



FEBRUARY 8-11, 2025 SUMMIT + ADVOCACY DAY RECAP

2 EVENTS. 4 AMAZING DAYS.



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HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER HAS ALWAYS WORKED TO PROVIDE PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS SOLACE - THROUGH EDUCATION, AWARENESS, ADVOCACY, AND LINKAGES TO TOP-NOTCH RESOURCES IN AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY.

A gastric cancer diagnosis is terrifying, and the stress, physical pain, and unknowns create tremendous emotional burdens. This year's event provided a retreat for those impacted by stomach cancer, helping them build navigational tools, support networks, community connections, and empowerment. We were honored to host this biannual signature event, fostering a strong stomach cancer village where attendees could share their experiences, gain knowledge, and connect with others.

Advocacy Day followed the close of the Summit in Washington, D.C., allowing participants to take their voices directly to policymakers and drive meaningful change.

MEET YOUR HOSTS!



**Summit Medical
Co-Chair:**
Dr. Yanghee Woo



**Summit Medical
Co-Chair:**
Dr. Nataliya Uboha
(Monday)

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Dear Attendees, Supporters, and Contributors,

When my father was diagnosed with advanced stomach cancer, I remember the fear, the uncertainty, and the desperate search for answers. Today, he is clinically cured, but the desperation I felt during that time has never left me. That's why the Stomach Cancer Advocacy Movement exists—not just to bring people together, but to drive real change in how stomach cancer is understood, treated, and prevented.

This past year, we have grown in ways I never imagined. Our 3rd Patient Empowerment Summit and 2nd Gastric Cancer Advocacy Day weren't just bigger—they were more impactful. More voices were heard. More patients and caregivers gained access to life-changing resources. What started as a gathering has become a true movement—a force demanding better treatment options, earlier detection, and a future where survival isn't left to chance.

To the doctors, researchers, and patient leaders who shared their expertise—thank you for helping us bridge the gaps in care. To our sponsors

and donors—your support ensures that no one has to fight this disease alone and that treatment options continue to advance. And to every patient and caregiver who showed up—your stories are the heart of this movement. You remind us why we keep pushing forward.

But we're not stopping here. Later in 2025, we'll bring the 4th Patient Empowerment Summit to Los Angeles—my hometown—continuing to strengthen and support our community. And in 2026, we return to Washington, DC, bigger, bolder, and louder than ever.

This movement is growing, and it's because of you. Together, we are reshaping the future of stomach cancer—until the day it no longer exists.

Warm regards,

Aki

Aki Smith
 Caregiver, Founder, and
 Executive Director, Hope for
 Stomach Cancer



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HOPE WAS COMMITTED TO MAKING EACH SUMMIT EXPERIENCE AS INFORMATIVE AND COMFORTABLE.

Key Highlights: To ensure attendees had an exceptional experience, we implemented several key features, prioritizing their well-being and accessibility.

ON-SITE MEDICAL SUPPORT

The health and safety of our guests were top priorities. An **EMT** was on-site throughout the event, ready to provide medical assistance if needed.

EMT services were also available on Capitol Hill.

- Feb. 8: 4pm – 9pm Feb. 10: 9am – 6pm
- Feb. 9: 9am – 6pm Feb. 11: 8am – 4pm

WELLNESS ROOM, 10AM - 6PM, SUNDAY AND MONDAY

Understanding the need for rest and relaxation, we provided a dedicated **Wellness Room** where attendees could take breaks and find a quiet space to unwind

SOME OF THE HEALING MODALITIES OFFERED BY CINAMON KIMBROUGH, LAc, LMT

QIGONG AND ACUPRESSURE

- 5 element nurturing exercises for the abdomen.
- Aiding circulation, reducing digestive stagnation, improving lymph drainage, and alleviating anxiety.

CUSTOMIZED, COMMUNITY STYLE, NON-INVASIVE ACUPUNCTURE

- Traditionally practiced in a group setting
- Chairs or lounges set up in a relaxing atmosphere
- Patients treated approximately six feet apart

MINI FRIEND AND FAMILY HOW-TO WORKSHOPS: ASIAN MEDICINE HOME CARE REMEDIES TO REDUCE SYMPTOMS

E Stim acupoints, Gua sha, Foot Soaks, Light Cupping, Blended Acupressure Meridian massage and Craniosacral, Steam Hydrotherapy, Ear seeds/Crystals, Meridian movement

REIKI HEALING SESSIONS OFFERED BY HEALING WITH HANNAH

Attendees experienced calming and restorative Reiki sessions, providing deep relaxation and energy alignment. This wellness-focused approach ensured that all attendees had access to supportive healing modalities throughout the event.

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YOUNG ADULTS & YOUTH PROGRAM TRACK



THE YOUNG ADULTS & YOUTH PROGRAM AT THE 3RD PATIENT EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT AND 2ND GASTRIC CANCER ADVOCACY DAY SUCCESSFULLY ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED THE NEXT GENERATION OF ADVOCATES. THIS PROGRAM PROVIDED A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG ATTENDEES TO CONNECT, LEARN, AND TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN ADVOCACY WHILE PARTICIPATING IN SPECIALIZED ACTIVITIES TAILORED TO THEIR PERSPECTIVES.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Capitol Tour & Civic Engagement**
Participants embarked on an educational tour of Capitol Hill, gaining insights into the legislative process and the role of advocacy in healthcare policy.
- **Community & Leadership Development**
Through interactive sessions, young attendees explored ways to amplify their voices, share their stories, and contribute to the stomach cancer community.

• Independent & Collaborative Projects

A platform was provided for young advocates to work on initiatives that aligned with their interests and the mission of **Hope for Stomach Cancer**.

• Livestreamed Special Session: Voices of the Next Generation

On Day 3 from 11:30am - 12:30pm, Lauren Kim and Daniel Kim led an impactful presentation highlighting the perspectives and experiences of young advocates in the stomach cancer community. This session featured personal stories, interactive discussions, and opportunities to share

advocacy ideas, inspiring and equipping the next generation with tools to make a difference.

Lauren Kim, an 18-year-old advocate, led the **Young Adults & Youth Program**, guiding participants through activities and discussions that fostered empowerment and engagement. Minors participated under the supervision of their parents, ensuring a safe and meaningful experience.

This initiative successfully cultivated the next generation of leaders in stomach cancer advocacy, equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to drive change for the future.

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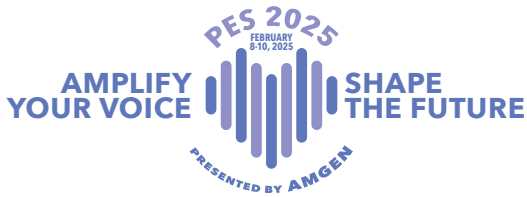
TAKEDA



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MEET OUR YOUTH





PES PARTICIPANT STATS

140 IN-PERSON, REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS

(MANY MORE JOINED IN ON THE DAY OF!)

DAY 1

321+
LIVE PARTICIPANTS +VIDEO VIEWS

6,009+
VIDEO IMPRESSIONS



[YOUTU.BE/SJ48TROHVJS](https://youtu.be/SJ48TROHVJS)



Your video
Day 1 - 3rd Patient Empowerment S...

Overview	Reach	Engagement	Audience	Revenue
	Impressions 6.0K		Impressions click-through rate 2.5%	Views 321

DAY 1 RECAP VIDEO:

Patient Empowerment Summit 2025 - Inspiring Change & Advocacy



[YOUTUBE.COM/
WATCH?V=HRKJ62BM46E](https://youtube.com/watch?v=HRKJ62BM46E)

Impressions:
1,214,817
Views:
28,176

Subscribers:
28,176
New Subscribers:
4,064

This effort ensures that the insights, discussions, and stories shared during the Patient Empowerment Summit and Advocacy Day remain accessible to a wider audience, allowing for continued learning and advocacy.



PARTICIPANT STATS

DAY 2

272+

LIVE PARTICIPANTS
+VIDEO VIEWS

6,253+

VIDEO IMPRESSIONS



[YOUTU.BE/XIXTZSG0YMG](https://youtu.be/XIXTZSG0YMG)

Overview	Reach	Engagement	Audience	Revenue
	Impressions 6.3K		Impressions click-through rate 2.3%	Views 272

DAY 3

229+

LIVE PARTICIPANTS
+VIDEO VIEWS

6,815+

VIDEO IMPRESSIONS



[YOUTU.BE/QKUNPIHWCW](https://youtu.be/QKUNPIHWCW)

Overview	Reach	Engagement	Audience	Revenue
	Impressions 6.8K		Impressions click-through rate 1.5%	Views 229

STREAMING FOOTAGE & VIDEO RECAP:

To enhance accessibility and navigation, we created copies of the **event's streaming footage**, removing breaks, adding disclaimers, including tags, and inserting timestamps. The edited versions are now available on YouTube:



DAY 1: [YOUTU.BE/HQLH3GBDQW4](https://youtu.be/HQLH3GBDQW4)

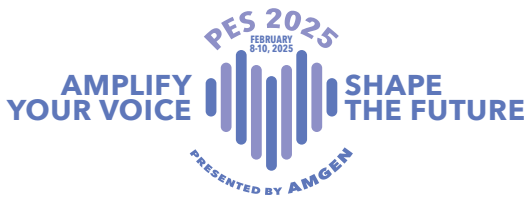


DAY 2: [YOUTU.BE/-XC4D6WKS PM](https://youtu.be/-XC4D6WKS PM)



DAY 3: [YOUTU.BE/93XW0NE2QF0](https://youtu.be/93XW0NE2QF0)

VIDEO IMPRESSIONS AND VIEWS CONTINUE TO GROW!

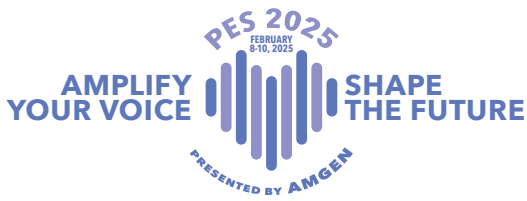


TESTIMONIALS



I appreciated that classes, the updates, the shares stories and the authenticity of Aki and her team who worked furiously to make all smooth as silk! I love the pathophysiology of the newest modalities in medicine and research. I especially enjoyed listening to the Research Doctors and how they are improving and impacting new research for cures for cancers. Thank you that the FOOD WAS AWESOME! And I didn't feel rushed at all to eat. Thank you for the opportunity to take food in with our sessions. I don't know about others but it takes me 1.5-2 hours to eat. " I appreciate the opportunity to go to Capitol Hill and meet with the Legislators.. or consults and aides. I especially appreciated how warm and welcoming the Capitol really is. Pleasantly surprised! The WELLNESS ROOMS were a calming refreshing time and winding down time.

-- Doreen



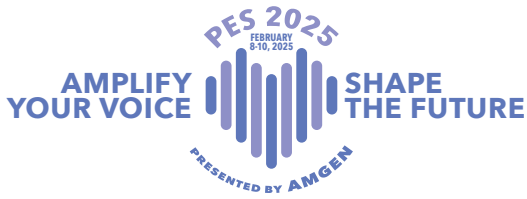
TESTIMONIALS



Hope for Stomach Cancer empowerment summit and Advocacy is a movement unlike the other that I have experienced since it focused on patients, caregivers, survivors in a more personalized way. Perhaps it is the size of it that creates the warmth experienced by all. The content of the summit is valuable to everyone because it touches on aspects not usually spoken about. The Man Up To Cancer was a nice addition. I had a profound experience with my Reiki session with Hannah at the Wellness Program. Advocating with our senators and reps for Early Detection and Screening was a concerted effort, and we all came out of Capitol Hill with renewed energy and vigor to pursue more without having to ask money from Congress. Times are different in our nation's capital where federal funding is threatened on all sides. With Aki Smith at the helm, we win continue to march behind the banner of Hope for Stomach Cancer.

-- Cecille





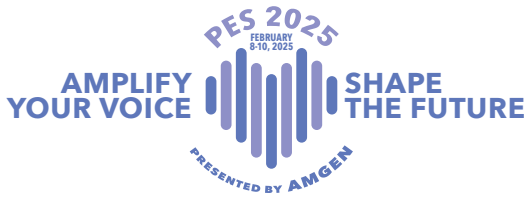
TESTIMONIALS



This event was life changing for me. Even though it was not my first summit, I learned gained so much knowledge of new/potential treatments. This was balanced with meeting great people with a sense of community. Sharing stories and experiences gives hope. Advocacy day truly felt like we are making a difference.

-- Javier





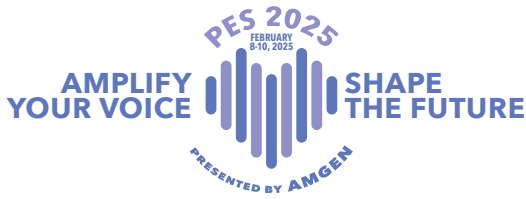
TESTIMONIALS



Thank you so much for all that you all do with sharing all your knowledge with us in the stomach cancer world. It really means so much to so many! Thank you for all your time and dedication to this organization! Truly heartfelt and enjoyed every minute of this event.

-- Priscilla





TESTIMONIALS

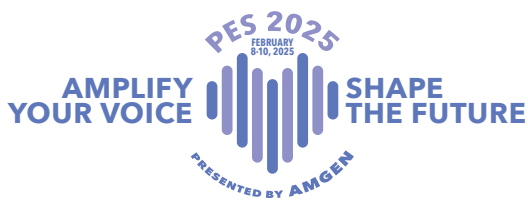


The Hope for Stomach Cancer Summit was an incredible event. I took away very valuable insights on the biology of this disease, learned about treatments, and got new research updates from top doctors and pharmaceutical companies. The networking opportunities with advocates and fellow patients provided me with inspiration to keep sharing my story and creating broader awareness so we can continue pushing for early detection and funding. Our visit to Capitol Hill and lobbying efforts with senators was so empowering.

Events such as this are crucial to advancing stomach cancer treatments and supporting patients with meaningful connections and resources.

Thank you for your dedication, you are making a difference in the lives of those affected by cancer.

-- Betza



MEMORIES OF HOPE





FOCUS GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

This year, we hosted two focus groups, providing an invaluable opportunity for patients and caregivers to share their experiences, facilitate collaboration, and inform decision-making in understanding the unmet needs of gastric cancer patients.

Focus Group Highlights:

- **In-depth insights:** Participants will share qualitative data, offering nuanced perspectives that might not emerge from surveys or quantitative research.
- **Diverse perspectives:** A range of experiences and attitudes will be explored, ensuring overlooked concerns are addressed.
- **Exploration of complex topics:** Sensitive and challenging discussions will be navigated in an open and supportive environment.
- **Interactive environment:** A dynamic exchange of ideas will foster deeper exploration and the generation of new insights.
- **Immediate feedback:** Real-time reflections on challenges and proposed solutions will support iterative refinement.
- **Participant engagement:** Active discussions will encourage candid responses, leading to richer insights.
- **Flexibility:** The format allows for tailored discussions, adapting as needed to ensure meaningful dialogue.

THANK YOU TO ALL PARTICIPANTS FOR CONTRIBUTING TO THIS CRITICAL DISCUSSION!

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FOCUS GROUP MEMORIES

FOCUS GROUP 1

February 10 | 9:30AM - 11:30 AM

10 patients, 3 caregivers



FOCUS GROUP 2

February 10 | 9:30AM - 11 AM

9 patients, 2 caregivers



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PREVENT. TREAT. LIVE.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

ALL GATHERINGS WERE LOCATED IN THE 1ST FLOOR PRESIDENTIAL HALLWAY.
HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS WERE LIVESTREAMED.

TIME	ROOM	ACTIVITY
4pm – 5pm	Foyer	Registration and Check-in
5pm – 5:10pm	Empowerment Theater	Welcome and Opening Remarks: Amplify Your Voice, Shape the Future
5:10pm – 6:40pm	Empowerment Theater	Keynote Presentation: New Directions in Gastric Cancer Prevention and Recurrence Monitoring Speaker: Dr. Andrew Chan, Gastrointestinal Oncologist
5:45pm – 6:15pm	Empowerment Theater	Keynote Presentation: Tips for Avoiding Financial Toxicity Speaker: Joanna Fawzy Doran, Esq., CEO, Triage Cancer®
6:15pm – 8pm	Reception Hall	Building Connections: Dinner and Networking MC: Jami Becker, Stomach Cancer Advocate and Survivor
8pm – 9pm	Empowerment Theater	Malignant Humor Comedy Session: Finding Light in the Darkness: A Comedy Night with Jami Becker Speakers: Jami Becker, Patient and Advocate and Stephanie Kline, US Marine Corps Veteran
9pm – 10pm	Wellness Room	Relaxation and Healing: Sound Bath & Yoga Nidra Facilitator: Healing with Hannah



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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

TIME	ROOM	ACTIVITY
8am – 10am	Reception Hall	Registration, Breakfast Buffet, and Networking
10am – 11am	Wellness Room	Optional Activity! Start the Day Right: Wellness and Yoga Facilitator: Healing with Hannah (Yoga Foundations)
11am – 1pm	Reception Hall	The buffet will be open from 11AM - 1PM. Participants may eat in the meal room or bring their meal to the Empowerment Theater during the session.
11am – 11:30am	Empowerment Theater	Educational Presentation: Addressing the Needs of Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Cancer Patients Join Oncology Social Worker Joslyn Trovati for an in-depth discussion on the unique challenges faced by adolescent and young adult (AYA) cancer patients. This session will explore emotional, financial, and social barriers, as well as strategies for providing holistic support. Speaker: Joslyn Trovati, MSW, LICSW, OSW-C
11:30am – 12:45pm	Meal Room	Moderated Town Hall Discussion & Buffet Lunch: Navigating the Cancer Journey Together Immediately following her presentation, Joslyn will facilitate a town hall-style discussion during lunch, encouraging patients and caregivers to share their experiences. This open and supportive conversation will cover AYA-specific challenges, survivorship, and advocacy, fostering connection and empowerment within the community. Moderator: Joslyn Trovati, MSW, LICSW, OSW-C
1pm – 1:30pm	Empowerment Theater	Expert Presentation: Moving the Needle on Upper GI Cancer Therapeutics An overview of innovative initiatives in the field, highlighting advancements in CAR T, antibody-drug conjugates, radio theranostics, and more, targeted to a lay audience. Speaker: Sandra Ryeom, Ph.D.
1:30pm – 3pm	Empowerment Theater	Interactive Nutrition and Cooking Demonstration. Nourishing Hope: Practical Nutrition Strategies for Gastric Cancer Speakers: Caitlin Benda, MBA, MS, RD, CSO, LDN Oncology Dietitian Clinical Specialist II and Molly Seys, RD, CSO, CNSC, Oncology Dietitian Clinical Specialist II

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9 (CONTINUED)

TIME	ROOM	ACTIVITY
3pm – 3:30pm	Foyer	Break
3:30m – 4pm	Empowerment Theater	Man Up to Cancer: Fostering Strength Through Shared Stories Speaker: Joe Bullock, Representing <i>Man Up to Cancer</i>
4pm – 5:30pm	Empowerment Theater	Playback Theater Session Your Story Matters: A Theatrical Bonding Experience Facilitator: Erin Whalen, Compassionate Coaching
5:30pm – 6pm	Foyer	Break
6pm – 9pm	Tower	Dinner and Evening Festivities Celebration Dinner: Football Party



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MONDAY, FEB 10 | EDUCATIONAL DAY

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS WERE LIVESTREAMED.

TIME	ROOM	ACTIVITY
8am – 10am	Reception Hall	Registration, Breakfast Buffet, and Networking
9:30am – 11:30am	Foyer	Focus Groups (By invitation only)
11am – 1pm	Foyer	The buffet will be open from 11AM - 1PM. Participants may take their meals from the buffet and bring them to the Reception Hall during the session.
11am – 1pm	Reception Hall	Opening Session and Lunch Buffet Patient Panel Discussion: Welcome remarks, patient stories, and a moderated panel discussion
11:30am – 12:30pm	Empowerment Theater	Special Session: Voices of the Next Generation. This session, led by Lauren Kim and Daniel Kim , will highlight the perspectives and experiences of young advocates in the stomach cancer community. Featuring personal stories, interactive discussions, and opportunities to share advocacy ideas, this session will inspire and equip the next generation with tools to make a difference. Other youth advocates are also invited to share their experiences and insights during this discussion.
<p>Keynote Educational Session: Bridging the Gap: Advancing Equity and Innovation in Stomach Cancer Care Moderator: Dr. Nataliya Uboha, MD, PhD <i>Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health</i> 10 min Q+A after each speaker</p>		
1pm – 1:30pm	Empowerment Theater	Transforming Care: Emerging Therapies and Challenges in Gastric Cancer. Insights into cutting-edge therapies, including immunotherapy, precision medicine, and clinical trial advancements. Speaker: Dr. Nataliya Uboha

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MONDAY, FEB 10 | EDUCATIONAL DAY (CONTINUED)

TIME	ROOM	ACTIVITY
1:30pm - 2pm	Empowerment Theater	Multidisciplinary and Surgical Strategies to Optimize Patient Outcomes: This session will explore the role of multidisciplinary teams in addressing disparities and improving outcomes in gastric cancer care, with a special focus on surgical strategies and advancements in minimally invasive procedures. Speaker: Dr. Yanghee Woo
2pm - 2:30pm	Empowerment Theater	Precision Oncology and Future Directions: Integrating Biomarkers, Liquid Biopsies, Empowerment, and Multidisciplinary Care in GI Cancers. A discussion on predictive and prognostic genomic biomarkers, ctDNA applications, and advances in multidisciplinary approaches to gastric cancer care. Speaker: Dr. Reetu Mukherji, Associate Professor of Medicine, Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center.
2:30pm - 3pm	Empowerment Theater	Panel Discussion: Equity and Collaboration in Gastric Cancer Care: Pathways to Progress Moderator: Dr. Nataliya Uboha Panelists: Dr. Kumar, Dr. Woo, Dr. Mukherji, and Dr. Martin Taylor Format: Moderated discussion and audience Q&A.
3pm - 3:30pm	Foyer	Break
3:30pm - 3:50pm	Empowerment Theater	HER2 and Beyond: New Approaches to the Management of Challenges Facing Genomic- and Biomarker-Informed Stomach Cancer Therapy Using a HER2 targeted therapy clinical vignette as a starting point, we will focus on possible options to prevent or manage targeted therapy resistance and new strategies to address residual, recurrent, and metastatic disease. Speaker: John J. Woog, MD, BCPA Professor Emeritus, Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, and Patient Advocate
3:50pm - 4:10 pm	Empowerment Theater	Diagnostics for Tomorrow: Unlocking the Potential of Early Detection, Molecular Residual Disease Surveillance, and Genomics-Directed Therapy This presentation will highlight the potential for innovative assays, including Cologuard Plus™, Cancerguard™, OncoExtra™ and Oncodetect™, from Exact Sciences, an industry leader in cancer diagnostics, to transform early diagnosis of stomach cancer and improve clinical outcomes for individuals with advanced, recurrent, or metastatic disease. Speaker: Michelle Beidelschies, Ph.D, Director, Medical Affairs, Multi-Cancer Early Detection

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MONDAY, FEB 10 | EDUCATIONAL DAY (CONTINUED)

TIME	ROOM	ACTIVITY
4:10pm - 4:40pm	Empowerment Theater	Advancing Gastric Cancer Research: From Biomarkers to Future Therapeutics. This session will explore the evolving landscape of stomach cancer research, focusing on diagnostic innovations, emerging biomarker-driven approaches, and the development of novel therapies. Dr. Taylor will discuss current and upcoming clinical trials, including the role of LINE-1 transposons in cancer detection and potential therapeutic targets. He will also provide insights into ongoing efforts to improve treatment strategies and precision medicine for gastric cancer patients. Speaker: Dr. Martin Taylor, Assistant Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, Brown University, Legorreta Cancer Center, and Brown Center on the Biology of Aging
4:40pm - 5:10pm	Empowerment Theater	Summary Panel Discussion Format: Key takeaways, audience Q&A, and actionable next steps for gastric cancer advocacy and care. Facilitator: Dr. Yanghee Woo
5:10pm - 5:25pm	Empowerment Theater	The Impact of Federal Policy on Access to Rare Disease Treatments. This session will highlight how federal policies, including the ORPHAN Cures Act, influence access to life-saving therapies for rare diseases and cancers. Shannon will discuss key policy developments, barriers to innovation, and what patients and advocates need to know to drive change. Speaker: Shannon Rohn Deere, Director, Leavitt Partners, Washington, D.C.
5:25pm - 5:30pm	Empowerment Theater	Closing Remarks

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BE A VOICE OF HOPE

MONDAY, FEB 10 | ADVOCACY TRAINING & WORKING DINNER

TIME	ROOM	ACTIVITY
6:15pm - 7pm	Tower	<p>From Story to Influence: Navigating Capitol Hill and Becoming a Trusted Voice for Stomach Cancer Advocacy. Tom Donnelly will provide a comprehensive guide on how advocates can effectively engage policymakers and build lasting influence. Key discussion points will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the Landscape - Navigating Capitol Hill and the policymaking process • Effective Meetings - Strategies for making the most out of legislative meetings • The Power of Storytelling - How to craft impactful narratives that resonate with policymakers • Sustaining Engagement - Keeping momentum after the initial meeting • Advocacy Beyond the Hill - Extending advocacy efforts to create long-term change <p>Speaker: Tom Donnelly, Senior Director, Grassroots Program Development, American Farm Bureau Federation</p>
7:10pm - 7:30pm	Tower	<p>Navigating Policy and Advocacy: Equipping Patients for Effective Capitol Hill Meetings. This interactive session will provide an in-depth understanding of key policy priorities, including the ORPHAN Cures Act and other legislative efforts impacting stomach cancer and rare disease treatments. Shannon will guide attendees through effective advocacy strategies, best practices for engaging with legislators, and how to craft impactful personal stories. Featured Speaker: Shannon Rohn Deere, Director, Leavitt Partners, Washington, D.C.</p>
7:30pm - 10pm	Tower	<p>A hands-on session led by expert panelists, providing practical guidance and training to enhance advocacy skills in preparation for Capitol Hill meetings.</p>

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GASTRIC CANCER ADVOCACY DAY RECAP

ADVOCACY DAY WAS DESIGNED TO ELEVATE THE VOICES OF PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS, EMPOWERING THEM TO ADVOCATE EFFECTIVELY.

Following the Patient Empowerment Summit, Hope for Stomach Cancer hosted an advocacy training session at 6 PM on February 10, 2025, followed by the 2nd Gastric Cancer Advocacy Day on February 11, 2025.

Hope for Stomach Cancer believes that advocacy is essential in bringing attention to health disparities and inequities. It plays a pivotal role in calling for policies that prioritize health equity and address the root causes of cancer disparities. Through advocacy, we pushed for increased awareness, funding, research, and support for those impacted by stomach cancer.

The heart of this event was to amplify the voices of gastric cancer patients and caregivers, ensuring they were heard and valued within the legislative system.

During Gastric Cancer Advocacy Day, we empowered patients by providing them with the tools and confidence to advocate for change in their own communities.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING ACTION WITH HOPE!

Your participation and dedication to advocacy continue to drive meaningful progress in the fight against stomach cancer. Together, we are making a lasting impact.

Your participation and dedication to advocacy continue to drive meaningful progress in the fight against stomach cancer. Together, we are making a lasting impact.



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ADVOCACY DAY RECAP

* At 6 PM, we held an **ADVOCACY TRAINING & WORKING DINNER**, an interactive session open to all attendees and sponsors, including those who did not plan to participate in Capitol Hill meetings the following day.

The session focused on the significance of patient and caregiver voices in advocacy, covering key topics such as:

- **Understanding stomach cancer disparities** and their impact on patients and caregivers.
- **Addressing the fight for health equity** and strategies to drive meaningful change.
- **Using effective terminology** to share personal stories and advocate for policy changes.

This engaging discussion equipped participants with the tools and confidence needed to advocate for policy improvements and better outcomes for the stomach cancer community.

* **THE 2ND GASTRIC CANCER ADVOCACY DAY**, hosted by **HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER**, took place under unpredictable circumstances due to a winter storm impacting Washington, D.C. With **3-5 INCHES OF SNOW IN THE FORECAST**, the **OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCED AN EARLY CLOSURE AT 2PM EST**, and airlines began canceling or rebooking flights, affecting advocates traveling to the event. Despite these challenges, the stomach cancer community showed resilience, ensuring that their voices were still heard on Capitol Hill.

* **THE POWER OF ADVOCACY**
Following the **Patient Empowerment Summit**, Hope for Stomach Cancer hosted an **advocacy training session at 6pm on February 10, 2025**, equipping participants with the tools to engage lawmakers effectively. Advocacy Day is **designed to elevate the voices of patients and caregivers**, ensuring that their experiences shape legislative priorities.

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ADVOCACY DAY RECAP

* WHY ADVOCACY MATTERS

Hope for Stomach Cancer firmly believes that advocacy is essential in:

- Bringing attention to health disparities and inequities.
- Calling for policies that prioritize health equity and access to care.
- Pushing for increased awareness, funding, and research.
- Supporting those impacted by stomach cancer.

At the heart of Advocacy Day is a mission to **amplify the voices of gastric cancer patients and caregivers**, ensuring they are not only heard but valued in the legislative process. By **equipping advocates with the tools to engage lawmakers**, this event empowers them to drive meaningful change in their own communities.

* KEY ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

One of the most urgent priorities during this year's Advocacy Day was the **re-introduction of the Stomach Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Act**. This critical legislation aims to:

- **Increase access to screening and early detection programs** to improve survival rates.
- **Expand research funding** to advance new treatment options and improve outcomes.
- **Address health disparities** to ensure equitable access to care, particularly for underserved communities.

* LOOKING AHEAD

Despite unexpected obstacles, advocates made a powerful impact by meeting with congressional offices and sharing their stories. The fight for stomach cancer awareness and policy change continues, and Hope for Stomach Cancer remains committed to ensuring that this disease receives the attention and action it deserves.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING ACTION WITH HOPE!

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ADVOCACY DAY RECAP

75

IN-PERSON,
ADVOCACY DAY
PARTICIPANTS!

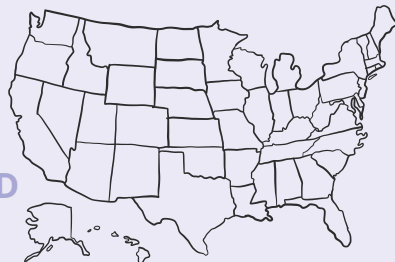
MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

40
CONGRESSIONAL
MEETINGS



HOPE ADVOCATES ON CAPITAL HILL

17
STATES
REPRESENTED



4 HIGH-LEVEL,
SCHEDULED MEETINGS

3 MEMBER-LEVEL
MEET-AND-GREETS

*PLUS SEVERAL IMPROMPTU
CONVERSATIONS WITH CONGRESSIONAL
REPRESENTATIVES WHO WERE VERY
INTERESTED IN OUR ASK FOR ACTION!

40 CONFIRMED MEETINGS
78% MEETINGS CONFIRMED

13 SENATE MEETINGS
27 HOUSE MEETINGS
20 DEMOCRAT OFFICES
20 REPUBLICAN OFFICES

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BE A VOICE OF HOPE

MONDAY, FEB 11 | GASTRIC CANCER ADVOCACY DAY

TIME	ACTIVITY
6am – 8am	Breakfast and last minute Preparations in the Reception Hall
8am – 8:15am	Meet at the DoubleTree by Hilton Washington DC - Crystal City Lobby to board the Shuttle to Capitol Hill
8:30am - 9:15am	Group Pictures on Capitol Hill
9:30am - 11:30am	Meetings with House of Representatives
1:30pm - 3:30pm	Meetings with Senate
3:30pm	Shuttle Returns to the DoubleTree by Hilton Washington D.C., Crystal City



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✦ REPRESENTATIVE JUDY CHU (D-CA-28)



✦ REPRESENTATIVE BRIAN FITZPATRICK (R-PA-1)



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*** REPRESENTATIVE
MIKE
THOMPSON
(D-CA-4)**



*** REPRESENTATIVE
ZACHARY
NUNN
(R-IA-3)**



*** REPRESENTATIVE
MARK ALFORD
(R-MO-4)**



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 CONGRESSMAN
JOE WILSON
(R-SC)



 CONGRESSMAN
LLOYD SMUCKER
(R-PA-11)



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Tuesday, Feb 11 | 12pm - 1pm
Meeting Room HC-5
U.S. Capitol Building

Welcome!

CONGRESSIONAL LUNCH BRIEFING ON STOMACH CANCER

Stomach Cancer remains a major public health issue, with nearly 27,000 new cases in the United States in 2024. The absence of early detection, public awareness, and structured screening systems contributes to late-stage diagnosis and poor outcomes.

Thank you for attending.

More information and resources at StoCan.org

This event has been structured to comply with Senate and House Ethics Rules



ADVOCACY DAY RECAP

* HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER'S CONGRESSIONAL LUNCH BRIEFING ON STOMACH CANCER

On February 11, 2025, at Capitol Hill, Hope for Stomach Cancer brought together lawmakers, advocates, and patients to raise awareness about the urgent need for early detection, research funding, and equitable access to treatment.



* OPENING REMARKS

The briefing began with an introduction from **Aki Smith**, founder of Hope for Stomach Cancer. She shared her personal connection to the cause and emphasized the critical gaps in early detection and treatment access for stomach cancer patients.



* CONGRESSIONAL REMARKS

Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC) delivered remarks at 12:10PM, highlighting the importance of legislative efforts to support stomach cancer research and improve patient outcomes.



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PRESENTATION ON STOMACH CANCER TRENDS

June Sweat provided an overview of current stomach cancer trends, discussing key statistics, disparities in care, and the challenges patients face due to late-stage diagnoses and limited screening options.



PATIENT PERSPECTIVES MODERATED BY ALICIA AGUIRRE

Alicia Aguirre, a founding board member of Hope for Stomach Cancer, moderated a panel featuring three patient advocates who shared their personal experiences with stomach cancer:

- **Jamaal Millisock** shared his journey navigating a stomach cancer diagnosis and the barriers he faced in accessing treatment.
- **Uroosa Khalid** spoke about the emotional and financial toll of stomach cancer, as well as the need for stronger support systems for patients and caregivers.
- **Brittany Defenderfer** highlighted the importance of early detection and patient advocacy in ensuring better outcomes.



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* KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Stomach cancer remains one of the deadliest and most underfunded cancers in the U.S.
- Late-stage diagnoses are common due to the lack of standardized early screening programs.
- Disparities in access to care continue to impact minority and rural communities disproportionately.
- Patient advocacy is critical in driving policy changes that promote early detection and expanded treatment options.

This briefing provided an essential platform for patients and advocates to share their stories, educate policymakers, and push for meaningful legislative action to address the growing burden of stomach cancer.



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STOMACH CANCER PREVENTION AND EARLY DETECTION ACT

(PENDING REINTRODUCTION IN THE 119TH CONGRESS)



POSITION

We strongly support the **reintroduction** of the **Stomach Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Act** in the **119th Congress** and urge all members of Congress to cosponsor this crucial legislation.

This Act is essential in addressing significant **racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities** in stomach cancer outcomes by improving **early detection, screening access, and care coordination**.

BACKGROUND

Stomach cancer remains a **major public health crisis**, with **nearly 27,000 new cases** expected in the United States in **2025**. According to the latest **American Cancer Society (ACS) data**, **stomach cancer incidence is projected to rise by 13%**, making it one of the **fastest-growing cancer threats**.

The **deadliest cancers now account for 21% of all expected cancer diagnoses and 43% of all cancer-related deaths**, with stomach cancer among the **leading contributors**. Nearly **70% of patients diagnosed with one of the deadliest cancers will die within two years, and half will die within one year**—an alarming statistic that remains unchanged despite medical advancements.

Despite these grim figures, **there are no national screening guidelines for stomach cancer in the U.S.**, unlike in countries where early detection programs have significantly improved survival

rates. This lack of **early detection, public awareness, and structured screening systems leads to late-stage diagnoses and poor survival rates**, particularly among **racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic minorities**.

This bill aims to **establish national screening guidelines and expand access to care for high-risk communities**, ensuring that **patients are diagnosed earlier** and given a **better chance at survival**.

THE ASK

We urge Congress to **reintroduce and pass the Stomach Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Act** in the **119th Congress** to **address the growing burden of gastric cancer and eliminate racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities in detection and treatment**.

This legislation is critical to:

- Establishing national guidelines for early detection and screening
- Expanding access to screening and care, particularly for high-risk populations
- Improving survival rates through early diagnosis and intervention

With **stomach cancer cases projected to rise by 13%**, now is the time to act. We call on Congress to **support our patient advocate community** and ensure that all individuals—especially those at the highest risk—have access to **lifesaving early detection and treatment**.

CONGRESS MUST ACT NOW TO SAVE LIVES!

STOMACH CANCER PREVENTION AND EARLY DETECTION ACT

(PENDING REINTRODUCTION IN THE 119TH CONGRESS)



WHO WE ARE

We are a coalition of organizations and advocates, including the Stomach Cancer Task Force, the American Gastroenterological Association, and a wide array of medical professionals, researchers, and patient advocacy groups. Our mission is to reduce the incidence and mortality of stomach cancer through prevention, early detection, and equitable healthcare access.

ABOUT US

HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER is the nation's leading stomach cancer awareness and support organization. We are the bridge connecting stakeholders to improve stomach cancer outcomes through support, solutions, and synergy. HOPE participates on both national and international stages to advance research, advocate for improved access and care, and support patients and families with comprehensive programs and services. Our belief is that there is always hope.

WHAT WE DO

Advocacy: We advocate for policies and legislation that address stomach cancer disparities, health equity and promote early detection and prevention.

Education: We educate the public and healthcare providers on stomach cancer risk factors, symptoms, and the importance of early screening.

Support: We offer vital resources and support to patients, caregivers, and families, particularly those from underrepresented and low-to-middle-income communities.

Research: We support and advance research efforts aimed at improving stomach cancer outcomes, focusing on the needs of high-risk populations.

GASTRIC CANCER DISPARITY IN THE U.S.: A THREAT TO RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES BY THE STOMACH CANCER TASK FORCE

Gastric cancer has severe impacts on certain ethnicities and races, with the highest number of cases in the U.S. occurring among Asian and Hispanic Americans. The five-year survival rate across all stages remains dismally low at 33%. Despite these alarming statistics, there is no structured system to screen for gastric cancer in high-risk populations.

Disparities in Care: Racial, age, socioeconomic status, and geographic location all contribute to the disparities in stomach cancer outcomes. More than half of our patients come from underrepresented communities, many of whom are diagnosed at advanced stages. These patients depend on HOPE's programs and services to help them navigate the overwhelming obstacles of diagnosis, treatment, and support.

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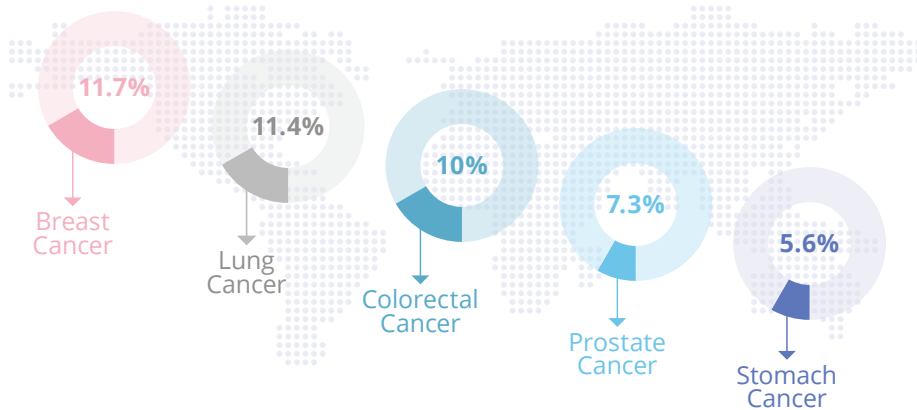
THERE IS
ALWAYS HOPE.



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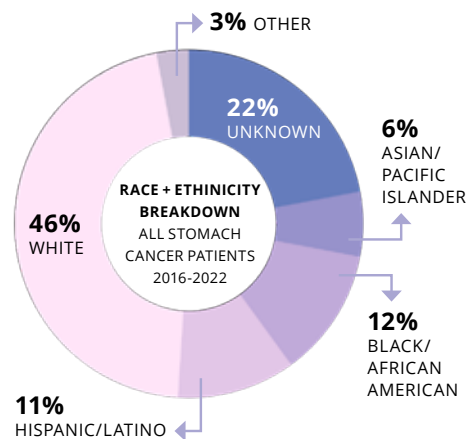


STOMACH CANCER IS THE DEADLIEST AND 5TH MOST DIAGNOSED CANCER WORLDWIDE.



DISPARITIES IN CARE: RACIAL, AGE, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, AND GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

More than half of our patients appear to be from underrepresented communities from low-to-middle income, and an alarming increase in the number of young adults (below age 40) who are seeking help from hope. These patients are in the advanced stages of their disease, and the outcome is bleak. These patients depend on HOPE's programs and services to help them navigate the overwhelming obstacles of diagnosis, treatment, and support.



HOPE'S ASK:

We urge Congress to **reintroduce and pass the Stomach Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Act** in the **119th Congress** to **address the growing burden of gastric cancer and eliminate racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities in detection and treatment.**

This legislation is critical to:

- Establishing national guidelines for early detection and screening
- Expanding access to screening and care, particularly for high-risk populations
- Improving survival rates through early diagnosis and intervention

With **stomach cancer cases projected to rise by 13%**, now is the time to act. Congress must support our **patient advocate community** and ensure that all individuals—especially those at the highest risk—have access to **lifesaving early detection and treatment.**

CONGRESS
MUST ACT NOW
TO SAVE LIVES!

CHART: PATIENT COUNTS WERE GENERATED BY LOOKING AT ALL PATIENTS AND PATIENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 40 WHO HAVE AT LEAST 2 STOMACH CANCER CLAIMS FROM 2016-2022. PATIENT COUNTS ARE NOT UNIQUE FOR THE HCO BREAKDOWN. A PATIENT COULD BE SEEN AT BOTH AN ACADEMIC AND COMMUNITY HCO WITHIN THE TIMEFRAME AND THUS COUNTED TOWARDS BOTH BUCKETS. DATA AVAILABILITY: THE DATA THAT SUPPORT THE FINDINGS WERE USED UNDER LICENSE FROM KOMOTO HEALTH. DUE TO DATA USE AGREEMENTS AND ITS PROPRIETARY NATURE, RESTRICTIONS APPLY REGARDING THE AVAILABILITY OF THE DATA. *SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL AGENCY FOR RESEARCH ON CANCER, 2020 AND AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY. CANCER FACTS & FIGURES 2022



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* HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER ATTENDED THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING HEARING ON MODERNIZING AMERICAN HEALTH CARE

On **February 11, 2025, from 3:20PM to 4PM**, select members of **Hope for Stomach Cancer** attended the **Ways and Means Committee Hearing on Modernizing American Health Care: Creating Healthy Options and Better Incentives** in the **U.S. House of Representatives**. As observers, we had the opportunity to gain valuable insight into the ongoing legislative discussions aimed at improving patient access, affordability, and the overall effectiveness of healthcare in the U.S.

The hearing addressed key issues related to modernizing healthcare policies, including incentives for better care options and strategies to make early detection and treatment more accessible. While we did not speak at the hearing, our presence underscored our commitment to staying informed and engaged in policy discussions that directly impact stomach cancer patients and their families.

As we continue our advocacy efforts, we remain dedicated to **ensuring that legislative solutions prioritize equitable access to early detection, innovative treatments, and comprehensive patient support**. We appreciate the opportunity to witness these critical discussions firsthand and look forward to further engagement with policymakers.



SCAN TO WATCH THE
HEARING OR VISIT:
[YOUTUBE.COM/LIVE/RyXEH7H06T4](https://www.youtube.com/live/RyXEH7H06T4)

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*** HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER'S IMPACT ON CAPITAL HILL IS GROWING!**



2023



2024

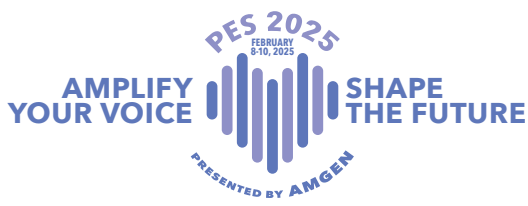


2025

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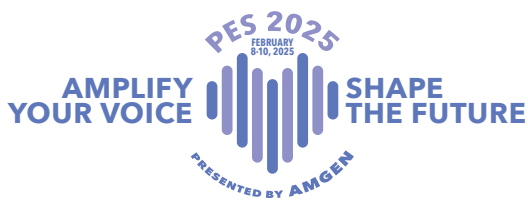


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MEMORIES OF HOPE





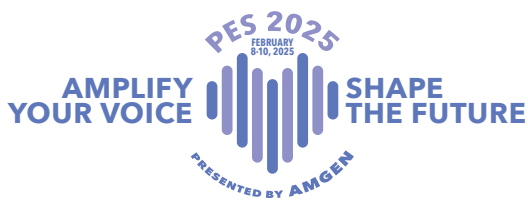
MEMORIES OF HOPE





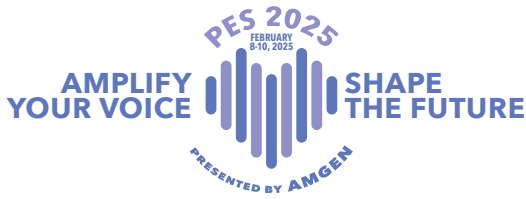
MEMORIES OF HOPE





MEMORIES OF HOPE





WE ARE THANKFUL!

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

We want to express our deepest gratitude to each and every one of you for your exceptional dedication and hard work during the Amplify Your Voice, Shape the Future Patient Empowerment Summit Washington D.C. and Gastric Cancer Advocacy Day. Your tireless efforts and unwavering commitment have been instrumental in making the event a resounding success. Thank you for your invaluable support and for being the heart and soul of our event!



Essie Graeber



Cecille Desimone



June Sweat



Irasema Chavez



Alicia Aguirre



Lauren Kim



Jerome White



Emi Lee



Aki Smith



Mahathi Vojjala



Uroosa Khalid



Frank Blandon



Jamaal Millisock

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPEAKERS!

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to our esteemed speakers who have graciously joined us to share their expertise. Your commitment to our cause and your willingness to empower patients with your knowledge is truly appreciated. Thank you for being an integral part of the Patient Empowerment Summit and Advocacy Day.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



THANK YOU FOR JOINING HOPE IN D.C.!



**FOLLOW HOPE FOR
SUPPORT, UPCOMING
EVENTS, STORIES, AND
MORE RESOURCES.**



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