

## Kim Jones Story

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Cancer has been a part of my life since I was a little girl. All my grandparents passed away from some form of cancer and my dad's mother committed suicide while going through chemotherapy when I was 12.

In the late summer of 2011, while taking a shower, I discovered a lump in my left breast. I was a 40-year-old salon owner/manicurist without medical insurance. I thought I would be able my mammogram done during breast cancer awareness month (October) at my church with the mobile mammogram unit to see what was wrong. Let's fast forward to my scheduled mammogram appointment. We (my mom and myself) arrived at my church, they proceeded to do my clinical breast exam. Then I was told that I did not qualify for the mammogram appointment based on the fact that I had a lump, and they only did exams on women with healthy breast tissue. At that point I truly felt hopeless (I didn't even get a referral). I didn't know what I was going to do next. My mom turned to me and said, "we are going to get you a mammogram".

I had a gut feeling that something was definitely wrong. I finally received my mammogram, needle biopsy (aspirated biopsy) and tissue biopsy. January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012, I was diagnosed with HER2+ Stage 3 breast cancer. My treatment plan consisted of a lumpectomy, excisional lumpectomy, over 30 rounds of chemotherapy, 37 rounds of radiation and breast reconstruction with chest expanders and implants. I like to think of myself as the poster child for this horrible disease, who was able to do it all with NO insurance and still went to work. I have been blessed to turn my test into my testimony. In 2016, myself and 3 other breast cancer survivors and one non-survivor started "Sisters Living Beyond the Ribbon ", an African American breast cancer survivorship organization. Our goal is to help women of color in our community in their fight against breast cancer. To help them navigate through their cancer journey, this includes help with medical bills, transportation, if someone just needs to talk etc.

Thank you, God