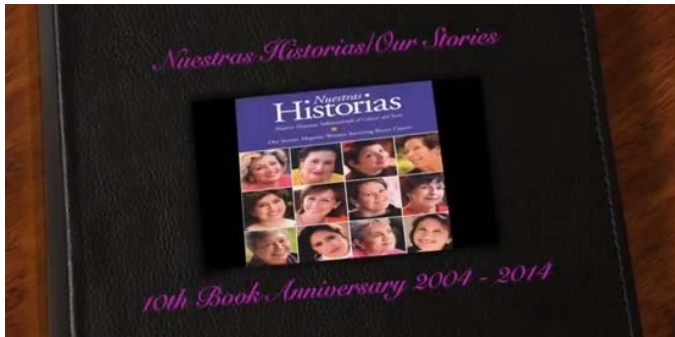


# ***Nuestras Historias: 10 Years Later!***



*Here is what some Latina cancer survivors have been up to in the last 10 years since sharing their stories in Nuestras Historias: Mujeres Hispanas Sobreviviendo el Cáncer del Seno (Our Stories: Hispanic Women Surviving Breast Cancer)!*

## **Irene Maldonado**

### **1. How would you describe your current breast health?**

My breasts are healthy. I have had many needle biopsies and surgeries to remove benign tumors in the last 10 years.

### **2. How did the experience of being featured in the book impact your life and your family's life?**

I was happy to share my story...to give hope to newly diagnosed Latina women. My family was happy I could share my experience with others and they all were very supportive. I was recognized once from a vendor machine man because his wife had just been diagnosed with breast cancer and was given a copy of the book!

### **3. Is there anything that you know now that you wish you had known when you were diagnosed with cancer? Why?**

Actually I have no regrets....from the moment I was diagnosed I made up my mind to keep on going, did what my doctors told me to do, asked God to help me and I never looked back.

### **4. What advice do you have for other women recently diagnosed with breast cancer?**

I will share what helped me and was told by a nurse: Everyone's cancer is different. Don't make everyone's story your own. Stay focused and try to concentrate on your next appointment only. Try to only go to trusted

websites like The American Cancer Association or the Susan G. Komen site. Keep your faith.

**5. What accomplishments/milestones have you experienced in the past 10 years that you're proud/grateful for?**

It has been quite a journey. I am very grateful for family and friend every day. That my son is now a grown man of 30 years....was 16 when I was diagnosed and I worried so much about how this would affect him. He is a strong and independent young man. I am grateful that I have been able to travel all over the U.S., Texas and cruise to Cozumel. I love to travel and go to the beach and have enjoyed many times at Port Aransas and Florida with friends and family!

**6. What does survivorship mean to you?**

As a survivor my awareness and being grateful has a different meaning. Every day is precious and not taken for granted. I appreciate the little things. A visit from a hummingbird around my plants on the deck. A beautiful sunrise or sundown. A hug from friends and family has more meaning. Living now...today! I'm very thankful for all my blessings.

**7. What challenges, if any, do you still face as a survivor?**

None

**8. What are your hopes for the near future?**

I'm looking forward to traveling to San Francisco to visit with my son who has just accepted a great design job opportunity!