

Washington Football Team THINK-PINK® Celebration



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

All-Star Survivors Share Breast Cancer Stories

Tanya Snyder Reflects On 22 Years Of "THINK-PINK®"

Steven Sims' Lifelong Connection To Breast Cancer

Washington Football Team Hosts Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Game

By Logan Campbell

Twenty-two years ago, team co-owner and breast cancer survivor Tanya Snyder introduced the “THINK-PINK®” campaign to the NFL. It has been one of the organization’s flagship initiatives ever since.

On Oct. 4, the Washington Football Team celebrated its annual Breast Cancer Awareness game, presented by the Inova Schar Cancer Institute, against the Baltimore Ravens. This game marked the start of a month-long initiative by the Washington Football Charitable Foundation to bring awareness to breast cancer.

To start off the day, the team’s “GameDay Live” programming featured interviews with eight American Cancer Society/Inova survivors who have participated in previous years’ All-Star Survivor Celebrations. The program also included an interview with wide receiver Steven Sims Jr. about the impact breast cancer has had on him and his family.

Both of Sims’ grandmothers are breast cancer survivors, so he knows the importance of raising awareness. “It means a lot to me. Ever since high school, I’ve always gone all out in October with all the pink and stuff for every game, so shout out to them,” said Sims Jr.

Although fans weren’t able to watch the game in person, there was a twist to have a few “attend” the game.

Before kickoff, cardboard cutouts of Inova Schar Cancer Institute Survivors and clinical staff members were placed in the stands at FedExField alongside “Crucial Catch” and “THINK-PINK®” personalized cutouts purchased by Washington fans. All of these cutouts were placed in a way to show the important statistic that one in eight women is diagnosed with breast cancer during her lifetime.

“While we have a tough road ahead of us in eradicating this terrible disease,” Tanya said, “it is

important that we celebrate those who have fought for their lives and for their families.”

All proceeds from the cardboard cutouts were donated to the Inova Schar Cancer Institute, the Brem Foundation to Defeat Breast Cancer and the Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity (ZTA) Foundation, which was instrumental in launching the “THINK-PINK®” program.

“Each and every one of our fans who has taken part in these initiatives over the years has played a major part as we work towards accomplishing one of the most important human health goals in history,” Tanya said.





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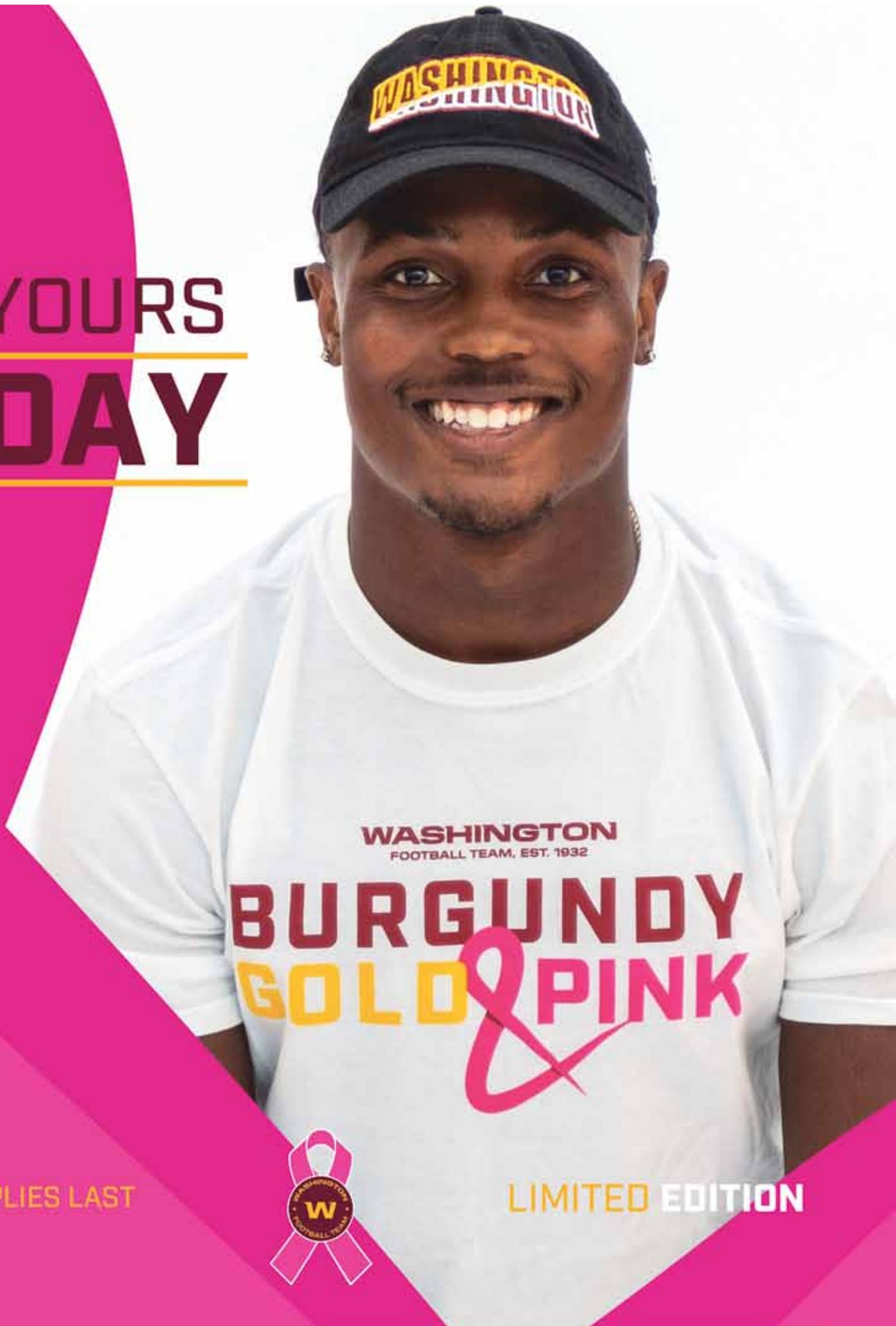
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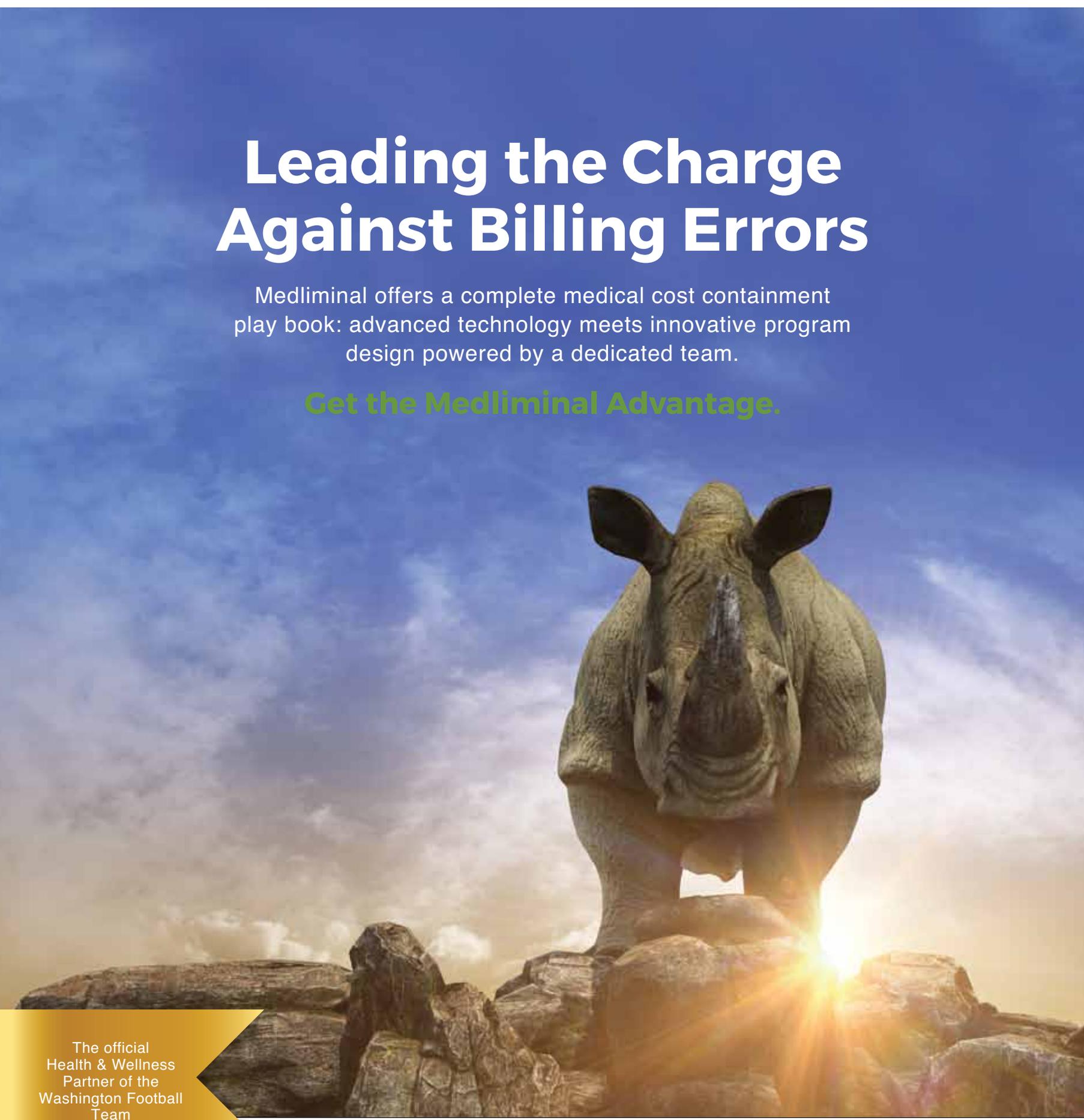
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WOW Hosts Virtual Family Workout

By Kyle Stackpole

On Oct. 24, Fuel Up to Play 60 and Women of Washington hosted a “Workout and Play Together WOW Families” -- a free event celebrating the networks that support cancer survivor resiliency. All donations went towards the organization’s “THINK PINK®” initiative to raise

awareness for breast cancer.

Washington Director of Marketing Platforms Stephanie Jokian opened the Zoom webinar by explaining the three breakout sessions.

One group worked with National Health and Fitness Expert Deanna Robinson, while the second honed its speed and agility with Kids

Elite and Washington alumnus Ken Harvey and the third practiced its soccer skills.

Between each 20-minute session, the 150 attendees regrouped for other activities like watching a video from offensive lineman Morgan Moses and asking Harvey questions about his 11-year NFL career.

The virtual workout was a part

of the Washington Football Team’s broader initiative to raise awareness for breast cancer. Fans can learn more about the franchise’s breast cancer awareness efforts by visiting the “THINK PINK®” section of the team’s website at <https://www.washingtonfootball.com/community/think-pink>.



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& GAMES

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All-Star Survivors Share Breast Cancer Stories

By Kyle Stackpole and Zach Selby

As a part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the Washington Football Team interviewed American Cancer Society/Inova survivors who participated in past years' All-Star Survivor Games and Celebrations. Here are their stories:

Amanda Halago-Davis

Oct. 14, 2018 was a special day for Amanda Halago-Davis, who was among those being honored at Washington's annual breast cancer awareness game at FedExField. It was about a week after finishing her treatment and exactly 20 years since she became a cheerleader for the franchise.

"The excitement of the game and being around all the football

players, it was basically like I was a little kid again."

Standing in the same tunnel she used to run out from, Halago-Davis got to know her fellow survivors. They told stories about their hardships and triumphs, sharing laughs and shedding tears. Halago-Davis even showed the women some of

"The bonding within that time frame, you would have thought we had known each other for 40 years. It was so great to experience that with other survivors."

her old moves.

It was a special day for all of them after what they had endured.

"The bonding within that time frame, you would have thought we had known each other for 40 years.

It was so great to experience that with other survivors."

Amy Larson

Amy Larson had a mammogram in December of 2016 and then immediately went on her annual family ski trip. And while she got a call from her doctor in Colorado, she

was not concerned because she has no family history of cancer.

"Well, I'm just going to put that away and we'll discuss it when we get back," Larson thought, "because I'm sure it's nothing."

But after a snow-delayed flight, Larson and her family rushed to the radiation lab; the word the doctors used to describe her breast cancer was "ominous."

"To say that that's the worst thing that happened in my life is an understatement. My two girls were in college at that time, and so the four of us just decided, it was on a Friday the 13th, that we were going to fight this and we would defeat it. We knew it would be a difficult battle, but we would prevail."

Larson beat breast cancer with the help of her family and friends, and now she wants to make sure anyone diagnosed has the best chance of beating it, too. Her first piece of advice: get your annual mammogram.

» see **SURVIVORS** | C9

SURVIVORS

From page C8

“This disease respects no boundaries at all. It can go at anyone at any age, mostly women, but males, too. So, you need to pay attention to your health.”

Karen Donohue

Karen Donohue was drained after just finishing treatment. She was relieved it was over, but she was worn out after going through rounds of chemotherapy and radiation. But then she got an opportunity to attend Washington’s Breast Cancer Awareness game and visit the Inova Sports Performance Center for the All-Star Survivor Celebration and was rejuvenated by the efforts the team took to make her feel special.

“Easily one of my favorite things I’ve ever done,” she said.

After eating a prepared breakfast, Donohue got a chance to meet

the other survivors at the stadium. Everyone was so happy to be there, she said, and there was a feeling of sisterhood all the women shared. She and the other women were then given pom poms and got to

earrings that day. It was truly a day of being made to feel like the most special person in the world, she said.

“It was just fantastic. I can’t tell you what that meant.”

**“It was an incredibly special afternoon”.
“To see the football players in their pink shoes, to see the fans in the stands with the Inova Schar pink towels, waving them and feeling that support was unforgettable.”**

run onto the field with the cheerleaders and wait for the team to come through the tunnel.

“It was awesome,” Donohue said, “Just all that noise, all that energy. And just to be down on the field, it was just incredible.”

Two weeks later, Donohue and the survivors were pampered for a day at the Park. Players gave tours of the facility, the women got makeovers, and she even made

Monica Stassen

When Monica Stassen first received her invitation to attend the Washington Football Team’s Breast Cancer Awareness game in 2017, she didn’t know if she could attend. She was just coming off a whole year of treatment, uncertainty and anxiety, and she had just finished her second surgery four days prior.

But this would be the first NFL game she and her 10-year-old son

had ever attended, and she would be honored alongside other survivors while seeing their hometown team play. It was too incredible of an opportunity to pass up. She had no idea the lasting impact it would have on either of them.

“It was an incredibly special afternoon,” she said. “To see the football players in their pink shoes, to see the fans in the stands with the Inova Schar pink towels, waving them and feeling that support was unforgettable.”

Stassen’s diagnosis and treatment were difficult on her son, and she thinks being able to see a celebration for breast cancer survivors and be part of an uplifting event provided hope for both of them.

“To see the smile on my son’s face, for him to see me participating in this great event with all these other survivors, it was unforgettable,” Stassen said. “Just a really wonderful moment.”





The “THINK-PINK®” fan outreach campaign is driven by hundreds of thousands of Zeta Tau Alpha volunteers who distribute pink ribbons at stadiums across the country. The photo is from 2019 at FedExField and shows the amazing volunteers who come out to support Tanya Snyder and the Washington Football Team.

Tanya Snyder Reflects On 22 Years Of “THINK-PINK®”

When Tanya Snyder and a small group of volunteers handed out the first 8,000 “THINK-PINK®” ribbons at a Washington Football Team home game in 1999, she had no idea it would be the start of a league-wide phenomenon.

Nearly ten million ribbons later, “THINK-PINK®” has become one of the organization’s flagship initiatives. As the Washington Football Team undergoes a rebrand, one aspect that will remain unchanged is its steadfast dedication to battling a deadly disease that will affect 1 in 8 women over the course of their lifetime.

“We’ve heard so many stories over the years and we certainly know that we’re making a difference, so it just makes me very proud,” Tanya told Senior Vice President of Media and Content Julie Donaldson.

Tanya was a young girl when she first heard about breast cancer. She remembers being “very, very shocked and scared,” and as someone who grew up with her mother and three sisters, the experience has had a lasting, memorable effect on her.

It was a cause that concerned Tanya, so she participated in charitable events she felt could make a difference throughout her life. Fast forward to when she and her husband, Dan Snyder, bought the team

in 1999, and the two saw an opportunity to establish their own charitable foundation to make a positive impact in the community by providing support and services to those who need it most. That is when the “THINK-PINK®” initiative was born.

Ten years later, the team’s efforts became more personal for Tanya. She found a lump two months after a mammogram in December of 2008. She assumed it was nothing, but it continued to bother her, so she scheduled an appointment with her doctor one month later.

“Please just tell me directly,” she said after going through a sonogram. “I want to know. I just want to make sure everything is okay.” That’s when the doctor told her she may have breast cancer. Hearing the news was as if someone “took a baseball bat, swung it and just hit me right in the head.”

“I didn’t even know what to say,” Tanya said. “I just expected to hear, ‘Everything is okay.’ I was always of the belief that I would never get cancer.”

Tanya then had a biopsy which confirmed she had ductal breast cancer. Fortunately, the cancer was still in Stage 1, and it was considered estrogen receptive, which was a positive indicator. She would still have

to undergo treatment though, so she did her research and looked at her options.

“I collected some great information and had the safest option for me since [the cancer] was detected so early,” Tanya said. “I was able to take care of it within a year and didn’t have to have radiation or [chemotherapy].”

In the years since her diagnosis and recovery, Tanya has heard the personal stories from women who want her advice. She takes that very seriously, she said, and is happy to support them. She also has a message for them: get regular checkups.

“If you find something from one October to the next, chances are you’re getting it really early,” she said. “When you get things early, you have a lot more choices and options for care to be able to take care of it.”

“THINK-PINK®” has spread far and wide across the NFL since Tanya started the tradition with her Zeta Tau Alpha sorority sisters. The Washington Football Team is partnered with the American Cancer Society, the Brim Foundation and the Zeta Foundation. Since 2009, the NFL has raised \$22 million that goes directly to communities and has helped conduct more than 200,000 cancer screenings.

And Washington’s players have also shown they are eager to get involved beyond just wearing pink. Many participate in the annual All-Stars Survivor Celebration, which was started by former tight end, Chris Cooley, partnering with the Washington Football Charitable Foundation.

“They made it happen by pulling women together for a day, making them smile, and making what would normally be an emotional, tough experience a happy and memorable day,” Tanya said. “[It’s] a day these women will never forget and the players will never forget, either.”

“I’m so proud of our players,” she added. “They’ve done a wonderful job and changed so many women’s lives that are in the thick of treatment. It makes me very proud.”

Tanya said she is heartbroken she will not be able to be with the fans in person this year. She’ll miss the stories and hugs she gets every year, but she wants everyone to remain diligent and remember what the pink ribbon represents.

“I know it’s saving lives,” she said. “That’s all that we can ask. We can’t wait until there is no cancer, but until we find a cure, detecting it early is the next best thing.”



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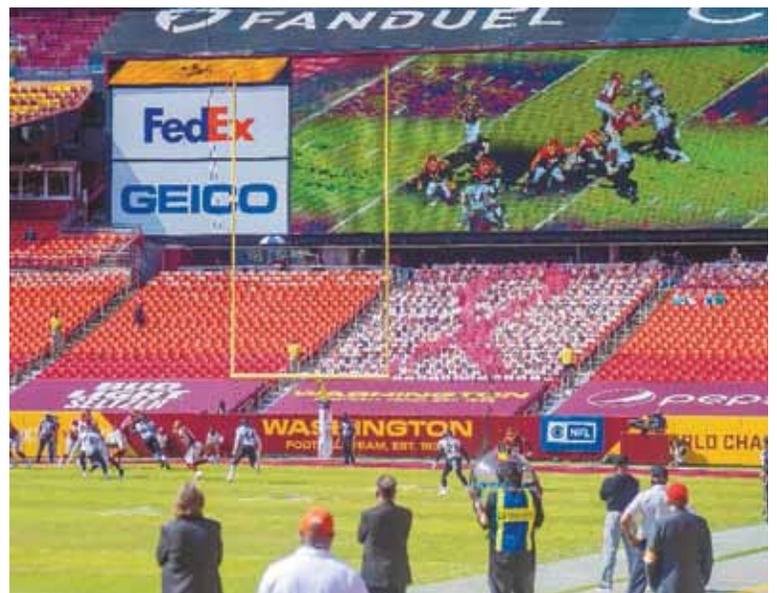
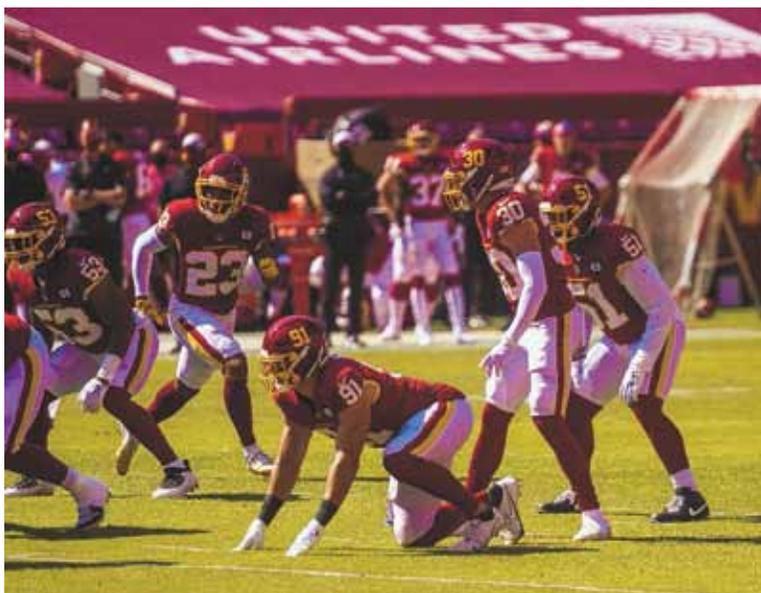
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Crucial Catch Game Gallery



Steven Sims' Lifelong Connection To Breast Cancer

Both of Sims' grandmothers are breast cancer survivors, so he understands the importance of raising awareness about the disease.

By Kyle Stackpole

Pregnancy is hard enough on its own, but for Nytasha Sims, it coincided with her mother being diagnosed with breast cancer. So, as she prepared for her second child, she did everything she could to support her mom through treatment.

"I say I marked my child because I cried so much about my mom and wanted her to beat it, and she did," Nytasha Sims said. "Here she is 24 years later and still standing and healthy and no signs of cancer."

As for her son, he's in the midst of his second NFL season with the Washington Football Team. Steven Sims Jr. has only known his maternal grandmother as a breast cancer survivor, and about 10 years ago, his dad's mom was also diagnosed.

She, too, has since recovered.

That's why Breast Cancer Awareness Month means so much to Sims, who aims to honor his family members in any way he can.

"It means a lot to me," Sims told Washington team reporter Logan Campbell. "Ever since high school, I've always gone all out in October with all the pink and stuff for every game, so shout out to them."

Sims, an undrafted rookie out of Kansas, made enough plays last training camp and preseason to warrant a spot on the team's initial 53-man roster. He earned playing time as a kick returner before blossoming into a starting wide receiver by the end of the year. In his final four games, he averaged five receptions for 57.5 yards and scored four touchdowns.

Being an NFL player, Sims now has a national platform to support

what he cares about. And when he has had the opportunity to raise breast cancer awareness, he has taken full advantage of it.

In Week 14 of last season, players were able to wear custom-painted cleats inspired by their personal causes as a part of the league's My Cause, My Cleats initiative. Sims, as well as teammates Montez Sweat and Deshaun Everett, chose to promote the Brem Foundation, a local organization predicated on fighting breast cancer. Sims' cleats were pink and white and included both of his grandmother's signatures.

"Definitely have some strong women [in my family]," Sims said. "Some fighters."

Sims missed this year's breast cancer awareness game with an injury, but he's always been a breast cancer awareness advocate and he

always will be. He understands the importance of regular checkups and urges women to go to the doctor if they start to see signs. Even if it's nothing, it's better than not knowing.

He preaches these precautionary measures because he has been associated with breast cancer his entire life. He knows the probability of getting the disease (1 in 8) and the consequences, and he wants women to have the best chance of beating it -- just like his grandmothers did.

"Your health is very important, so I feel that women and men, we just have to take the initiative and jump on it," Sims said. "Don't be scared to find out the results or anything like that because I feel everything's going to be OK. It's going to work out how it's supposed to."



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