

SURVIVOR'S VOICE

Here's another powerful example of how your gifts are helping breast cancer patients.

Ms. Magalis Mercedes is a 52 year-old woman was originally diagnosed with breast cancer in 2002. She underwent treatment in her country of birth, the Dominican Republic. Magalis' children and their father had already immigrated to the United States when she was found to have breast cancer. She underwent treatment there went into remission.

In January of 2010 Magalis was granted permission to come to the United States; soon after she was given permanent residence. Immediately before leaving the Dominican Republic she noted a change in her breast; testing here revealed that she had invasive ductal breast cancer. She began treatment at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Magalis is living with her two young adult children (a son and a daughter, both in their early 20s) and her husband, from whom she was separated for years. The children are both students. Her daughter has a part-time job but has had a hard time keeping up with the hours as she always accompanies her mother to medical appointments and treatments, most recently consisting of daily radiation therapy. While Magalis's husband works, his income is very limited. She herself has not been able to work due to her treatment. She hopes to find a job as soon as she is cleared to work.

Despite having had to cope with all of her financial worries in addition to the stresses of chemotherapy, a mastectomy, and now radiation, Magalis has maintained a grace and an immense generosity of spirit. Her inner beauty has impacted her community, fellow patients and her medical providers. Magalis has a strong religious faith and has learned to use herself as a tool to give aid and comfort to other cancer survivors. She has re-established a wonderful relationship with her children after having lived separate from them for eight years. She is at all times dedicated to helping others. On countless occasions she has reached out to other Spanish-speaking woman and has given them hope and strength to keep moving forward with their lives and their treatment. She is a champion of her local support group for Spanish-speaking women with cancer. Magalis has a special spirit and a love of life that are a model to all around her.

Thank you again Breast Cancer Charities of America for being there when I needed it. I cannot express my deep gratitude for your help.



Ms. Magalis Mercedes age 52