



Hartford HealthCare
St. Vincent's Medical Center

Swim Talk NEWSLETTER



November 2025 Published by the Swim Marathon Committee

The Healing Power of Giving

This Thanksgiving season, discover two inspiring journeys of perseverance, healing, and gratitude.

Unemployed and Diagnosed with Breast Cancer - Not a Great Combination. I had recently been laid off from my job due to a reduction in force. Shortly thereafter, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Those early days after my diagnosis were a lot. I wasn't sure how I would get through it all; the surgeries, the radiation, the regular bills and, now, medical bills with no income coming in and the job search on hold. I was put in touch with the Swim through my oncology physician at St. Vincent's Medical Center. The Swim helped cover the high monthly cost of my Cobra insurance and took some pressure off a difficult situation. I had known about the Swim assistance program from the Swim Across the Sound event. **What I didn't know, is how they could help individuals with financial support during hard times.**

Throughout his life, my dad would always say "the only thing you can control in your life is your attitude". Early on during my treatment, I used to say that each morning before I got out of bed as I was going through those hard days. It helped me change my mindset from "why me?" to "why not me?". That coupled with the support I received from the Swim, my amazing team of medical professionals and the support of family and friends helped me to turn my attitude around and be grateful for all the good things that were happening despite all that was going on that was hard.

A year later, my cancer journey is in the rear-view mirror, I started my own consulting business and am working full time. I am so grateful to everyone involved in helping me get to the other side of that rough time. As I catch up financially, **I have been able to make donations back to the Swim** so they can help other people during their hard days. I will forever be grateful to them for the help they provided and the worry it took off my plate during that time. **What an amazing organization!**

-Jess C.



A Night of Music - Giving Back for More Than a Decade. After losing her husband, Keith Lebo, to pancreatic cancer in 2009, Charlene Lebo channeled her grief into action. While planning a fundraising event in 2010, she faced a second loss when her brother-in-law, Jim DeSantie, also passed away from the same disease. Together with her sister Suzanne, and supported by their family and friends, they launched "**A Night of Music.**" This highly successful and moving annual fundraiser honors both Keith and Jim, raising essential funds for St. Vincent's Swim Across the Sound to directly benefit cancer patients and their families.

This year's event is on Saturday, November 15th at the Fairfield Theater Company (FTC).

For Charlene, the decision to donate the event's proceeds to the Swim Across the Sound is deeply personal and connected to the empathy she received after Keith's passing.

"The reason I donate to the Swim is because of Dr. Stuart Marcus," Charlene shares. Dr. Marcus, the former president of St. Vincent's Medical Center, took the time to meet with her after her husband's death and spent over an hour explaining the complexities of what had happened. Although Keith received treatment at a different hospital, he met Dr. Marcus early in his diagnosis. That compassionate meeting left a lasting impression on Charlene, and it's this spirit of personalized care and support that fuels her continued commitment to the Swim's mission.

Jim DeSantie received care at St. Vincent's Medical Center, choosing doctors he respected, including Dr. Chris Iannuzzi. Even while facing a difficult diagnosis, Jim always felt he had a compassionate team dedicated to his well-being.



"A Night of Music" has been a beloved tradition in the local fundraising community for over a decade. **Last year, the event raised an outstanding \$72,000 in support of the Swim Across the Sound.** This remarkable achievement reflects both the community's generosity and the dedication of Charlene, Suzanne, and their network of family and friends. Every dollar raised goes directly toward easing the financial and emotional burdens faced by local cancer patients.

Mark your calendars to be a part of this inspiring night of music, food, drink and silent auction

Sponsored by:

A NIGHT OF MUSIC

Town Fair Tire Foundation

In Memory of:
Keith Lebo and Jimmy DeSantie

Presented by:
The Sabia and Lebo Families

**November 15,
2025 | 6:30-10 PM**

Join us for a great Night of Music featuring two of the top bands in our area: **The Heavy Hitters and Hazzard County.**

Your ticket helps fund vital programs, financial assistance, and services that make a real difference during the toughest fights.

To purchase tickets, visit:

<https://giving.stvincents.org/event/a-night-of-music/>

**\$50 General Admission ticket or
\$150 VIP ticket which includes open bar & appetizers**

**For more information,
contact:
475-210-7308**

Location:
Fairfield Theater Company
70 Sanford Street | Fairfield



Hartford HealthCare 
St. Vincent's Medical Center

**SAVE THE DATE
for the 2026
Swim Across the Sound
August 1, 2026**

To learn more or to donate to support cancer patients, visit:

<https://giving.stvincents.org/swim-marathon/>

***Thank you to the generosity of our
2025 Corporate Sponsors***



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Save the date for the 2026 Swim Across the Sound being held on August 1, 2026!!

St. Vincent's Medical Center | Philanthropy Department
2800 Main Street | Bridgeport, CT 06606

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