Francesca Baratta, Erica Buchman, Kristen Burnell, Alyssa Connors, Kelly Craig, Deanna Dunsmuir, Jake Edinger, Amy Fezza, Keri Ann Flaccomio, Melanie Framo, Rachel Frank, John Frazee, Andrew Gould, Louis Guerrero, Lauren Haag, Ashley Hastings, Bryan Kaminsky, Jeremy Kelly, Nick Kolani, Scott Laudati, Jon Lindenauer, Ryan Mallory, Stefanie Mauro, Nicole Mazewski, Kaitlin McGuinness, Jenna Moonjian, Dave Ragazzo, Lindsay Sanchez, Diana Stanczak, Keith Stratton, Brittany Temple, Samantha Ullrich, Rachel Wintermute.

Whenever necessary, The Ramapo News will publish corrections or clarifications in the following issues. All corrections must be brought to the attention of the editor as soon as possible. The Ramapo News strives for accuracy. In keeping with journalistic standards, pre-publication review of any article, quote or editorial is not allowed. Viewpoints may be dropped off at SC-218 or e-mailed to rcnjnews@ramapo.edu. The Ramapo News reserves the right to edit viewpoints for content, style and space. Anonymous viewpoints will not be accepted.

Paid advertisements are accepted at the sole discretion of The Ramapo News staff and are due no later than the Monday of that week's issue. Rates are available by contacting the editorial staff by phone or e-mail.