

Leading the Fight Against Breast Cancer

An Interview with Evelyn H. Lauder,
Senior Corporate Vice President and Head of Fragrance Development Worldwide, The Estée Lauder Companies Inc.,
and Founder and Chairman, The Breast Cancer Research Foundation®

EDITORS' NOTE Evelyn Lauder has been a successful businesswoman for 50 plus years at The Estée Lauder Companies; an activist and philanthropist; an accomplished photographer; and a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother. In 1989, Lauder initiated a fundraising drive that established the Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. In October 1992, she co-created the Pink Ribbon with SELF magazine, which today has become



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the worldwide symbol of breast health. The Estée Lauder Companies Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign was established in 1992 and to date has distributed more than 110 million Pink Ribbons worldwide. In 1993, Lauder founded The Breast Cancer Research Foundation (BCRF) which, to date, has raised over \$290 million to fund innovative clinical and translational research worldwide. In 2000, Lauder and The Estée Lauder Companies launched its Global Landmarks Illumination Initiative, whereby historic landmarks are illuminated in pink lights during the month of October, focusing global attention on this issue. Lauder has received much recognition, including France's Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur in 2002.

COMPANY BRIEF The Estée Lauder Companies Inc. (www.elcompanies.com) is one of the world's leading manufacturers and marketers of high-quality skin care, makeup, fragrance, and hair care products. Headquartered in New York City and with more than 30,000 employees, the company sells its products in more than 140 countries and territories, under brand names including Aramis, Aveda, Bobbi Brown, Clinique, Coach Beauty, Donna Karan, Estée Lauder, Goodskin Labs, Lab Series Skincare for Men, La Mer, M·A·C, Ojon, Origins, and Tommy Hilfiger.

You've been the leader in the fight to defeat breast cancer for over 20 years. How did this fight start for you, and how did it develop in the early days?

It started in 1988 when my company was invited to a meeting for what was then called the CTFA – the Cosmetic, Toiletry, and Fragrance Association. It's an industry-wide group for lobbying in Washington, D.C., as well as for other purposes. They had created

an amazing program for all women who were cancer patients called Look Good...Feel Better. The idea started because when a woman is undergoing chemotherapy treatments, she can lose her eyebrows, her eyelashes, her hair, and might even face some skin coloration changes. By showing the patients how to use rouge, eyeliner, eyebrow pencil, earrings, and a wig, scarf, or hat, they began to feel more like themselves. At this meeting, we saw a video about women who were

breast cancer patients, all of whom were bald, who volunteered to have their pictures taken before, during, and after a makeover. At the end of the film, there was not a dry eye in the house. I started asking questions, and I learned that 44,000 women were dying of breast cancer every year, which was twice as many people who were dying of AIDS. At that time, AIDS received a huge amount of publicity and AIDS patients were my inspiration, because many of them were telling stories about their plight and their campaign for the development of new drugs to treat the disease. Women with breast cancer were dying quietly. There was really no one who was an advocate for them.

So I started speaking to friends who were Editor in Chiefs at the beauty and health magazines about running stories on breast health. I then became a member of the Board of Overseers at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. I agreed to help them build a Breast Center, and in the end, helped to raise \$18 million. That Breast Center was up and running from 1992 until last year, when we moved. In September 2009, we moved into a whole new facility three times the size of the original, thanks in part to the generosity of my husband, Leonard. It is 150,000 square feet over nine floors, and it has state-of-the-art diagnostics, a surgical consultation, psychological counseling, oncology, and a boutique where women can go to buy all the things that they need, along with many other services.

By 1992, there was an established presence of awareness, but the one thing that was still missing was coordinated research via a national organization.

So I consulted with Larry Norton, Director of Breast Cancer Programs and Deputy Physician-In-Chief at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, about putting together a foundation focused on

breast cancer research and decided to call it The Breast Cancer Research Foundation (BCRF). We created a Scientific Advisory Board to select research projects deserving of support. We then established a board of directors and a board of advisors who raise money to enable the scientific team to select the very best breast cancer researchers around the world.

The Breast Cancer Research Foundation was born in August of 1993. Our first fiscal year ended in June 1994, and in that short period of time, we raised just over \$600,000 to support eight researchers. The following year, we raised nearly \$2 million, the year after that it increased to nearly \$4 million, then \$6 million, and so on until 2001. Myra Biblowit became President of BCRF in 2001 and she has guided the foundation to raise more than \$35 million a year. Since 1993, we have raised more than \$290 million dollars.

Have you been happy with the way the corporate world has supported the foundation, and what kind of partnerships have you developed with them?

The corporate world has been extraordinarily helpful and we have many partnerships. Delta Air Lines painted a plane pink and sells pink lemonade during the month of October. Together with their employees, they raised \$1 million dollars in 2009 for BCRF. We have been very fortunate to forge relationships with a wide breadth of corporations and brands, from Bloomingdale's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy's, Coach, and Ann Taylor, to Conair, Wilson Sporting Goods, Duraflame logs, Van Cleef & Arpels, Snuggie, Brillo pads, and Teleflora. We even have a program with a fuel company.

The Estée Lauder Companies hold a big sale each October called Sale-a-bration where we sell merchandise, involving such brands as Jo Malone, Donna Karan, La Mer, Bobbi Brown, Estée Lauder, and many more.

Do you ever step back and think about how much impact you've had in terms of the breast cancer cause?

I don't want to spend time looking backwards and evaluating what I've done; I just want to move ahead with it. I want to reach the point where The Breast Cancer Research Foundation goes out of business. All I want is to cure cancer. That, and the dedication of our doctors, fuels our energy to raise as much money as possible to find a cure. ●