



MINORITY WOMEN AND MEN FIGHTING BREAST CANCER

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For Immediate Release:

LIVING LIFE & LOVING IT ***Denise Roberts: A Survivor's Inner Voice***

LOS ANGELES, CA (October 5, 2004) – There are three adjectives that best describe **Denise Roberts** (52), CEO and founder of **THE DENISE ROBERTS BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION (TDRBCF)**: free-spirited, determined and fun-loving. “I am free-spirited because I have been challenged so much in life, health wise. My spirit won’t allow me to hold on to fear. As a baby of eighteen months old, I had very severe boldness in my legs and had to have surgery to correct them. I wore a cast on them for a year. At the age of thirteen, I had scoliosis and for two years I had to wear a full body cast with a steal metal plate on the side to straighten my spine. Then there was breast cancer..” states Roberts. “I am determined because I will never give up on life. I do everything I think I might like to do as long as it doesn’t endanger my life or hurt anyone else, and I am fun-loving because I love living. I love to laugh. A good laughter goes a long way for me.” She shook her head and said, “If I didn’t have a good sense of humor, I wouldn’t be here.”

In 1987, during an annual physical, Roberts, then (35), requested a mammogram because she had been feeling overly exhausted. Her physician thought it was unnecessary because she was under the age of 40 (a required age to receive mammograms). Roberts was diagnosed with chronic fatigue, and was prescribed to get more sleep, relax and to eat healthy. However, Roberts’ inner voice, a clear and strong voice advised otherwise. After a second opinion and careful review from her husband, Dr. Antoine Roberts and colleagues, it was confirmed that she indeed had breast cancer. She was given three options: endure long-term chemotherapy, live with a radical mastectomy, or no treatment, which would lead to her possible death within a year.

Feeling depressed, cheated and trapped, Roberts bravely decided to have the radical mastectomy. She knew that this was the best option for her, one that would add years to her life, so that she could continue to be the beautiful, young wife and mother to her 7 year-old son and 5 year-old daughter. The surgery was a success, but the battle was far from over.

For many years, Roberts continued her work as an interior designer and entrepreneur, owning her own boutique, *Design by Denise*. This work fulfilled one facet of her vibrancy, yet shadowed another. She felt that there was something more that could be given back to the community. Ultimately, she was living on this earth for a greater purpose. In 1998, with some encouragement from her nephew, she left the interior design world, closed her boutique, and began to research on how to start her own breast cancer foundation.

Thus, in 1999, The Denise Roberts Breast Cancer Foundation was born. Later that spring, the first annual Founders Day Celebration was held at Cooley's restaurant, and the foundation was introduced to family, friends, supporters and the world. "I am committed to being a voice to the voiceless; to those who experience this disease, and to all those who prioritize everything else before their own health care." said Denise Roberts. "My advocacy stems from the fact that I am willing to share my story, and to build strength in others through my survivorship."

Her story and experience has enlightened thousands of women and men, and has inspired them to get involved in the education, research, treatment, prevention and care for breast cancer. Roberts stresses to many that they should not subscribe to the inclination that health consciousness should start at age 40, and that no one knows your body better than you. Denise Roberts is a living affirmation that breast cancer does not have to be a death sentence; with early detection and routine breast screening, breast cancer can be controlled and ultimately terminated. She continues to promote laughter and faith as the necessary medicines that will enable us to uplift the human spirit from the hopelessness created by breast cancer. Today, this 17year breast cancer survivor is living life and loving it!

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For more information about Denise Roberts and THE DENISE ROBERTS BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION, visit www.tdrbcf.org or call 310.337.0262.