

Team Spirit

Rhonda Hicks - 47, Wichita, KS



Rhonda is a mother of two, who helps at-risk high school and first-generation college students navigate the education system. You might say she actively cheers them on. When Rhonda was diagnosed with a very aggressive type of breast cancer (triple negative) in 2013, she was referred to a breast care specialist right away. One of the staff members was Terri Leschuk, nurse navigator, who helps guide patients through their cancer journey. Rhonda and Terri made an immediate connection as they realized they had been cheer squad members together in high school! Both the breast care specialist and Terri provided Rhonda with the information she needed to map out her course of treatment.

“They were knowledgeable and caring and delivered the information I needed in a way that spoke to my learning style,” Rhonda shared. Rhonda chose aggressive treatment that included chemotherapy, surgery to remove both breasts, radiation and reconstruction. As challenging as this course of treatment was, she never lost confidence in the treatment plan that Terri helped her navigate.

Rhonda highlights three key tenets that helped her through her cancer journey:

- 1. Find a scripture you can stand on – “I will not relax my hold on you.” Hebrews 13:5*
- 2. Seek, rather than avoid, information so you can make the best decisions possible.*
- 3. Look for the treasure in your pain – reconnecting with Terri and developing new friendships with her care team.*

Rhonda appreciates the patient navigation services that she received, saying “I don’t want anyone to go down this road, but the phenomenal care I received from start to finish brings tears to my eyes.”