

OHIO SIXTY SOMETHINGS WHO ARE OVERCOMING ADVERSITY: PAYING HEALTH FORWARD

COLUMBUS, OHIO, January 14, 2019 -- The pages of the calendar reveal a new year and new opportunities...and for many Baby Boomers, “take better care of myself” is likely on their 2019 resolution list. Exemplifying that is a dynamic group of Ohio 60 somethings -- seniors who prove that a positive attitude is the right fuel to help them overcome chronic health conditions and live a longer, richer life. In an effort to “pay it forward,” the intrepid Ohioans are sharing their stories and spirit with their peers.

All beacons of tenacity, these heroes speak at Medicare expos, and other senior events, spreading the “it’s all about mindset” message to the growing number of seniors struggling with health issues. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports three in four US adults aged 65 and older have a chronic disease, such as cancer, heart disease or diabetes. Those numbers are expected to rise significantly with a rapidly growing population and increased life expectancy in the U.S. The Population Reference Bureau estimates the number of Americans 65 and older will more than double from 46 million today to 98 million by 2060.

The 60 Strong Ambassadors, who range in age from 60 to 70, were chosen by a celebrity panel of judges, including Ohio media personalities, politicians, and leaders in the arts, to be highlighted in Akron and Columbus 2019 calendars featuring area activities and events that many seniors enjoy. While their stories vary, they all have common underlying priorities: regular exercise, eating well, and maintaining good health.

The 60 Strong program is the brainchild of [agilon health](#), a company that partners with primary care physicians. The public service initiative was launched by agilon health with its Ohio partners, [Central Ohio Primary Care Physicians](#), Columbus; and [Pioneer Physicians Network](#), Akron; to educate seniors on the importance of maintaining good health and getting regular screenings. Additional 60 Strong Ambassador rollouts are slated for Zanesville and Dayton, in October 2019.

Angela Bosela, an [Akron 60 Strong Ambassador](#) who had 70% of her stomach removed in 2007 and endured chemotherapy and radiation treatments, was inspired to become a competitive runner.

“After cheering for my daughter at a race, I was motivated to start running,” Angela says. “I’ve now completed 200 races, including a marathon and 15 half marathons, and I often place in my age group.”

Angela is also a volunteer counselor for stomach cancer survivors, and she and her husband Paul founded the Ohio Chapter of Debbie’s Dream Foundation, an organization that provides support to stomach cancer patients and their families.

Gary Pinta, M.D., president of Pioneer Physicians Network in Akron, says, “Like Angela, all of our winners in the 60 Strong Campaign are inspirational. Many of them have chronic health

conditions, but they exercise regularly and make ‘good health’ a priority. Some are summiting the nation’s highest peaks and running marathons and others are raising money for charities.”

Columbus resident Bill Davidge is a luminary when it comes to helping others. A Broadcast Analyst for the Columbus Blue Jackets, Bill was struck with a blood disease—multiple myeloma (MM)—in 2014. Now in remission, the former Ohio State University hockey player has organizes annual charity golf tournaments and has raised over \$50,000 for MM research at The James Cancer Hospital, Columbus. He eats a high protein/low carb diet and works out five days a week. Despite losing his first wife in a car accident, he doesn’t dwell on hardships.

“I look at each day as a gift and try to live my life to its fullest,” says Bill. “I hope to inspire others to reach out and give a helping hand to those in need.”

Some of the 60 Strong Ambassadors are grief counselors; they also serve as spokespersons about Medicare coverage and health care decisions and emphasize the importance of annual physicals, regular screenings, and exercise.

The last point is critical. According to the CDC, one-third of older adults do not get regular physical activity.

In gratitude for their newfound lease on life, the 60 Strong Ambassadors are literally paying it forward,” says Bill Wulf, M.D., CEO of [Central Ohio Primary Care Physicians](#). “The 60s are a difficult period -- it’s often the first time that people experience real health struggles. The Ambassadors have already experienced adversity, so they provide encouragement to others and give them hope.”

About agilon health

agilon health of Long Beach, California, a company founded in 2016 by world-class health care leaders, is partnering with U.S. physicians to manage the transition from fee for service to integrated payment and care delivery. Recognizing the increasing pressure on physicians caused by the existing healthcare system, agilon health has created a complete operating platform for managing global risk-based healthcare that brings people, process and proprietary technology together in partnership with physicians to take responsibility for total healthcare spend. The company anticipates expansion into the following markets in 2019: Zanesville and Dayton, Ohio. For more information visit www.agilonhealth.com.