



**Hartford Healthcare St. Vincent's Medical Center**  
**Swim Across the Sound**  
**August 1, 2026**  
**How to FUNdraise**

**What you need to know when discussing Swim Across the Sound...**

**What is Swim Across the Sound:** Each Summer, swimmers cross the Long Island Sound from Port Jefferson to Captain's Cove Seaport in Bridgeport. The Swim Marathon is celebrating its 39<sup>th</sup> year in 2026 and is recognized as one of America's Top Open Water Swims. Thanks to swimmers, donors, and event sponsors, the Swim helps hundreds of local families each year.

**What do the funds raised through Swim Across the Sound support:** In 2025, the Swim and other events held to support the Swim throughout the year, raised approximately \$790,000 which helped support programs and services for local oncology patients, including financial assistance for the needs that health insurance does not cover. Our hope is that we can help cancer patients and their families focus on their health and healing.

**How can I get involved?**

Learn more at <https://swimacrossthesound.org/>

- Start fundraising to support local cancer patients. You don't need to be a Swimmer to make an impact! To learn more about how you can fundraise for Swim Across the Sound, or set your own challenge to complete 15.5 miles from July 1 to July 31, in or out of the water, join us at: <https://charity.pledgeit.org/VirtualChallenge26>
- Ask your company to join Swim Across the Sound as a Corporate Sponsor or start your own Company Team in the [Virtual Challenge](#).
- Register as a Swimmer, Boater, or Volunteer for the day of the event: <https://swimacrossthesound.org/>
- Come out the day of and cheer on our Swimmers!

**How your donation makes a difference:**

No act of generosity is too small.

- ♥ \$50 helps pay for one ride to treatment
- ♥ \$100 pays for a diagnostic ultrasound
- ♥ \$150 pays for one month of utilities
- ♥ \$250 pays for a wig
- ♥ \$500 pays for daily essentials including groceries, soap, shampoo for five families

Hartford Healthcare St. Vincent's Medical Center is a 501(c)3 organization, which means your donation is tax deductible!

**Swim Across the Sound**





## Steps to Fundraising:

**Every dollar helps us directly impact a member of our community. Get started today!**

### 1. Get registered.

- Open water swimmers, boaters, day of volunteers-[Register Here](#)
- General fundraisers, or setting goals to get moving in a pool or out of the water all together-[Register Here](#). See below video on how you can get started in our Virtual Challenge in 2026!
  - Follow a step by step registration video [HERE](#)



### 2. Set up your page.

Setting up your page only takes a few minutes! If you didn't do it at registration, be sure to add some personal touches before you start sharing your page!

Remember-**Details motivate compassion.**

Share your story, add a picture, and customize your Fundraising Page.

If you need any help, please reach out to Melecia Ming at [Melecia.Ming@hhchealth.org](mailto:Melecia.Ming@hhchealth.org) or at 475-210-4657.

You can also watch a step by step video for help by following this link: [Click Here](#).

### 3. Share your story

It's easy to share your personal fundraising page, and you should share it more than once! See below for some ideas on how you can get your personal fundraising page out to your network and don't hesitate to reach out to the Philanthropy Team if you need some ideas at 475-210-4657.



## How to put the FUN in fundraising. Tips and tricks to help you along the way...

### Match your donations.

Check to see if your company has a matching gifts program! If you think they would be interested in sponsoring the event, we can help provide more information.

### Make a personal donation.

Your friends and family will likely donate at the level you give, so start off your goal by making a personal contribution to your efforts.

### Think outside the box.

Think about people outside of your immediate network. Can you ask your barber, Doctor's Office, Landlord, or any business you frequent?

### Don't be afraid to make the ask.

Emails, texts, in person. Create excitement around the amazing work you are doing!

### The fortune is in the follow up.

On average, it takes 4x of following up before people donate. Don't be afraid to keep following up your asks and change up the way you are reaching out.

- Use your follow ups to do things like shout out those who already gave and share how much more you need to reach your goal.
- Need help coming up with this content? Reach out to the Philanthropy Team who can help you draft some messages and get ideas.



### Social media

Use your social media to spread the word on the lifesaving work you are doing. And don't forget about LinkedIn or Venmo! Tag people in your posts and stories to help get the word out there.

### Host a fundraising event.

- Partner with a local restaurant/bar for a give back night and take donations at the door. If you want to host an event like this, we can help!
- Hold a dress down day or bake sale at work
- Bring coin jars to work or local stores
- Host brackets for March Madness or Super Bowl. Winner splits the prize 50/50 with half the proceeds benefiting the Swim.

### Everyone loves a raffle.

Can you get an item or gift card donated from a local business? Consider offering a drawing for anyone that donates at a certain level.

- Other raffle prizes at work can include a special half day or full day off, reserved parking for the week, lunch/coffee with the boss.



### **Connect the dots.**

When you email your friends and family, can they forward your ask on to anyone else? Who knows who they can help connect you with that would be willing to donate!

### **Host a sale.**

Have any items you are looking to get rid of? Doing some spring cleaning? Sell goods you are no longer wanting and donate the proceeds back to Swim Across the Sound.

### **Be proud.**

You are fundraising for an organization that is supporting some of our most vulnerable friends, family, and neighbors. Every dollar has the power to make a difference. Thank you for all you are doing.

**Remember, every dollar matters! YOU are helping directly support a cancer Survivor and their family worry a little less about life's stresses and just focus on healing.**

**Need some other fundraising ideas, reach out to the Philanthropy Team at 475-210-4657 or [Melecia.Ming@hhchealth.org](mailto:Melecia.Ming@hhchealth.org) for help. Or here are some other thoughts to get you started...**

1. Pay to dress up at work. Want to spice up a dress down day? Could colleagues pay to wear 80's themed clothes, ugly sweaters, or dress in their favorite era? Award the Best Dressed Colleague with a Spirited Award.
2. The Hospital hosts a "Trim for the Swim" every year. Departments donate a small themed Christmas Tree, like a lottery tree, toys for tots tree, Bridgeport eatery tree. Each tree has different items. People purchase raffle tickets and bid on the tree they want to win. Can you and your office recreate this at the Holidays, on Valentine's Day, or Easter? It is fun to be displayed in a main area, and get everyone involved.
3. Spot the Baby Competition. Have everyone bring in baby photos of themselves. Invite coworkers to enter in guesses for who belongs to each baby photo. Every guess is a donation.



## Get Moving for the Virtual Challenge!

Once you register and start fundraising, we hope you will join us in The Challenge and set a goal to complete 15.5 miles from July 1, 2026 to July 31, 2026, either individually or as a team.

Here are some fun ways you can get moving and crush that 15.5 mile goal. Remember, the goal is to get moving and challenge yourself, however you choose to. You got this!



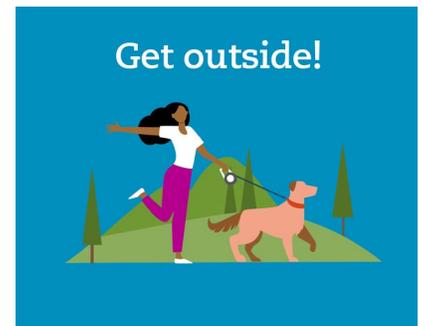
Did you know that one hour of dancing every week for a year is like walking from Chicago to Indianapolis (186 miles)?

That means that 1 hour of dancing is like walking 3.5 miles. Set a goal to join a dance class once a week or have a dance party with your family a few times a week to get moving together and have fun with it!

There are about 2,200 steps in one mile which means there are 34,100 steps in 15.5 miles.

**Broken down from 7/1/26 to 7/31/26 that is 1,100 steps a day!**

Start a step challenge at work, make a goal to walk with your pets each day, or go on a hike. Get stepping to 15.5 miles!



One mile in a standard 25 yard pool is 66 laps.

Get to your local YMCA or a pool, and commit to doing 64 laps four times a week. Take your time and crush that goal in the water!

10 minutes of stretching is like walking the length of one football field.

There are a little over 14 football fields in one mile which means you would need to stretch for 140 minutes to walk one mile.

You may not be able to stretch your way to 15.5 miles, BUT can you set a goal with your colleagues, family, or friends to take stretch breaks throughout the day. This challenge is all about pushing yourself, however you can. This is a great way to start the habit of moving more throughout the day!





Social Media Resources and Sample Posts...



I am proud to be participating in/raising money for St. Vincent's Medical Center's Swim Across the Sound. My goal is to raise \$XX. Very often a diagnosis of cancer can be financially devastating. It may cause loss of work, leaving patients and families hard pressed to find the means to afford necessities like food, utilities, rent or mortgage. Many even have difficulty affording much needed medicines, a wig, a prosthesis, or early-detection screening. In all these instances, St. Vincent's is there to offer financial assistance. But they need our help. I appreciate your help and hope you will join me in a cause that means so much to me. \*INSERT LINK TO YOUR PAGE.\*

Did you know that \$50 can help provide one ride to treatment for a local oncology patient? I am fundraising for St. Vincent's Medical Center Swim Across the Sound to support programs, services, and screenings for local Survivors and their families. Please help me reach my goal of \$XX. \*INSERT LINK TO YOUR PAGE.\*

We have raised \$xx together! From the bottom of my heart, thank you so much for your support! We only have \$XX to raise to reach my fundraising goal. It would mean so much if you could help me reach this goal. Together, we are helping a Survivor and their family focus more on healing and getting better. \*INSERT LINK TO YOUR PAGE.\*

As people donate, post a picture of you and them together and thank them for supporting you! This personal shout out will not only show your depth of gratitude, but will also encourage others to donate and keep your ask top of mind. If you are participating in the Virtual Challenge, add your goal too!

If someone donates at every one of these levels, you will have raised \$600! Post this to your timeline or story, ask people to send you their donation commitment and Venmo handle. Then post the updated grid with the donations you have received crossed off and tag who donated each amount. This is a great way to raise money in a short period of time. We have the original image, Alyssa.

Remember tell people what you are raising money for and why!



S	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5
W	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10
I	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25
M	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$75	\$75



### Sample Email Messages for Virtual Challenge...

Friendly reminder, the Philanthropy Team is here to help! If you need additional resources or ideas for your fundraising, please reach out to us at [Melecia.Ming@hhchealth.org](mailto:Melecia.Ming@hhchealth.org).

*And remember to add your personal. Those details are important to your donors!*

Dear [\[First Name\]](#),

I'm excited to be fundraising for St. Vincent Medical Center's Swim Across the Sound. Each Summer, swimmers cross the Long Island Sound from Port Jefferson to Captain's Cove Seaport in Bridgeport, completing a 15.5 mile swim and raising money for this incredible cause. This year, I am joining them in their fundraising efforts and celebrating their strength and commitment at the finish line by participating in the Virtual Challenge and setting a goal to [walk/run/swim](#) 15.5 miles in the month of July!

I need your help. I hope you will consider giving to my efforts. Together, we can help support oncology programs and services for local survivors, like rides to and from treatment, providing wigs, or financial assistance. Hope has no finish line, and I would appreciate any amount you can give to help me reach my \$\$ goal.

Thank you for your amazing generosity,

[\[Insert Name\]](#)

My Personal Page: [copy and paste link here](#)

Dear [\[First Name\]](#),

This year, I am honored to be supporting St. Vincent's Medical Center Swim Across the Sound's Virtual Challenge.

St. Vincent's Medical Center, and the funds raised through Swim Across the Sound, directly helps local families experiencing cancer focus on healing and getting healthier faster.

I hope you will consider supporting me in this effort and reaching my goal of \$\$ while I [walk/run/swim](#) 15.5 miles in the month of July! Through your donation to my challenge, you're not only helping a local Survivor, you're also helping St. Vincent's provide critical procedures like mammograms, diagnostic ultra sounds, and biopsies, all which go such a long way in heling diagnose cancer earlier. These procedures go a long way in catching cancer earlier and helping save lives.

It means so much to me that you care to help me in my efforts in the fight against cancer.

With gratitude and many thanks,