

Press Release



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Amazon Heart Announces Changing Gears – The Global Run: a Unique International Adventure for Young Breast Cancer Survivors

Changing Gears Comes to Your Hometown!

June 6, 2005 – San Jose, CA – Today, Amazon Heart – www.amazonheart.com – an organization founded in 2004 to provide programs that support young breast cancer survivors, announced its first Global adventure for young women - *Changing Gears – the Global Run*.

Changing Gears is a global motorcycle relay where young breast cancer survivors from across the world will take part in one week rides in the United Kingdom, United States and Australia.

The goal of this unique event is to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer support programs in all three countries. The final leg of the Run will take place from October 23 – October 30, 2005, in Australia, starting in Sydney and finishing in Brisbane. Twelve courageous young women breast cancer survivors from the US will take part in this leg, joining thirteen Australian survivors to ride motorcycles donated by Harley-Davidson and driving two support vans. The funds raised by the US riders will support the development of a world first internet peer support program by Amazon Heart and the Young Survival Coalition in the US while funds raised in Australia will support local breast cancer charity Breast Cancer Network Australia.

The riders will also raise awareness and money from and within their local communities. For more information on the ride go to www.changinggears.org

Amazon Heart and its Cause

Amazon Heart was founded by two young breast cancer survivors, to meet the needs of women living with breast cancer through peer support, information, and advocacy.

Last year Amazon Heart held its first *Changing Gears* event, a one week ride in California from San Diego to San Francisco. The event was so successful it has expanded to the United Kingdom and Australia in 2005. Other projects include a book published last year about the founders' experiences facing breast cancer entitled, "Amazon Heart – Coping with Breast Cancer Warrior Princess Style", another adventure event for young survivors called Amazon Heart Odyssey where they will travel to Sri Lanka to build houses for poor families, and a unique online peer support program which is slated to launch in late 2005.

Last year the inaugural Changing Gears ride in California raised \$45,000 which supported scholarships for young breast cancer survivors to attend a national conference staged by The Young Survival Coalition, the operation of a 24 hour peer support hotline by Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization and the development of peer support programs by Amazon Heart.

"The experience of breast cancer impacts everyone who is forced to deal with it in profound and sometimes unexpected ways," says Megan Dwyer, co-Founder of Amazon Heart and one of the riders.

"For those of us who have been through the experience of a diagnosis, there seems to be a common theme of wanting to live life fully, right now, in this moment. And there is also a strong need to connect with others who share this common bond. Changing Gears is exactly that. Women living with breast cancer coming together to form a supportive community, taking on a new challenge and living life to the fullest."

Meredith Campbell, Amazon Heart's other co-founder from Australia, and also a rider, adds, "Young breast cancer survivors speak a common language born of experience but we have too few opportunities to share our wisdom with each other and to make our voices heard in the wider community.

"Amazon Heart's programs, from our book to our events and online peer support program, bring young survivors together to raise awareness of our unique needs and to continue along our own personal path of growth and healing by building a supportive community. Already the conversations and relationships building among these women from across the country as they prepare for the ride are amazing."

The Participants Who Will Make a Difference

The 25 women participating in *Changing Gears* in Australia were chosen from a diverse applicant pool. All of the women have faced breast cancer and want to make a difference in the lives of other young women with the disease.

Applications for the ride were recruited through publicity and email campaigns globally.

We have 21 young breast cancer survivors riding in this event, and four young breast cancer survivors assisting as support van drivers. All riding positions are now full. We are still looking to recruit an additional two van drivers.

Rider Name	City	State	Country
Megan Dwyer	San Jose	California	United States
Meredith Campbell	Brisbane	Queensland	Australia
Linda Baginski	Walnut	California	United States
Jennifer Dillan	Portland	Oregon	United States
Laurie Graham	Highland	Michigan	United States
Jen Hazleman	Polo	Missouri	United States
Cathy Huston	Grand Rapids	Michigan	United States
Jean Reilly	Dyer	Indiana	United States
Karen Richards	Chicago	Illinois	United States
Ramona Smith	West Jordan	Utah	United States
Stacy Thayer	Castro Valley	California	United States
Rhonda Witharm	Hayward	California	United States
Marie Fox	Sydney	New South Wales	Australia
Donna Handley	Sydney	New South Wales	Australia
Donna Hansen	Melbourne	Victoria	Australia
Lisa Siganto	Brisbane	Queensland	Australia
Janet Tratt	Brisbane	Queensland	Australia
Naomi Benheim	Camberwell	Victoria	Australia
Wendy Raditz	Ivyland	Pennsylvania	United States
Cindy Angell-Johnson	Lockwood South	Victoria	Australia
Suzanna Ochse	Lilydale	Victoria	Australia
Van Drivers			
Jessica Orellana	Mt St Thomas	New South Wales	Australia
Lynda Dunn	Currum Downs	Victoria	Australia
Kristy Parkinson	Boat Harbour	New South Wales	Australia

The Partners and Sponsors Give Back

Roche

The Primary Sponsor of the Australian Leg of Changing Gears is Roche Products in Australia.

Roche Products is a global market leader in oncology and haematology. Roche has researched and developed many medicines used in the treatment of cancer and has a long-term commitment that goes beyond the research and development of new drugs, to a well-established education, care and community support program. Roche Oncology and Haematology invests significantly in research and development and is committed to working with members of the oncology community to understand and address the needs of people with cancer and ultimately improve outcomes for all patients.

Harley-Davidson

Harley-Davidson will loan 20 motorcycles for our riders, transport the bikes to and from our start and finish, donate leather Harley-Davidson jackets to first time riders, and will support us in organizing other logistical elements.

We are delighted that this icon of American motorcycling is supporting our vision and this incredible event.

The Young Survival Coalition

The Young Survival Coalition (YSC) is the only international, non-profit network of breast cancer survivors and supporters dedicated to the concerns and issues that are unique to young women and breast cancer. Through action, advocacy and awareness, the YSC seeks to educate the medical, research, breast cancer and legislative communities and to persuade them to address breast cancer in women 40 and under. The YSC also serves as a point of contact for young women living with breast cancer. Find out more at www.youngsurvival.org.

Breast Cancer Network Australia

Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) was officially launched in October 1998 and is the national voice of Australians personally affected by breast cancer. Its role is to **empower, inform, represent** and **link together** people whose lives have been affected by breast cancer. It links together more than 120 breast cancer member groups and over 13,000 individuals across the country.

Breast Cancer Network Australia's Mission is to:

- **empower** women to have a voice in their own health care and to play an active role in improving breast cancer treatment, care and services
- **inform** women using a wide range of well-researched resources, directly or by referral to other appropriate agencies
- **represent** Australians affected by breast cancer in the health care system, scientific community, media and wider public
- be driven by women who have themselves experienced breast cancer and **link together** individuals and groups sharing similar issues and experiences