



The Power of Hope

Impact Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 2023

www.hope4moc.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Friend,

It's hard to believe, but we've just reached the end of our second full year of operation already. Of having a core group of volunteers band together to advocate for women diagnosed with mucinous ovarian cancer. And, equally important, to raise money to fund vital research on this disease.

As I write this, the third edition of the *Power of Hope*, I do so with a grateful, but heavy heart. I am excited about the progress we've made already, but saddened that results didn't come in time to benefit my sister, Rhonda.

Leading the Way With Research

Looking forward, as she would want us to do, research remains our top priority. And the quality of proposals we've received for consideration for *Rhonda's Award 2024* is amazing! Just wait until you learn more about the winner when it's announced in September. We are also thrilled with the work we funded last year that is now underway in Australia. You'll find an update on it later in this report.

Our Physician Advisory Committee Chair, Dr. Michael Frumovitz, has an on-going clinical trial at MD Anderson that shows promise. The trial's goal is to explore the use of a surgical procedure, referred as HIPEC, for recurrent mucinous ovarian cancer. It's expected to conclude in October.

Between these two projects, and the proposals currently being considered for Rhonda's Award 2024, our confidence is high that we are moving research in the right direction.

Improving Access to Information

We hear almost weekly what a difference our Resource Library is making in the lives of women battling this disease.



From providing connections to second opinions to disease-specific information, we have worked hard to assemble resources we couldn't find *anywhere* when Rhonda was diagnosed in late 2019:

- List of GYN oncologists who have experience treating this rare type of ovarian cancer? *We developed one and continue to expand it based on recommendations from physicians and patients.*
- Avenue for obtaining an online second opinion from a leading GYN oncology team? *Thanks to the team at University of Chicago Medicine, that's a big YES now, too.*
- Digital resource library with articles, videos, and podcasts specific to this disease? *You bet. One we'll continue to grow after our new website launches.*
- The attention of scientists at leading research institutions around the world? *Yes! It's happening and some applied for Rhonda's Award 2024.*

Goals for the Next Year

At MOCC, we use *hope* as a verb, not a noun. One that represents hard work, as well as promise. As we set our goals for the upcoming year, they include projects that will require both:

- Revamp the MOCC website and move it to a Google-friendly platform where it will be easier for women, families, and the health care community to find. This includes adding expert-written articles to our blog on a regular basis.
- Investigate funding opportunities that can help finance our new website.
- Expand our Physician Advisory Committee to add one or more members who have experience in mucinous ovarian cancer research or treatment.
- Explore new avenues for managing the **MOCC Cares** package process, including for obtaining donations.
- Continue to generate awareness of this disease in the funding community and among research institutions.

Thank you for joining us and making this fight your fight. With your continued support, we can make tomorrow better for women and their families.

Sincerely,

Shelley Laurell

President, Board of Directors

Mucinous Ovarian Cancer Coalition/MOCC





A Look Back

AT THE YEAR ENDING JUNE, 2023

With help from each of you, our young nonprofit organization has accomplished much over the past year. Here's a quick look back at what we've achieved together.

JULY 2022

- ✓ MOCC once again earns top rank from Great Nonprofits making us two for two since our launch in the fall of 2020!
- ✓ The date and location are set for the *2nd Annual MOCC Charity Golf Outing*.



AUGUST 2022

- ✓ The second annual *The Power of Hope* annual impact report for donors is published and distributed.
- ✓ MOCC and the *Walk 4 Hope* continue to be featured in the Bedford Press each month.

SEPTEMBER 2022

- ✓ MOCC is featured in several television stories, including a Cancer Moonshot story discussing President Biden's goals for this program.
- ✓ Dr. Kylie Gorringer is announced as the first winner of *Rhonda's Award*, a research grant open to scientists worldwide who are working on mucinous ovarian cancer.
- ✓ MOCC celebrates our two-year anniversary on September 17th, the birthday of our late founder, Rhonda.

SEPTEMBER 2022

- ✓ The *Walk 4 Hope* is held in southeast Michigan. The event raises just over \$16,000 for research and projects for MOCC.
- ✓ MOCC hosts a month-long awareness campaign to coincide with Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.



OCTOBER 2022

- ✓ MOCC supporters, Kathy Mroz and Lori Baldwin, represent us at the Detroit Tigers "Teal the Bases" organized by Michigan Ovarian Cancer Alliance.



NOVEMBER 2022

- ✓ We join other nonprofit organizations worldwide for the third time and participate in *#GivingTuesday* on November 29th.
- ✓ MOCC offers *Caregiver Survival Kits* to family members caring for a woman with mucinous ovarian cancer in honor of National Family Caregiver Month.



DECEMBER 2022

- ✓ We kick off *Hugs for Havyn* to send cards and care packages to a 15-year-old young woman undergoing treatment for mucinous ovarian cancer.
- ✓ MOCC recognizes and thanks our all-volunteer crew in honor of International Volunteer Day.



JANUARY 2023

- ✓ MOCC is approved for the NCCN Patient Advocacy database.
- ✓ We initiate the search for a partner to build a new website for MOCC.

FEBRUARY 2023

- ✓ MOCC begins to promote *Rhonda's Award 2024* with call for proposals set to open in May.



MARCH 2023

- ✓ The winner of the first *Rhonda's Award*, Dr. Kyle Gorringer, begins her research at the Sir Peter MacCallum Department of Oncology at the University of Melbourne in Melbourne, Australia.

APRIL 2023

- ✓ MOCC names Dawn DuPree and Alysha Eipperle as our Volunteers of the Year.
- ✓ Our volunteers host a Community Garage Sale that earns almost \$2,000 to help pay for the expenses associated with MOCC Cares packages.



MAY 2023

- ✓ *Rhonda's Award 2024* opens with an invitation for researchers to submit an abstract for research projects up to \$50,000 by June 15th.
- ✓ MOCC is selected to be part of the Dana Open LPGA Charity Ticket program.
- ✓ MOCC continues our *#ItsProbablyNothing* campaign on May 8th, World Ovarian Cancer Day.



JUNE 2023

- ✓ MOCC Physician Advisory Board reviews abstracts received for *Rhonda's Award 2024* and issues invitations for top contenders to tender a full proposal.
- ✓ The *2nd Annual MOCC Charity Golf Outing* is held near Grand Rapids, Michigan. The event is chaired by MOCC Board Secretary, Bonnie DeLange, and earns just over \$18,000 for research and services.
- ✓ As the fiscal year closes, MOCC mourns the passing of our cofounders' (Rhonda and Shelley) father, Ronald. He was among the organization's most generous and dedicated supporters, and will be greatly missed.



"We continue to support MOCC and the work both of our daughters started in hopes of preventing other families from experiencing the profound grief we've lived with since losing Rhonda."

Dick & Sharon Laurell

"Nothing can lessen the pain of losing a daughter, but knowing we are making a difference by supporting MOCC helps."

Jackie Couch

"MOCC took my beloved sister, Rhonda, from us far too young. By channeling my personal grief into this organization, I hope to help fund research that results in early detection and treatment. And one day soon, a cure."

Shelley Laurell

THE DIFFERENCE MAKERS



Through the generosity of our faithful donors and the growing number of new supporters, we are able to shine a spotlight on this disease on a global level. That is helping us attract top-tier research institutions to apply for *Rhonda's Award*. With every passing day, we feel confident we are moving closer to our ultimate goal of finding a cure for this rare type of ovarian cancer.

The kindness of our benefactors also allows us to continue sending *MOCC Cares* packages to women battling this disease, as well as maintain a resource-driven website that we plan to improve over the next year.

Big or small, we appreciate each and every donation we receive. They add up quickly and allow us to continue to grow.

THE SAPPHIRE SOCIETY

This fiscal year, we added a new donor category. Named after the birthstone of our late founder, Rhonda, *The Sapphire Society* reflects cumulative giving.

The following supporters have given a combined total of \$5,000 or more since MOCC was launched in September of 2020.

- Ron and Jackie Couch
- Danielle Duke*
- Rick and Kathy Mroz
- Scott and Michelle Schwartz
- Thom and Bonnie DeLange
- Dick and Sharon Laurell
- Shelley Laurell
- Jennifer Wilkins*



ANNUAL DONORS

We would also like to thank each of the following people and companies who believed in and supported MOCC over the last year.

The list below identifies individuals who donated between July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023.

\$1,000+ DONORS

- Luke and Lori Baldwin
- Thom and Bonnie DeLange
- Richard and Sharon Laurell
- Rick and Kathy Mroz
- Jenny Wilkins*
- Ron and Jackie Couch
- Danielle Duke*
- Shelley Laurell
- Michelle and Scott Schwartz

\$500 - \$999 DONORS

- Bruce and Amy Bis
- Jim and Beth Perry
- Rich Zurawski
- Doug Manore
- Lisa Peters

\$250 - \$499 DONORS

- Matt Amico and Lynne Johnson
- Dawn DuPree
- Joy Wilkins
- Joe and Jamie Butz
- Jules Wilkins

THANK YOU



\$100 - \$249 DONORS

- Josh Bellestri and Abbey VanBrandt
- Tracey Harder
- Marilyn Marok
- Victoria VanBrandt
- Mike and Vickie Wilkins
- Rhonda Duke
- Ed LaBounty and Judy Adams
- Tim and Terri VanBrandt
- George Wells and Cindy Zimmer

*Includes a donation of professional services

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

**(Businesses and Organizations
who Donated \$250 or more)**

- Awesome Lawn & Pest Control
- Baldwin Resources, LLC
- Clean Planet Recycling
- DLN Integrated Systems, Inc.
- Duo-Form Plastics
- Fun Stuff Productions
- H&B Poured Walls
- H&R Block (C&T Management)
- Heart to Heart Hospice Foundation
- Joey's Tavern
- Robinson Dental
- Samuel, Son & Co. (USA), Inc.
- Senior Care Content Specialists
- SMK Beautification
- Three Men & A Grill
- Thumb Area Psychological Services

THANK YOU TO OUR *MOCC CARES* PACKAGES DONORS

- Lori Baldwin
- Jamie Butz
- Jackie Couch
- Casey Decker
- Bonnie DeLange
- Dawn DuPree
- Mindy Kendall
- Sharon Laurell
- Shelley Laurell
- Jennifer Loar
- Kathy Mroz
- Sheryl Platz
- Michelle Schwartz
- Jenny Wilkins
- Joy Wilkins
- Jules Wilkins
- Veronica Wilkins
- Jessica Wolford

IN HONOR AND MEMORY

In Honor of Rhonda Couch on her Birthday

- Amy and Bruce Bis
- Jim and Donna Bischoff
- Ron and Jackie Couch
- Ed LaBounty and Judy Adams
- Dick and Sharon Laurell
- Shelley Laurell
- Diana VanWinkle

In Honor of Sharon Laurell

- Jim and Donna Bischoff
- Nancy Fox

In Honor and Memory of Tina Manore

- Doug Manore

In Memory of Ronald L. Couch

- Bruce and Amy Bis
- Jacqueline Couch
- Thom and Bonnie DeLange
- Sandy Graham
- Dick and Sharon Laurell
- Shelley Laurell
- Marilyn Marok
- JoAnn Moyer
- SSOE, Inc.
- Jim, Marcia, and Karen Swiczkoski

In Memory of Debbie Rhodes

- Kaydi Aanerud
- Tony and Lynn Marsh
- Desiree McCormick
- Brent and Jeanne Southall
- Mary Studer
- Contractors Association of Will & Grundy Counties

In Memory of Karly Robb

- Theresa Bannworth
- Cassandra Bohaychuk
- Dawn George
- Tiffini Radner
- Stacy Roskovich
- Staff at Samuel, Son & Company (Heath, Ohio)

In Memory of Patricia Williams

- Elizabeth Arena
- Rob, Vicki, and Reagan Amand
- Ira Borden
- Albert and Reverend Karen Vickers Bundy
- Joann Dougherty
- Patricia Doyle
- Karen Elliott
- The Leslie Graber Family
- Ed and Terry Hagan
- Bob and Debbie Hess
- Peggy Hohenstein
- Dave and Yuri Kerrins
- Jim and Helene Moran
- Kristine Olson
- George and Barb Rosenthal
- Bob and Kathy Ross
- Paul and Joan Sarmousakis
- Nancy Schiavone

THE HISTORY OF

The Rhonda's Award



In the midst of a busy, happy life, Rhonda went for a seemingly routine physical. One she was faithful about having each and every year, complete with blood work and all the recommended preventative screenings. Within just a few hours of completing her blood work, Rhonda received a call informing her that there was a serious problem.

One test led to another as potential causes were eliminated. When ovarian cancer was initially ruled out, Rhonda and her family breathed a sigh of relief. The disease had claimed her maternal grandmother's life. Within 48 hours, however, Rhonda would learn that was a mistake. She did, in fact, have ovarian cancer.

Rhonda was diagnosed with mucinous ovarian cancer, which typically affects women at a younger age than other forms of ovarian cancer. Despite doing every test her doctor recommended each year, the disease had gone undetected and was at an advanced stage.



After several biopsies and a failed surgical attempt, followed by a life-threatening infection, Rhonda's prognosis was grim. Her loved ones searched tirelessly to find ongoing research or a clinical trial that might offer hope. But few alternatives were available for treating this rare form of ovarian cancer. It was the desire to fund research that would lead to more treatment options—and, eventually, a cure for this disease—that gave rise to *Rhonda's Award*.

MEET THE *RHONDA'S AWARD* 2023 WINNER

Dr. Kylie Gorringer, Associate Professor and Group Leader of the Gorringer Lab at the Sir Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre at the University of Melbourne, was chosen as the first recipient of *Rhonda's Award* in the fall of 2022. Her proposal, *Targeting the Mucinous Ovarian Cancer Environment*, was one of several strong contenders for the honor.



Dr. Kylie Gorringer and her team

In providing MOCC with a status update, Dr. Gorringer explains:

"We would like to make a small protein ("peptide") that sticks to our target. To do this, we use a method that makes millions of peptides, and then we see how well they stick to the target. The ones that don't stick get washed away. The sticky peptides each have a unique tag made of a molecule called RNA.

We read off all the tags on the sticky peptides by RNA sequencing so we know which ones stuck and which were washed away. At the moment, this is the stage we are at – we have all the sticky peptides' tags and are doing the sequencing. We should soon know if we have some peptides that stuck well to the target!



If we do get some good ones, we can re-test them to see which stuck the most strongly and whether we can refine them to be even stickier. Then we can add a radioactive molecule to the peptide and test to see if it will stick to cells that have the target on their surface."

Pictured above is team member Nivi in the tissue culture hood. She is growing tumor cells donated by a patient with mucinous ovarian cancer. Dr. Gorringer's team uses these cells to test out therapies.



“Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

MOCC Board of Directors

- Shelley Laurell, President
- Bonnie DeLange, Secretary
- Michelle Schwartz, Treasurer
- Kathy Mroz, Member-at-Large
- Jennifer Wilkins, Member-at-Large

Digital and Media Volunteers

- Alysha Eipperle, Media Relations/Promotions
- Danielle Duke, Website

Advisor to the Board

- Sharon Laurell

In Memoriam

Rhonda Couch

Founder, 1964 – 2020



“Wherever a beautiful soul has been, there is a trail of beautiful memories.”

MOCC PHYSICIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

When it comes to expertise and experience with mucinous ovarian cancer, our Physician Advisory Committee represents the best of the best. Each member donates their time and talent to help us succeed. They are a great source of pride to MOCC.

While they are available to us whenever we need a question answered or a contact for a woman struggling to find a GYN oncologist, their main role is helping us with Rhonda's Award. Each spring, they review the abstracts we receive and recommend which researchers should be invited to submit a full proposal. Then they thoughtfully review each proposal to determine which one has the greatest potential for impacting early detection, improving treatment outcomes, or leading to a cure.



Michael M. Frumovitz, MD, MPH, FACOG

MD Anderson Cancer Center



Katherine Kurnit, MD, MPH

The University of Chicago Medicine



Jennifer Mueller, MD, FACOG

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center



MOCC MISSION AND GOALS

As a nonprofit organization, we strive to be good stewards of the time and resources entrusted to us. A 100% volunteer agency, we are committed to our mission and to meeting and exceeding our goals.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mucinous Ovarian Cancer Coalition (MOCC) is a 501(c)(3) organization. We seek to improve the quality of life for and survival rates of women diagnosed with a rare form of ovarian cancer called mucinous adenocarcinoma of the ovary, also known as mucinous ovarian cancer (MOC).

COALITION GOALS

Founded in 2020, the organization has three goals:

- 1** Provide financial assistance to researchers investigating MOC and other potentially linked diseases.
- 2** Build and continuously update an online resource center that connects women and their families with information and experts in this type of gynecological cancer.
- 3** Provide emotional and financial support to women undergoing treatment for mucinous ovarian cancer. Assisting women struggling with household tasks and daily living expenses, as well as those whose spirit may need a boost.

"I am so honored to be a part of MOCC and to know the difference we are making in the lives of women diagnosed with mucinous ovarian cancer. From our Physician Advisory Board to Rhonda's Award and our online resources, we want women to know we are fighting for them and that they are not alone. Just as my dear friend, Rhonda wanted."

Bonnie DeLange

"I am eternally grateful for my dear friend, Rhonda. Losing her to mucinous ovarian cancer has been very difficult. That's why MOCC will forever be a part of my life. I will support and nurture it just like Rhonda would have done."

Lori Baldwin

"Helping to grow MOCC means the world to me, as I know it would to my late cousin Rhonda. Our resources, second opinions, and funding for research make a difference every day."

Jenny Wilkins

"I'm so proud of the work that MOCC does to support women fighting this rare type of cancer. Through sending care packages and cards, assisting with referrals for second opinions, and funding research, we are changing lives. I know Rhonda would be so proud of the impact being made in her honor."

Kathy Mroz

"I am honored to be a part of this wonderful organization. I know Rhonda, my late cousin, would be amazed at how far MOCC has come in just a few years. Rhonda wanted to provide awareness and support to others who are impacted by this rare disease. We continue to take the reins and do this for her. I know she would be proud!"

Michelle Schwartz





Let's Keep in Touch



FIND US ONLINE:

www.hope4MOC.org



EMAIL US:

Hope4MOC@gmail.com



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK:

[@MucinousOvarianCancerCoalition](https://www.facebook.com/MucinousOvarianCancerCoalition)

