

# Women At Risk

## 20th Anniversary Research Edition

Please  
join us!

Women At Risk's

### 20th Anniversary Luncheon

Celebrating WAR's research and programs, and the many lives touched over the past 20 years.

Monday, May 9th, 2011

11 a.m. Reception & Auction  
12 p.m. Luncheon

Waldorf=Astoria,  
New York City

#### Guest Speakers

The Honorable  
Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress,  
14th Congressional District

Lynn Sherr  
Author, Award-Winning  
Broadcast Journalist  
and Former ABC News  
Correspondent

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For more information,  
contact Eric Dubinsky at  
(212) 305-4486 or  
edubinsky@  
womenatrisknyc.org.

Dear Friends,

**W**e are thrilled to be celebrating Women At Risk's twentieth anniversary year with you! It's hard to believe that 20 years have passed since Susan Furst recognized the need for an organization that focused on women at high risk for breast cancer in the New York metropolitan area and started Women At Risk to fill that void.

Since then, WAR has grown in leaps and bounds, expanding to provide education and support to women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer as well as those at risk, initiating programs for underserved New York City communities, and funding and conducting numerous innovative research studies.

In this special edition of our Spring Newsletter, you will find statistics and stories cele-

brating our many research accomplishments. Our Fall Newsletter will focus on the other arms of our mission—patient support and education.

We also encourage you to visit our blog at [www.womenatriskblog.com](http://www.womenatriskblog.com) where we will be showcasing individuals who have been touched by WAR in our "20 Lives, 20 Ways" series.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge Dr. Kathie-Ann Joseph's extraordinary leadership as WAR's Medical Director over the past three years. We wish her the best and are pleased to welcome our new Co-Medical Directors, who you will read about on page 3.

Thank you again for your support, and we look forward to our continued work together in the years ahead. There is still so much to be done.

Bonnie Pressman, *President*



**To Contact  
Women At Risk:**

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or email  
[info@womenatrisknyc.org](mailto:info@womenatrisknyc.org)

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You can also become  
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## High-Risk Research

Through its unique High-Risk Registry, WAR has been collecting valuable data on women at high risk for breast cancer for two decades. Using this data, WAR has conducted and published several studies that have contributed to a greater understanding of breast cancer risk factors:

### **Cohort study of women at risk for breast cancer and gross cystic disease**

By J. Chun, K.A. Joseph, M. El-Tamer, A. Rundle, J. Jacobson, F. Schnabel  
Presented: 6th Annual Meeting of the *American Society of Breast Surgeons*, 2005  
Published: *The American Journal of Surgery*, 2005, Volume 192, Issue 4

### **Predictors of breast cancer development in a high-risk population**

By J. Chun, M. El-Tamer, K.A. Joseph, B.A. Ditkoff, F. Schnabel  
Presented: 7th Annual Meeting of the *American Society of Breast Surgeons*, 2006  
Published: *The American Journal of Surgery*, 2006, Volume 190, Issue 4



*Kathie-Ann Joseph, M.D., M.P.H., and Amy Whiffen, M.P.H., present research from WAR's High-Risk Registry at the 11th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Breast Surgeons*

“My WAR grant was really instrumental in keeping me interested in cancer research.”

—Dr. Francis Lee

### **Interactions of increasing age and breast cancer risk factors**

By J. Chun, B. Pocock, K.A. Joseph, L. Klein, M. El-Tamer, F. Schnabel  
Presented: 31st Annual Symposium of the *American Society of Breast Disease*, 2007

### **Breast cancer risk factors in younger and older women**

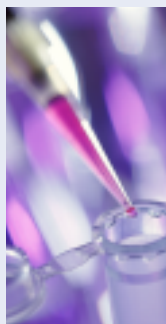
By J. Chun, B. Pocock, K.A. Joseph, M. El-Tamer, L. Klein, F. Schnabel  
Presented: 24th Annual *Miami Breast Cancer Conference*, 2007  
Published: *Annals of Surgical Oncology*, 2009, Volume 16

### **Assessing a Bayesian risk prediction model in a high-risk breast cancer population**

By J. Chun, F. Schnabel, O. Ogunyemi  
Presented: *American Medical Informatics Association Annual Symposium*, 2007

### **Predictors of breast cancer development in women with atypical ductal hyperplasia and atypical lobular hyperplasia**

By A. Whiffen, M. El-Tamer, B. Taback, S. Feldman, K.A. Joseph  
Presented: 11th Annual Meeting of the *American Society of Breast Surgeons*, 2010  
Published: *Annals of Surgical Oncology*, 2011, Volume 18



“With our grant from WAR, we were able to show the importance of environmental exposures and oxidative stress on breast cancer risk. It allowed us to develop new assays and collect initial data. It gave us the resources to develop new areas of research.”

—Dr. Regina Santella

## Looking towards the future: WAR welcomes new Medical Directors

After over three years of distinguished service and leadership, Dr. Kathie-Ann Joseph has left NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia for a position at NYU's Langone Medical Center. We are grateful for the vision and dedication she demonstrated during her time as WAR's Medical Director and wish her well in her future endeavors.

We are pleased to announce that in her place, WAR has appointed two physicians to serve as Co-Medical Directors, Dr. Preya Ananthkrishnan and Dr. Katherine Crew.

Dr. Ananthkrishnan is a breast surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center, where she specializes in oncoplastic surgery, nipple-sparing mastectomies, and the multidisciplinary care of young women with breast cancer.



Dr. Ananthkrishnan



Dr. Crew

Dr. Crew is a medical oncologist at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center. Her specialty is caring for breast cancer patients and women at high risk for breast cancer. Her research focuses on the prevention of breast cancer in high-risk women through chemopreventative agents and supplements such as vitamin D and green tea extract.

We are thrilled to have these two accomplished physicians with varied backgrounds and skills on board to lead Women At Risk into its third decade. ■

## Call for Volunteers

Women At Risk is looking for breast cancer survivors to volunteer in the Stacey Garil Womack Resource Library. Volunteers provide support and assistance to breast cancer patients and their families at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center. You must be at least two years out of treatment and have daytime availability during the week.

Please contact Jenny Saldaña at [jsaldana@womenatrisknyc.org](mailto:jsaldana@womenatrisknyc.org) or (212) 305-9894.

## Research Highlights

WAR has funded 55 innovative studies since its inception in 1991. Here, we highlight two studies that have gone on to receive additional funding and have truly impacted the lives of women affected by breast cancer.

**The Researcher:** Dr. Heather Greenlee, Assistant Professor, Department of Epidemiology, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, Division of Hematology/Oncology, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons

**The Research:** The study was a community-based physical activity and dietary change intervention among overweight and sedentary minority breast cancer survivors, including women of Hispanic and African descent. Women were given 6-month memberships to a local Curves fitness center and participated in nutrition education sessions.

**The Results:** The Curves model was effective in helping the breast cancer sur-

vivors lose weight. "Many researchers hypothesize that eating a good diet, being physically active, and achieving a healthy body weight after a breast cancer diagnosis will improve recurrence and survival rates," said Dr. Greenlee. "We hope to use data from our studies to eventually conduct a definitive study on weight loss intervention among breast cancer survivors."

**The Impact:** Dr. Greenlee presented her research at the 2008 and 2009 *San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposiums*. The findings also allowed her to secure additional funding from *The Gateway Foundation for Cancer Research*, and a large grant from the *National Cancer Institute* is currently pending.

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**Researcher:** Jose Silva, Assistant Professor of Pathology, Institute for Cancer Genetics, Columbia University Irving Cancer Research Center

**The Research:** As tumor cells deviate from normal cells, they acquire abilities that help them survive, but they also develop sensitivities. Dr. Silva's work attempts to find these sensitivities and target them in treatment, creating per-

sonalized therapies for women with breast cancer that are more effective and have less harmful side effects than chemotherapy.

**The Results:** This study focused on breast cancer patients with ErbB2-positive tumors, who have a poorer prognosis than other patients. Dr. Silva and his team isolated a new therapeutic strategy for these women that could positively impact the outcome of their disease if the findings are validated in a clinical setting. "Thanks to the support of Women At Risk, we were able to obtain enough data to demonstrate that our project was feasible," said Dr. Silva. "Because of that, the project has received a lot of interest from cancer research funding programs that have provided us with additional funding to continue our studies."

**The Impact:** The research was presented at the 2010 *American Association of Cancer Research* meeting and the 2011 *New York Academy of Science* meeting. Dr. Silva has received grants from the *American Association of Cancer Research* and the *National Cancer Institute* to continue this project.

## Thanks to Our Donors

Women At Risk would like to thank all of its donors for their generous support over the past two decades. While lack of space precludes us from acknowledging each person individually, we would like to give special recognition to the individuals and companies whose cumulative gifts to WAR totaled \$5,000 or more in 2010. A complete list of donors who gave over \$500 is available on our website at <http://nyp.org/services/war/support-war.html>.

A gift to Women At Risk is a thoughtful way to honor a friend, family member or caregiver. To make a donation, please use the enclosed envelope or call Eric Dubinsky at 212-305-4486.

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*Included in this list are donations received between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2010.*

*We apologize for any inadvertent omissions.*

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