

Press Release: Teb's Troops, Inc.

(Indianapolis) -- Death is not an option.

In May 2005, Indianapolis native Tricia E. Black, or "Teb," as her friends and family fondly know her, was diagnosed with stage IV metastatic melanoma -- the deadliest form of skin cancer. After the initial shock of her diagnosis, Teb, true to her nature, set out not only to fight her own personal war against cancer, but to help others fight as well.

Teb wanted to rally her "troops" and desired more than anything to make something positive come from this experience no matter what the outcome. She asked her friends to help her design and sell a camouflage bracelet signifying soldier status in the war against cancer, the profits of which would go to organizations that support the treatment, prevention, and research of cancer, including melanoma.

Teb's friends responded. In August 2005, Teb's Troops, Inc. (www.tebstroops.org) was launched.

At 29, Teb had the world by the tail. Teb and her loving husband Michael share their one-year-old son, Sam, and are both successful attorneys. From the get-go Teb realized that she was neither unique nor alone in her fight, there are thousands of women just like her: sisters, daughters, mothers, significant others and friends, who face an uncertain future with out a cure for late-stage skin cancer.

"This fight is not just about me, but the other women and men like me who wake up one morning and a doctor tells you that you may not see your child graduate from high school, let alone celebrate a first birthday. That simply wasn't an option to me, nor would it be to any parent. So we decided to fight."

Teb is a survivor, and has beaten melanoma once before. But this time she has a husband and son, and she is not interested in building a legacy, a cure is the only option.

“I knew I had the love and support of my family, and Michael and I, thankfully, have a fabulous support network of friends, relatives, peers, and co-workers. I wanted to channel all that positive energy and goodwill in an attempt to assist others fighting this awful war. My hope is that through our efforts, one person, one parent, one woman like me will hear that she has melanoma, but realize it's not a death sentence because a cure has been found. I honestly believe that this is possible and is not some far-off dream.”

Melanoma can strike anyone. Melanoma skin cancer accounts for approximately 4% of all skin cancers each year. It is, however, the most deadly, least treatable of all skin cancers, accounting for most skin cancer related deaths. The number of new cases of melanoma is increasing at an alarming rate; indeed, incidents of melanoma are rising faster than any other cancer. The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2005 there will be over 59,000 new cases of melanoma in the United States. Of those diagnosed, over 7,000 people will die of this disease. That is one person almost every hour.

The incidents of melanoma are rapidly increasing for women under the age of 40. In fact, in women ages 25-29, melanoma is the primary cause of cancer death, and in women ages 30-34, melanoma is second only to breast cancer as the most common cause of cancer death.

If caught in its early stages, melanoma is almost always curable. If left untreated (or unnoticed), however, melanoma can spread (metastasize) rapidly to other parts of the body. Once the melanoma has metastasized, the situation is grave. At present, there is

no therapy available that consistently treats later stages of melanoma cancer successfully. Simply put, there is no cure for late stage melanoma.

Teb currently lives in Indianapolis with her husband and son, and is undergoing experimental treatment at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

By enlisting as a Teb's Troops soldier today and purchasing a Teb's Troops bracelet you will show your support not only for Teb, but for a cure for late-stage melanoma. To donate to Teb's Troops, Inc., please visit us at www.tebstroops.org.

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