



## Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer

Two South University Drive, Suite 326 , Plantation, FL 33324  
Phone: 954-475-1200 || [www.DebbiesDream.org](http://www.DebbiesDream.org)



*Denise Leprine*  
Advocate  
1965-2021



*Elexis "Lexy" Marie Patton*  
Advocate  
1993-2021



*Marisa Ajdelman*  
Advocate  
1965-2021

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October 30, 2021

Dear DDF Supporter,

Living with a stomach cancer diagnosis comes with extreme challenges. The prognosis is often grim, treatment regimens are harsh, and the mental and emotional turmoil of the diagnosis can take its toll. The stresses added by the COVID-19 global pandemic have magnified these challenges.

Last year, we shared the stories of Carmen Muro and Marisa Ajdelman, both stage 4 stomach cancer patients who faced their unique challenges at the onset of the pandemic. Carmen had spent 51 days in the hospital alone due to mandatory visitation restrictions. Due to the lockdown restrictions, Marisa could not enroll in any clinical trials as an alternative treatment for her stage 4 unresectable second recurrence. Sadly, both Carmen and Marisa succumbed to this disease this year after fighting hard to adjust to the changing world around them. Unfortunately, stomach cancer did not stop there.

In February 2020, Lexi Patton was only 27 years old when she was diagnosed with stage 4 stomach cancer. In a short period, she became a strong patient advocate and worked with DDF on awareness initiatives to help educate others on the disease. However, Lexi had a recurrence at the end of 2020, and her battle sadly ended in September 2021. Another bright light in the stomach cancer community was Denise Leprine. She served as a mentor in our Patient Resource Education Program, participated as an advocate during our 2020 Stomach Cancer Capitol Hill Advocacy Day, and even volunteered her story on behalf of DDF for multiple health publications. Denise also had a recurrence in early 2021 and passed away on August 19, 2021, at 56. These are just some of the beautiful lives that we have lost, and there are countless others.

The last two years indeed have been some of the most challenging times of our generation. That is why we persist in our mission. DDF continues to be the leading non-profit patient advocacy organization dedicated to funding research and supporting patients, families, and caregivers impacted by stomach cancer. We have no plans to slow down the mission that our late founder, Debbie Zelman, started in 2009. We have successfully navigated the “**new normal**.” In 2020, we launched our COVID-19 Resources and Support Program to provide virus prevention information, a meal delivery service to keep patients safe, and a Mind, Body, Spirit video series to provide psychological and emotional support. In addition, the Dream Makers Miracle Fund helped grant bucket list wishes to patients and families to give them hope and inspiration during these trying times.

However, to continue our mission under these circumstances, we need your help more than ever before. Please join us in raising the necessary funds to continue supporting critical research and providing resources and support to patients and their families in their time of need. To make your donation, please complete and return the enclosed envelope or donate on our secure website at [www.DebbiesDream.org](http://www.DebbiesDream.org). ***With your help, we can make the DREAM of finding a cure for stomach cancer a reality!***

Sincerely,

Andrea P. Eidelman, Esq.  
Chief Executive Officer