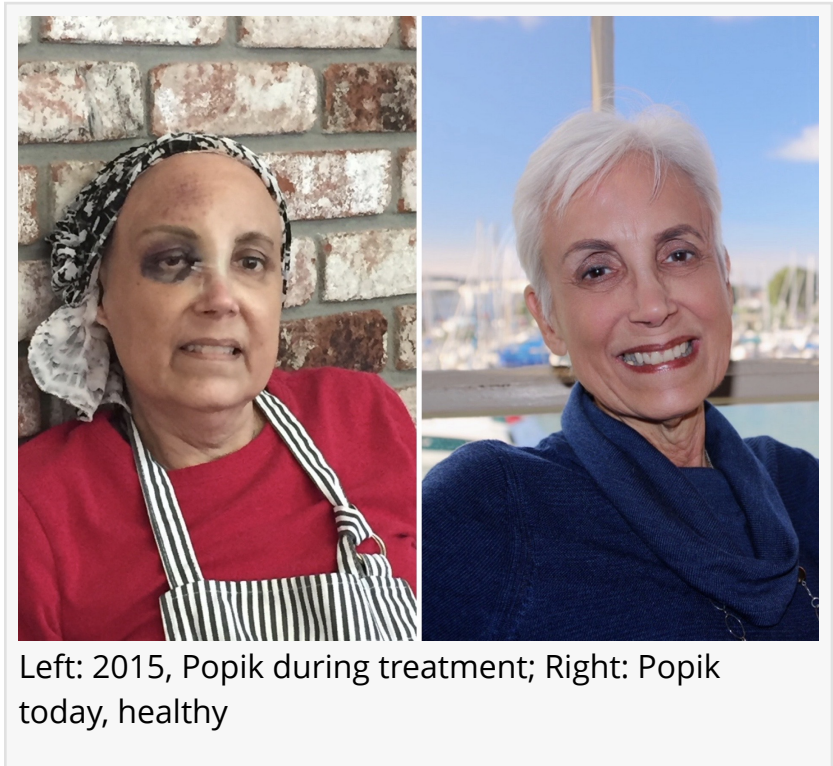


# Bay Area Woman Beats World's Deadliest Cancer and Raises Over Half a Million Dollars for Pancreatic Cancer Research

*Susan Popik, a 3-time cancer survivor, is Chair of the San Francisco Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN) Affiliate*

REDWOOD CITY, CA, UNITED STATES, April 13, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Diagnosed with Stage 3 pancreatic cancer in 2015, Susan Popik (73) was given a less than 5% chance of survival. Beating the nearly impossible odds, the Redwood City resident is now a rare survivor of exocrine pancreatic cancer – and surviving was just the beginning. Since her diagnosis, Popik has helped raise more than half a million dollars for pancreatic cancer research. Pancreatic cancer is the world's deadliest cancer and the third-



Left: 2015, Popik during treatment; Right: Popik today, healthy

leading cause of cancer-related death in the U.S. (and is on course to being the second leading cause by 2030). Popik, who has a BRCA2 genetic mutation, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer after overcoming two previous breast cancer diagnoses in 1990 and 2007.

After her diagnosis with pancreatic cancer, Popik was introduced to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN), the leading advocacy group funding life-saving research and providing direct patient services. Her two daughters signed their family up for the annual PurpleStride fundraising event in San Francisco, and they raised more than \$20,000 that first year. It lit a spark, and as Popik started to recover, she joined in the action.

Today, Popik volunteers as Chair of the San Francisco Affiliate of PanCAN, and [her daughters](#) serve as Marketing Communications Chair and PurpleStride team lead, respectively. In her first year at the helm, Popik's affiliate raised over a quarter-million dollars. This year, under her leadership, the SF affiliate has raised \$200,000 to date and hopes to reach its fundraising goal of \$230,000 before [PurpleStride 2022](#), taking place on April 30 at Oakland's Lake Merritt Amphitheater.



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*Susan Popik*

This year, Popik will participate in her eighth PurpleStride. So far in 2022, she has personally raised more than \$50,000, making her the third-highest fundraising individual in the country, from any affiliate, raising more money for the San Francisco PanCAN affiliate than any other individual in its history.

"I'm part of a very small group of fortunate people who survived this horrific disease," says Popik. "As a rare survivor, it feels like my responsibility to pay it forward for others who will be touched by pancreatic cancer. When I learned about PanCAN and its mission to improve patient

outcomes by attacking pancreatic cancer from every angle – not just their incredible patient services, but also research and advocacy – I knew that I needed to be involved."

The term "rare survivor" hardly covers it. After being declared cancer-free five years post-diagnosis, Popik recalls asking her oncologist how many of his Stage 3 pancreatic cancer patients were survivors. His response: "Now, I have one."

Since Popik's diagnosis, pancreatic cancer survival rates have increased from less than 5% to 11% thanks to advocacy and research from PanCAN and other groups. And PurpleStride, the leading fundraising activity for PanCAN, involves nearly 60 communities across the country with one goal: to join together to raise critical funding and awareness for the world's toughest cancer. Last month, PanCAN released a new [public service announcement](#) featuring beloved actor, writer, and producer Mindy Kaling, promoting PanCAN PurpleStride, for which Kaling serves as the official brand ambassador. After two years of virtual fundraising events due to the pandemic, PurpleStride SF 2022 will be back in person at Oakland's Lake Merritt Amphitheater on Saturday, April 30.

"It has been easy for me and my family to keep going back to PurpleStride," said Popik. "It's not only a great cause, but the event itself is both fun and inspiring. We're back in person this year at Lake Merritt, and I can't wait to gather with others for an undoubtedly lively event!"

Recently, pancreatic cancer has received more attention as it has taken the lives of several prominent individuals, including "JEOPARDY!" host Alex Trebek, actor Willie Garson, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and U.S. Representative John Lewis. Still, an increase in public awareness and research funding remains critical. There is a long way to go.

For more information on the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network and its urgent mission to save lives, visit [pancan.org](http://pancan.org) or follow PanCAN on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook!

Becca Chambers, Communications Chair

Pancreatic Cancer Action Network – San Francisco Affiliate

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