

Rodney Yee And Colleen Saidman To Be Honored At Fighting Chance's 18th Annual Summer Gala

Fighting Chance, a free cancer professional counseling center on the East End that offers support to newly-diagnosed patients, is holding its 18th annual Summer Gala on Saturday, June 22.

The event will be hosted within one of the largest barns on the East End, which sits on the property of the Wesnofske family, on Scuttlehole Road in Bridgehampton, and is considered a historically iconic structure. Built in the early 1800's, the barn serves as a reminder of a time when farming was a dominant part of life on the East End.

The owners of the property, Ray Wesnofske and Lynda Wesnofske, are also on the Board of Directors of Fighting Chance, and Mrs. Wesnofske the Gala Chairwoman.

"This will be the first time that our Summer Gala -- now in its 18th year -- will be held at the Wesnofske Barn, and we are grateful to the family for making such an extraordinary place available for our fundraising event," Fighting Chance Founder and Chairman, Duncan Darrow, shared. "It should be a memorable evening."

The evening will pay tribute to Rodney Yee and Colleen Saidman, Yoga Shanti Studio co-founders,

who will be awarded the Medal of Honor.

"For 10 years, Yoga Shanti, in partnership with Fighting Chance, has run 'Yoga for Cancer Patients' - a free twice-a-week class for those entering long-term survivorship," Darrow explained. "Hundreds of patients receiving crisis counseling at Fighting Chance have also participated in the yoga program, typically for a one-year period. Many of the patients firmly believe that the yoga experience has helped to keep their cancer in remission."

"It was 2008. Both of us had been practicing Yoga with Donna Karan's husband during a very difficult stage in his cancer journey. We all saw that the modalities we developed were extremely beneficial to him. So it was his dying wish that we find a way to offer the same kinds of modalities to cancer patients elsewhere," Yee and Saidman explained about the founding of "Yoga for Cancer Patients" in Fighting Chance's newsletter. "That goal also became part of the mission of the Urban Zen Integrated Therapy, which Donna has been tireless in supporting for over a decade."

Fighting Chance is America's oldest and largest free cancer counseling center that operates on a region-

al basis - in this case, the Eastern End of Long Island.

Because of their regional service model, a walk-in office in Sag Harbor is available where patients will find "boots on the ground." That means licensed health care professionals - including a clinical psychologist and oncology social workers - who can meet with the patient in person.

In person counseling is the "gold standard" when helping a newly-diagnosed patient cope with the psychological repercussions of cancer that include anxiety, depression, insecurity, and insomnia. Fighting Chance sees about 250 newly diagnosed patients per year, attributing their success to offering free-of-charge gold standard in-person counseling and providing a counseling team with over 75 years of experience navigating the cancer journey.

Tickets to the 18th annual Summer Gala are \$400. The soiree will be held from 6:30 to 11 p.m.

The Wesnofske Farm is located at Scuttlehole and Day Lily Road in Bridgehampton. For more information about Fighting Chance, please visit www.fightingchance.org.