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# Newsletter

## March 2021 | Founder's Message



I wanted to share with you the impact the AiRS Foundation had in 2020.

We received 58 applications for financial assistance, of which 55 were approved for assistance and the other 3 are pending. Of the 55, 42 were for reconstructive surgery and 13 for nipple tattooing. We continue to help women throughout the country, from 23 states, 52 cities, who ranged in age from 20 to 80 years old. Our referrals came from several sources, including the American Cancer Society, Susan B. Komen, Physician/Hospital/Nurse Navigator and our Professional Partners. The number of our Professional Partners has increased from 17 to 23 in 2020. Through these contacts and our Advocacy Programs we were able to save and/or have donated \$379,836.00 in services.

Now, more than ever the AiRS Foundation must raise funds so we can continue to help women who need reconstructive surgery and nipple tattooing who do not have the funds to meet their copays or who do not have insurance. Please help these women by making a donation today. Any amount is greatly appreciated.

[Donate Now](#)

Sincerely,  
Morgan Hare  
Founding Member

## Thoughts from an AiRS Medical Professional Partner



**Michael S. Beckenstein M.D., FACS**  
Alabama Breast Cancer Cooperative  
Birmingham, AL

<https://www.msbsd.com/dr-beckenstein/>

Dr. Beckenstein is certified by both the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS) and the American Board of Surgery and is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons (FACS). In addition, Dr. Beckenstein is an active member of The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) and the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS).

### Why do you feel reconstruction after mastectomy is an important procedure for some women, and how do you think it impacts their lives?

Mastectomies abruptly remove a woman's breast(s) which are important to her feminine identity. This can result in loss of self esteem and confidence. The loss of breasts also serves as a daily reminder of surviving cancer and the price paid for survival. I can relate to this with my recent entrance into the ring to fight cancer. Reconstruction not only rebuilds a woman's breast(s), restoring femininity, confidence, and esteem, it demonstrates her triumph over cancer. We often enhance the aesthetic appearance which also provides a sense of rejuvenation for these women. The benefits of Reconstruction go way beyond the physical changes!

### What would you want to tell people to encourage their awareness and giving to help make reconstruction available for more women?

Every woman should have the choice to seek reconstruction. Women need to be fully aware that this option exists so they can enjoy the benefits. There should never be a financial reason to be deprived of this benefit. The AiRS Foundation provides financial and educational resources to assure no woman misses the benefits of Reconstruction!

## Patient Spotlight



### Carol Pinney

Carol Pinney received her first tumor diagnosis when she was only 14 years old. Over a period of 12 years, she had 27 tumors removed and a bilateral mastectomy. After suffering the loss of her breasts and her husband to divorce, Carol joined the Peace Corps. She worked in Africa for 3 years and then returned to the U.S. to attend nursing school. Carol has been a nurse for 20 years. Many years later when her children became more independent and life quieted down, she decided it was time for reconstructive surgery. With the overwhelming copays, she looked for help and found AiRS. Carol's advice to other women going through similar situations... "resource all you can and be very, very brave."

## AiRing it Out

Learning how to overcome breast cancer and a subsequent mastectomy physically and emotionally happens at a different pace for everyone. The AiRS Foundation has a number of resources such as AiRing It Out videos that feature topics such as lifestyle and medical issues, and these can be found under "Videos" on the AiRS Facebook page and website. Some of the subjects we have covered are:

- **Breast Cancer and Genetic Risks**, featuring Dr. Alexes Hazen, an Associate Professor at the Hansjorg Wyss Department of Plastic Surgery at NYU Langone Medical Center. She specializes in aesthetic and reconstructive surgery and is an AiRS Foundation board member. Also featured is Dr. Deborah Axelrod, Director of Clinical Breast Programs and Services and Medical Director of Community Cancer Education and Outreach at NYU Clinical Cancer Center in New York City. She is a board-certified surgeon who specializes in breast diseases and breast cancer.
- **Dealing with Stress During the Holiday Season**, featuring Dr. Olufunke Awosogba, Assistant Professor at the Department of Psychiatry at UT Southwestern Medical Center and Director of Behavioral Health in Hematology and Oncology Outpatient at Parkland Health and Hospital System, and Melissa Berry, a seven-year Triple Negative Breast Cancer survivor and the founder of Cancer Fashionista.
- **Cancer and Sexual Health**, featuring Dr. Lyndsey Harper, an Associate Professor (Affiliated) of Ob/Gyn for Texas A&M College of Medicine, a Fellow of The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and a Fellow of the International Society for the Study of Women's Sexual Health. Additionally, Dr. Harper is the Founder and CEO of Rosy, a women's health technology company that connects women who have sexual health concerns with hope, community, and research-backed solutions. Also featured is Melissa Berry, founder of Cancer Fashionista.
- **How to Shop for a Post-Mastectomy Bra and Holiday Fashion Ideas**, featuring Dana Donofree, founder of AnaOno Intimates, whose mission is: "We recognize not all breasts are (re)created equal. We embrace different breast shapes and surgery outcomes and intimately understand your unique needs. Our bras are designed to fit YOU". Hosted also by Melissa Berry, founder of Cancer Fashionista.
- **Types of Breast Cancer, Risk Factors and Treatments**, featuring Dr. Melissa Pilewskie, who is an expert in breast cancer surgery and is the Director of Strategic Planning for the high-risk breast program, at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. This video is hosted by Dr. Rod J. Rohrich, Clinical Professor of Plastic Surgery, Baylor College of Medicine, Founding Partner-Dallas Plastic Surgery Institute, and Founder and Board Member of the AiRS Foundation.

## Fundraising News and Ideas



### Davis Cup Tennis Tournament

Lubbock, Texas  
After being postponed in October due to Covid-19, the Falls Tennis and Athletic Club in Lubbock, TX hosted a tennis tournament to benefit the AiRS Foundation. This exciting event had over 80 players assigned to six countries competing against each other in a round robin format. Participants had a great time dressing up in representative costumes of each country. After such a long time of quarantine, it was nice to have a sense of normalcy. Many local businesses supported the event by providing t-shirts, masks, food and beverages. It was a weekend full of tennis and comradery for a great cause and raised close to \$6,000 for the AiRS Foundation!



### Host your own Fundraiser

The AiRS Foundation has recently updated its website to include a fundraising section where you can see ideas about how to host a fundraiser of your own! AiRS needs your support.

[Learn More](#)

## Make a Difference Today!

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## Like and Follow the AiRS Foundation on Social Media



### OUR MISSION

AiRS Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing breast reconstruction, after mastectomy, to women who cannot afford this procedure.

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