

GIFT YOUR GRATITUDE

MICHELLE'S STORY

In late 2015 I received the diagnosis everyone fears: cancer. I was diagnosed with Stage Three Colon Cancer. In the months that followed I endured surgery and grueling rounds of chemotherapy. Once I finished, I felt completely frail and vulnerable. Chemo had been my weapon against cancer. When it was over, I felt powerless, as though all I could do was hope I stayed healthy. Then I heard about the Livestrong program at the Y and how it was free to cancer survivors, so I decided to take advantage. I wanted to keep fighting.



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When I began, I was losing my balance, suffering from chemo-induced neuropathy and was physically weak. I needed help just getting in & out of the car.

At first, I could only exercise with 3lb weights. But as Livestrong went on, I could feel myself becoming stronger, not just physically, but mentally and emotionally, too. I ended up finishing the program with an unexpected inner strength and sense of empowerment that I know I wouldn’t have gotten anywhere but the Y.

Because of Livestrong at the Y, I gained accountability, encouragement and friendships I never would have found. It also sparked a desire in me to help others towards healthy living. So much so, that I recently became a certified group exercise instructor and wellness consultant for the YMCA. One year ago I was recovering from surgeries and spending time at the treatment center. Now I’m teaching Boot Camp!

Everyday I’m grateful for the support of the Y and its donors who allowed me to regain my health. I wouldn’t be here without them. Looking forward, my hope is to one day be able to help with the Livestrong program and support other cancer survivors in their health journey.

-Michelle S.

