



2020 HONOREE

## Terri Rodney-Brown



As if surviving cancer once isn't enough, Terri has survived cancer TWICE. In February 2018, she was diagnosed with Stage 2 endometrial cancer. Terri's treatment plan included a hysterectomy and radiation after which her doctors informed her that the cancer was low-grade and they thought they had gotten it all. Unfortunately, in August 2019, Terri had some routine medical scans performed where two masses over her liver were detected. A few days before her planned surgery to address those masses, Terri was informed that she needed an emergency colonoscopy due to some additional masses detected around her colon. Ultimately, Terri was experiencing a recurrence of endometrial cancer that had metastasized to her diaphragm and abdomen. She had extensive surgery to remove 14 tumors and aggressive chemotherapy treatments to fight against any further metastasis, with the last treatment completed on February 24 of this year. To date, her scans and blood work are clear!

Terri will have scans every three months to ensure her cancer does not return. She is an avid golfer and has gradually gotten back into the game she loves after fighting cancer for the second time. She says that her cancer fight and survival is an awe-inspiring and humbling journey filled with tremendous people and experiences, big ups and downs, hope, and a realization that every moment she has with family and friends is a blessing.

"I believe for women, it is so difficult to find their voice and talk about cancer because of fear, the stigma of a catastrophic illness and not feeling comfortable to express the tidal wave of emotions that occur; especially when it feels that someone just put a timestamp on you. We fight so hard sometimes to be heard because of our gender, and when it is something like cancer, women have a tendency to not speak up and or speak out. We're afraid we will be labeled too emotional, which is disheartening. All those voices are so important; not only to give others a voice or hope, but to also say it's ok to say I feel terrible, I'm scared, or I don't understand. I hope more women who are on this journey will discover that it is OK, that they are OK and very much needed to share their experiences and emotions when it comes to fighting cancer."

Terri believes that life is not about the destination but rather about the journey. "Things will happen in life, and there won't be a lot you can control. You can either let it stop you and stay curled up into a ball or you can get up and take a step forward and then continue to move forward any way you can. You know it's scary because you don't know how long or if you will be able to continue to your destination. But that's ok because you were truly blessed to even make the journey. The reality is that you can't take money, possessions, or your professional career with you. Cancer reminds you that the only important thing to cherish and take with you is the LOVE of family and friends."