



## **HOPE CONNECTIONS FOR CANCER SUPPORT PAYS IT FORWARD TO THE HEROES THAT CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH CANCER AND THEIR LOVED ONES**

On Tuesday, April 21, 2020, the staff at the Aquilino Cancer Center at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital were greeted with a catered breakfast provided by participants and friends of Hope Connections for Cancer Support. The Original Pancake House delivered a full breakfast for all staff. The breakfast was paid for by participants at Hope Connections, who were asked to donate a gift card to 'pay it forward' to the clinical staff, who are working long hours to provide them with uninterrupted care during COVID -19. The Original Pancake House graciously donated 20% of all food bought for this program to Hope Connections to support its free programming for cancer patients and their caregivers.

The Shady Grove Adventist is the first community-based, free-standing, comprehensive cancer center in Montgomery County. Multidisciplinary [cancer care team](#) members work together in one facility, to provide seamless, coordinated care. [Hope Connections for Cancer Support](#), located in Bethesda and Landover, provides FREE support groups and mind/body and educational programming to people with cancer and their loved ones. The group was founded to ensure that no one faces cancer alone. [The Original Pancake House](#) has three restaurants in the area that remain open for pickup and carryout.

“A founding principle at Hope Connections is integrating all aspects of care,” says President and CEO Mary McCusker. “It is important for the clinical and emotional treatment providers to work together for the good of the patient. We have great partners at the Aquilino Center. We knew that they were working at full tilt and were looking for a way to support the clinical staff, who support our patients with such dedication. Our participants responded enthusiastically, and we were able to provide breakfast for everyone on staff. It’s a small thing, but we all really wanted to show these great people our support. The money donated by The Original Pancake House to Hope Connections will allow us to continue running our programs, which have been adapted to online delivery. Even though our doors are closed, we are up and running and making sure that people who are going through a cancer journey at this difficult time, get the emotional support they need.”

*Hope Connections for Cancer Support is an independent, community-based, nonprofit organizations dedicated to providing free programs of emotional support, education and hope to people affected by cancer.*

*Through participation in professionally-led support groups, educational workshops and mind/body programs based on peer-reviewed, evidence-based research, people affected by cancer can learn vital skills to regain control, reduce feelings of isolation, and restore hope - regardless of the stage of disease. Most importantly, Hope Connections provides a home-like setting for people with cancer where they can connect with and learn from each other.*

