Celebrate SpringTime…
A festive new event for CST in 2013

Over 150 friends and supporters attended CST’s first Celebrate SpringTime, gathering on April 12th at the Larchmont Yacht Club, a beautiful setting for this informal and festive celebration. During the evening, Jolita Gudaitis Haigis, a CST Advisory Board member and psychologist at Mamaroneck High School, made a special presentation to attendees, speaking movingly about her experience with cancer and the assistance she received from CST staff. “CST was invaluable to me and helped so much during the difficult six months I underwent aggressive chemotherapy, now already five years ago. I am honored to share that painful journey with others to help them to see and fully appreciate the depth and breadth of CST’s work in caring for those with cancer,” Jolita commented.

Heartfelt thanks to our many contributors who enabled CST to raise over $45,000 to support our free nursing, counseling and case management services. A special thank you to The Hildegarde D. Becher Foundation, Inc., Cartledge Brown Wines, Michele Faber, Patrick Oswald of Martin Scott Distributors, Flowers by Stephanie, Mark Teasdale of Proximo Spirits, John Wall and Larchmont Yacht Club for their assistance and generosity.

Coping in the Workplace
By Emily Laitmon, LCSW

Cancer strikes us all, favoring no economic class, age or culture. It indiscriminately visits factories, retail establishments, restaurants, office cubicles and executive suites, ordinary “joes” and the rich and famous. You receive a diagnosis, have the needed surgery and treatments and get ready to return to work when you’re physically and emotionally prepared. For many, the process of getting back into a work routine and experiencing that normalcy serves as a distraction from treatments and helps the healing process.

Many people are able to continue working during treatments and being proactive

(Article continued on page 6)
Greetings from the Executive Director

Actress and director Angelina Jolie’s poignant piece in The New York Times of May 14, 2013 entitled “My Medical Choice” describes her motivation for getting a preventive double mastectomy after discovering that she carried the gene, BRCA1—which puts her at a high risk for developing breast cancer. With a family history of cancer (her mother died at 56), Ms. Jolie writes about her decision to have the surgery and what it entailed. Embedded in the article is a statement, “The cost of testing for BRCA1 and BRCA2, at more than $3,000 in the United States, remains an obstacle for many women.”

As with so many advances in healthcare today, the benefits are great, but access for those who are uninsured or whose insurance does not cover a particular test or treatment, is limited or often nonexistent. Ms. Jolie advocates that gene testing and lifesaving preventive treatments be accessible to more women “...whatever their means and background, wherever they live.” In fact, according to the Community Health Advocates (888-614-5400), an organization dedicated to “helping people get, keep, and use health coverage” under the Affordable Care Act—the recent health care reform legislation—genetic counseling and testing for the BRCA gene fall under “preventive care” and are probably covered by insurance. That said, it is best to call your insurance company to ascertain whether you will be covered for these services.

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has information, readily available, regarding genetic testing. Its fact sheet on genetic testing for the BRCA gene can be retrieved online (www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/risk/brca) or through a phone call to 800-4-CANCER. The benefits and risks of genetic testing are presented clearly and the NCI recommends seeing a genetics counselor before and after testing to obtain information about your particular cancer risk. To find a genetics counselor near you, go to the National Society of Genetic Counselors at www.nsgc.org and click on “find a genetic counselor.” Another very helpful resource is an organization called, FORCE. Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered, which focuses on assisting individuals and families affected by hereditary breast and ovarian cancer. You can reach this organization at www.facingourrisk.org or by calling 866-288-7475. Angelina Jolie has taken a brave step toward raising awareness and diffusing the mystery surrounding these kinds of tests.

CST Expands Case Management Program

Through the support of our generous donors, CST expanded its case management program with the hiring of Rocío Castañeda in January, 2013. Rocío joins CST’s current case manager, Lourdes Parra, to assist our patients with applications for government benefits, such as Social Security Disability, and education about community resources. CST has the only case management program serving lower Westchester County that focuses solely on those affected by cancer. In 2012, Lourdes helped over 140 individuals with issues related to income assistance, medical insurance and other concerns, offering practical help and guidance. In addition, our case managers are adept at advocating to ensure that patients receive the medical care and assistance they require to cope with a cancer diagnosis. Both Lourdes and Rocío are fluent in Spanish which enables CST to serve Westchester’s growing Hispanic/Latino communities.

Team CST Dives Right In

Join Us on July 19th at the NYAC!

We hope that you will join us this summer to raise much needed funding for Cancer Support Team’s free services to people living with cancer. For the 5th year in a row, Team CST is swimming to support Swim Across America of Long Island Sound (SAALIS), a non-profit organization that is in its 21st year of raising funds to fight cancer. SAALIS has an open water swim and many pool swim events planned for this summer. Team CST, a group of CST staff members and their families and friends, will participate on July 19th at the NYAC in Pelham. Many thanks to former Team Captain and continuing Team member, Katie Shields, and to our new Team Captain, Kathleen Morrissey, who is enthusiastically rallying Team members to gear up for this special event. Kathleen says, “I have always had a passion for swimming. I am happy now to invite others to join me in swimming together for Cancer Support Team. I hope all will feel welcome to join us on July 19th for a fun experience.”

To join or donate to Team CST or any of the SAALIS swim teams, and to find out about other SAALIS events, log onto www.swimacrossamerica.org/longisland. All of us at CST are so appreciative of the ongoing support we receive from SAALIS. We couldn’t do what we do without the hard work of Tony Sibio, SAALIS Chairman and CST Advisory Board member, and the many volunteers who organize such successful swimming events.
Heartfelt Thanks to Our 2012 Donors

Cancer Support Team heartily thanks the many individuals, corporations, foundations and government agencies who support our services and programs through their generosity. While space allows us to list only donors of $250 or more, we wish to express our appreciation to all who have given so generously. Every effort has been made to ensure that names appear correctly in the appropriate donor category. In case of error or omission, please contact us at the CST office, 914-777-2777.

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Memorial Donations
The families of the following people have designated CST for memorial donations:
Margaret Woo
Angela Millman

Preparation of this newsletter was donated by Sandy Dewey/DeweyInk.
Coping... (con’t from page 1)

MS. T. called CST after she was hospitalized and diagnosed with lung cancer. In the first phone call with one of our case managers—a CST staff member who assists people in applying for government benefits and community resources—Ms. T. asked, “How will I survive without an income?” Ms. T. was no longer able to work and was understandably very concerned. Her family tried to help as much as they could, but they were limited in what they could do. Ms. T. explained that she had already applied for a government benefit called Supplemental Security Income, but that it only provided a small income, certainly not enough to live on. The case manager accompanied her to the Social Security Administration office and helped her apply for Social Security Disability benefits, providing her with a larger income, and food stamps. In addition, due to Ms. T.’s limited income, she was not able to pay for her cell phone any longer. Ready access to a phone was critical in order for Ms. T. to communicate with her doctors. The case manager located a community resource that offered Ms. T.’s free cell phone service. Presently, while Ms. T. is being treated for the lung cancer, the CST case manager, in collaboration with a CST nurse, continues to assist her by identifying resources that will help her cope with the illness.

For those affected by cancer, CST makes a difference!

If you feel it’s appropriate, you may engage an open and honest office dialogue to discuss your cancer and possible impact on the workload of healthy employees.

You are your best advocate. You come first in terms of your mental and physical health. Internalizing this idea is an initial step in empowering yourself towards healing. Don’t hesitate to ask for assistance from an experienced therapist or coach in dealing with your spouse, family, friends, or the work environment. Short term treatment for loss and transition is appropriate for understanding and coping with your cancer.

Finally, contemplate this surfer’s mantra: “I cannot smooth the surf, but I can learn to ride the waves.” Surf’s up!

Emily Laitmon, LCSW, is a psychotherapist in private practice in New Rochelle and NYC working with Women’s Issues, Couple Counseling, and Family Therapy. You can contact her with your questions or concerns at Laitmon@outlook.com

CST Makes a Difference!

Another Year of Service...CST 2012 Recap

CST is the only home care program serving lower Westchester which is solely cancer-focused and offering services free of charge and without regard to insurance coverage. Demand for our services is increasing and our staff members continue to meet this increased need. The following are just some of our accomplishments in 2012:

- Served 521 individuals as well as their many family members and friends and provided 1,987 in-person visits primarily in patients’ homes, a 17% and 46% increase respectively over the last five years
- Gave over $32,000 in financial assistance to patients and families
- Coordinated 824 rides to treatment appointments through our volunteer driver program, a 39% increase over the last five years
- Held our first Service of Remembrance for families of deceased patients
- Implemented community educational programs such as, “The Angst of Anxiety: Reducing Your Worries Surrounding Medical Visits, Test Results and the Future”
- Held the 14th annual Gayle K. Lee Women’s Health Awareness Luncheon focused on the latest treatments for breast cancer, raising $42,000 to support our services
- Moved to new offices which provide a more efficient and centrally-located space so that our staff members could serve the growing number of people asking for our help

Our deep appreciation goes out to our generous supporters, who enable us to continue our mission of enhancing the quality of life of individuals and families in lower Westchester County who are affected by cancer.

CST Welcomes Dr. Aran Ron to Board of Directors

Cancer Support Team is pleased to announce that Dr. Aran Ron joined its Board of Directors in January, 2013. Dr. Ron is President of Health Strategies Consultants and an Operating Partner at Bessemer Venture Partners. He provides consulting services to various health care sectors including insurance, provider delivery systems, and venture and private equity.

Previously, Dr. Ron served as president and chief operating officer of Group Health Incorporated (GHI) and chief medical officer of Emblem Health Plans. Prior to joining GHI, he served as Medical Director at Oxford Health Plans, Senior Vice President for Medical Affairs at New York Downtown Hospital and Director of Quality Programs at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York. Dr. Ron lectures at Columbia Business School and Cornell Medical College, where he won the 2008 Excellence in Teaching Award. He received a medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania and holds a degree in business and public health from Columbia University. Dr. Ron’s many years of leadership experience in a variety of health care settings will be an asset in his membership on CST’s Board of Directors.
Our thanks to Grandmaster Bruce Chung of Bruce Chung Tae Kwon Do for hosting a fundraising event in May 2012 to benefit CST.

****Save the Date****
October 10, 2013
Anne Moore, M.D.
Medical Director,
Weill Cornell Breast Center

15th Annual Gayle K. Lee Women’s Health Awareness Luncheon