



Be Informed. Be Empowered.  
Manténgase informado y capacitado

# Impact Report 2018-2019



# Message from Bag It

*Wow! We had an incredibly busy, productive and fabulous year!*

- Thanks to all of you who provided input, guidance, assistance, and support in helping to launch the 2019 version of the Bag It bag - in both English & Spanish.
- We launched our updated logo and new website which has over 150 resources (*and growing*) and is a wealth of information for patients/survivors, caregivers, and advocates.
- The leadership conference for cancer advocates, Escape to THRIVE, was once again a great success in educating and connecting advocates from across the country and from a variety of cancer types.

## Board Members

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**YOU - the donors, volunteers, sponsors, partners, friends, bag recipients, medical providers, and the community are what make the Bag It bag and the Escape to THRIVE leadership conference valuable to all those impacted by cancer.**



# Highlights of the Year

- Bag It celebrated 15 years of serving more than 76,000 patients and their families
- 120 bags provided through Sponsor a Bag donations
- Launched a new Spanish and English bag
- Refreshed Bag It logo and look
- New website with an online resource center offering more than 150 websites on all cancer-related topics

**Our Vision:** Bag It will empower patients to be more involved in their care, advocate for themselves, and learn to cope with the challenges associated with diagnosis and treatment. Further, Bag It empowers cancer advocates to promote this same vision in their communities.

**Our Mission:** Bag It educates, supports, and empowers those impacted by cancer.

## Staff

Mindy Griffith, *Executive Director*  
Sherri Romanoski, *Founder, Senior Advisor*  
Joyce Palasek, *Program Coordinator*  
Lisa Terrazas, *Volunteer & Event Coordinator*  
Annetra Farrington, *Program Assistant*



# What's in the New Bag?

*We're proud to introduce our completely updated and redesigned Bag It bag!*

Based on feedback from more than 80 survivors, care partners and medical professionals, the new bag brings together the most requested and reliable cancer information into a single resource to educate, support and empower patients with any type of cancer. Being informed and armed with the tools to stay organized, feel confident in asking the right questions, express fully one's needs and wants, and be an active participant on the care team can profoundly impact the care received and quality of life.

We've updated many features and introduced some new materials including a new booklet, *Paths to Survivorship*. Content from leading cancer authorities helps those with cancer and their loved ones better understand and navigate each phase of survivorship – from diagnosis, through treatment, and beyond.

Available in English and Spanish, the bag is provided by select medical providers at no charge or by ordering online for yourself or as a gift for someone. While we request a nominal fee to help us cover the costs, Bag It's Sponsor A Bag fundraiser ensures that no one goes without a bag due to financial hardship.

## Leading authorities who provided us permission to reprint their content

American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR)  
American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)  
Cancer Care, Inc.  
National Cancer Institute (NCI)  
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS)  
National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN)



## My Companion Guidebook

- Filled with messages of hope and tips on how to make the most of the bag and customize it to one's own needs
- 6 tabbed sections to organize and store personal and medical info, reports, medications, and contacts, plus multiple calendars and log options to track appointments, notes/questions, schedules and symptoms
- Reliable resources inside the bag and online plus a glossary of common cancer terms

## Leading Cancer Resource Publications

Four go-to guides with information on:

- cancer diagnosis and treatment basics,
- coping with emotions, relationships and how to communicate with others in your life,
- common questions about diet, nutrition, and physical activity during and after cancer treatment,
- suggestions for cancer or treatment-related symptom management, adjusting to life after treatment, practical matters,
- support for care partners, families, and friends

plus a personal journal.



*“Bag It has undergone updates over the years, but this latest version is outstanding. I am enormously proud of what the staff and volunteers have created. They have kept the integrity of the Bag It concept and mission and taken it to horizons I only dreamed of. Being a part of this process is truly a gift.”*



Sherri Romanoski, Founder

# Escape to THRIVE

Escape to THRIVE Leadership Conference supports cancer advocates from across the country representing different cancer types, efforts/organizations, cultures and ages. The goal is to help them continue their work effectively, build capacity and develop collaborations – all to impact patient education and outreach.

This year's topics were Survivorship, Precision Medicine, and Integrated Oncology Cancer Care.



Here are some of the critical questions posed and discussed by national advocates at Escape to THRIVE 2019:

How can we as individual organizations welcome people across the continuum of survivorship - from previvors to metastatic patients?

How can community-based research be funded better to include minorities/underserved?

How do we develop research advocates for survivorship?

How do survivors find the treasure in their wreckage? How to find purpose in cancer?

Collaborative vs. individualized advocacy - working together or working apart?

# Advocates shared these thoughts

I think it was different in pretty much every aspect! Starting from it being a small group, with a very inviting environment to share your views, but to also take in other views and perspectives. It felt very dynamic and inclusive.  
- Marisol Rosas Becerril

This was an interactive conference. We did not just sit and listen. We learned and shared and helped each other. What we learned stays in our minds easier and longer because we participated in every presentation. - Susan Patterson

The advocates who attended were a great cross-section of diseases, stages, and survivorship. I learned a lot about what was possible in advocacy. Networking was awesome! I sorely needed a way to rebalance disease, life, and advocacy. This conference helped me in many ways. - Janet Freeman-Daily

It was the best conference I have ever been to and I go to 3-5 a year. It had a lot of useful information, but not so much that it was overwhelming.

The mix of groups and types of advocates really makes this an amazing conference! The spirit of collaboration and diversity of experiences really gave everyone a chance to learn. - Lisa Rezende

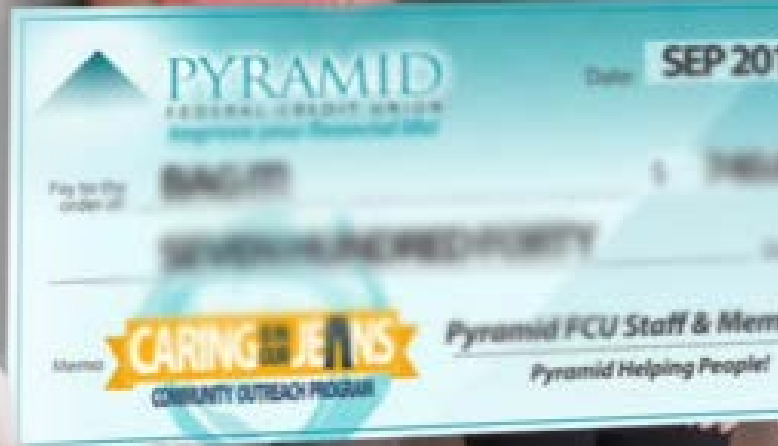
## Community Support

*“In 2010, my family was devastated at the news that my father had been diagnosed with cancer. At his first appointment with his oncologist, he was given the “Bag It” binder and bag. Although it may sound simple, a binder and bag to keep track of his visits with multiple doctors and test results, it is so much more than that. We wouldn’t have been able to be as organized or prepared for all the visits to different doctors without it. **During such an overwhelming time, “Bag It” provided us with a sense of relief** that we carried the information to answer any question, at any time and gifted us the peace of mind to focus on what mattered most, his healing.*

*At my employer, Pyramid Federal Credit Union, employees have the option to donate \$2 a week to wear jeans on Friday and Saturday turning your typical casual jean day into something much more meaningful. Each month a different department selects a local non-profit the donations will be given to. I was thrilled to be able to suggest “Bag It” as I had a personal experience with the organization through my dad. It was such an amazing feeling knowing our donation helped others the way it helped my family through that tough time.*

Pam Miley

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## Volunteers Emi

*“My first event as a Bag It volunteer was at the Take a Hike for Bag It event in October 2018 and I have been volunteering ever since. I completed the Ambassador Training in January 2019 and now attend community events as a Bag It ambassador. This past year I have engaged in many volunteer projects for Bag It and it has been an enjoyable and rewarding experience.*

*The staff and fellow volunteers are some of the kindest and most inspiring people I have ever met!*

***Knowledge is power, and I love how Bag It continues to produce and provide valuable tools** for cancer patients and their caretakers to navigate and organize their journey from diagnosis and beyond.*

*I feel grateful for the opportunity to be a part of an organization that continues to have a positive impact on people’s lives. I look forward to helping Bag It in the future however I can.”*

Impact Report Cover Designed by:  
Delphine Sebe



### VOLUNTEER IMPACT

97 volunteers gifted  
1,186 hours of their time  
valued at more than \$30,160



# The Impact of Bag It Birthday Fundraiser

*“The minute I was handed my “Bag It” at my first doctor appointment after getting the phone call that I had cancer was when I realized this was real.*

*At first I didn't look in my bag. It took me some time but finally I sat and reviewed the information. The Teamwork brochure helped me to know what to say and ask and keeping all my paperwork in one place was very helpful.*

*I celebrated my birthday this year doing radiation treatments so when I set up my birthday fundraiser on Facebook I knew the Bag It organization was who I wanted to give back to. It has helped me to understand this new normal I live and is a wonderful resource.*

*“We are in this together.” - Mary Couture*



*“I truly believe the Bag It is the best thing a cancer patient can receive when diagnosed. It is a life saver, a bible, companion.”*

Nurse Navigator, Tucson, AZ

*“All of the information helped me have a better idea of what the process would be like. This helped me be less scared of the unknown, helped my confidence and helped me maintain a higher level of communication with my physician regarding my treatment.”*

Alejandro, Roswell NM

*“The Bag It should be an automatic gift that every patient should receive at diagnosis. They should not leave their doctor's office without it.*

*I am definitely with you on this concept because it empowers the survivor and makes us feel in charge of our lives.*

Dr. Elise Bourne-Busby, Passaic NJ

# Financials Income

Corporate Partnerships - 55%

Medical Providers - 13%

Fundraising/Events - 13%

Foundations - 8%

Individuals - 6%

Programs - 4%

In-kind, other - 1%

*\*Financial numbers are unaudited for 7/1/18 - 6/30/19*



[www.BagItCancer.org](http://www.BagItCancer.org)

520-575-9602

# Many Thanks to Our Major Partners

## Changemaker



## Advocates



William & Mary Ross  
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