

Everyone Deserves Equal Care: Kelly L. Michael, MBA, and Susan G. Komen Oregon and SW Washington, invite you to join the virtual MORE THAN PINK Walk on August 23 to fund health disparities projects for women of color.

When Kelly lost her close friend to breast cancer two years ago, she knew her fight against the disease was just beginning. It was this same friend who opened her eyes to the startling disparities women of color face when it comes to breast cancer care.

Currently, the breast cancer mortality rate is 40% higher in the U.S. for black women than white women; and, black women are often diagnosed with late-stage breast cancer when treatment options are limited, costly, and the prognosis is poor.



“Seeing someone that I cared about going through her initial diagnosis, countless treatments, and surgeries, up until she departed, was very hard for me,” Kelly said. “She instilled wisdom by introducing me and her sister circle to Susan G. Komen Oregon and SW Washington; it made me open my eyes to the importance of being aware of your breast health, getting screenings, and following up [with your healthcare provider].”

Susan G. Komen Oregon and SW Washington is determined to bridge these disparities and move beyond their successful Worship in Pink Program, (in which congregations of all faiths and community organizations provide education about breast health to increase the number of women receiving mammograms) to a 5 year project called the African American Initiative.

The MORE THAN PINK Walk is Komen Oregon and SW Washington’s largest fundraising event of the year and it is more important than ever before that the community rises up and registers to join in on this August 23 event. Though participants can’t gather in person this year, the dollars raised through this event are what fund these vitally important health disparities projects.

Breast cancer patients are reeling from the pandemic and financial needs have doubled; It is only with the help of the community that Komen can continue to exist and provide care to those who desperately need their services.

“My hope for the future of Komen is to inspire women of color who are underrepresented in our community to self-advocate; and that future is only possible if Komen continues to exist,” Kelly said. “It’s important for people to participate in the Walk

and help raise the much needed dollars that will aid Susan G. Komen in continuing to provide education, assistance, and resources about breast cancer.”

By joining the MORE THAN PINK Walk, you’re showing that you deeply care about the future of breast cancer patients all over Oregon and SW Washington. Register today at KomenOregon.org.

**Kelly Michael is the Medicaid and Charitable Health Program Manager at Kaiser Permanente Northwest, and she is a valued member of the Susan G. Komen Oregon and SW Washington Board of Directors, and African American Initiative Advisory Council.*