

Jacqueline Bromberg Memorial Scholarship Fundraiser



By
Adam
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In March of 2005, at the age of 17-years-old, Jacqueline Bromberg was diagnosed with Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumors (GIST), a rare type of cancer normally found in adults aged 55+. The doctors told her she had six months to live, but Jacqui was not ready to leave her family. Instead she decided to fight the cancer, even though it meant undergoing numerous surgeries and trial chemotherapy treatments. Nearly five and a half years later, Jacqui lost her battle with GIST.

Jacqui was my cousin. From the beginning, I saw what this disease did to her, but Jacqui's light could not be dimmed. Her personality, her caring, giving spirit, and her sheer will to live left an indelible mark on my life. I learned many lessons from Jacqui, and as I continue to move on from her passing, I realize new and different ways she has influenced my life.



Jacqui (left) with her

sister and best friend,
Bonnie.

During the last few months of her life, I made a point to visit Jacqui as frequently as possible. It was about the only times I didn't mind being unemployed, because I was able to see her more often. At a time in my life when things weren't going well, Jacqui was able to look past my problems and just see me. I will never forget that, and always love her for it.

If a day or two passed in between my visits with her, when I finally did see her, she was noticeably thinner. The disease was wearing her down, and we knew that, despite her strong desire to live, she couldn't take much more. She and I spoke about mortality several times, and from these talks I found that what Jacqui feared more than death was the thought of leaving her family. Even though she knew she didn't have long to live, she still worried about the people she would leave behind. That was Jacqui.

Jacqui lived her life with a dignity that many of us won't attain with 100 years on Earth. She only had 22 years with us, and make no mistake, there is no way to sugarcoat what cancer did to her. But Jacqui wouldn't want to hear that talk. She refused to be defined by the disease she suffered with, even when she knew the end was near. I am unbelievably sad that she's not here today, but I am eternally grateful for the time I had with her.

Jacqui didn't just touch the lives of her family; along the way, she became friends with many of her doctors and nurses. Both her hospital and at-home nurses helped Jacqui through her battle with cancer, not only with their skills, but with their strength and laughter. Because of the tremendous support of the nurses, Jacqui's family felt inclined to donate a memorial scholarship in her name to the Health Careers department at Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School in Rochester.



The 1st Annual Fundraiser Skating Event, to benefit the Jacqueline Bromberg Memorial Scholarship, will take place on Saturday, April 16th, from 3-5 P.M. It will be held at the Bridgewater Ice Arena, 20 Bedford Park, Bridgewater, MA. Jacqui's older sister Bonnie works at the arena, and the owners have been gracious enough to donate ice time for this event, which will include skating, raffles, and refreshments. The cost is only \$5, but further donations will be accepted. If you can't attend the event but would like to donate still, checks can be sent to:

Jacqueline Bromberg Memorial Scholarship Fundraiser
c/o Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School
476 North Avenue, Rochester, MA 02770

Many of the people reading this story never had the chance to meet Jacqui, and unfortunately, they never will. It's too bad, because Jacqui was a truly special person, and I know you all would have loved her. In closing, I would like to leave you with the words Jacqui left for us, written on the back of the card with her picture on it that was handed out at her funeral:

To All Those I Love:

*I will miss you more than anything.
But I will come visit and watch all you beautiful people,
and take care of you.*

*I was sent here to meet and love everyone of you.
Whenever times get tough, you know I am only a prayer away.*

Love You More Than Words...

Jacqueline Bromberg

July 1, 1987

August 3, 2009