

Kicking Cancer on the Catwalk

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Assistance In Healthcare, a West Valley charity, will kick off its second-annual Project Pink in October. This charity fashion show brings Valley men and women together to help the cancer patients of Phoenix.

Having cancer is tough on everyone -- for the patients, it's the physical drain of the disease and treatments; for relatives and friends, it's the emotional drain that comes with this terrible, incurable disease. But then there's the financial aspect. Cancer treatments are expensive and when patients are paying hospital bills, there's less money that can be spent on everyday expenses.

That's where Assistance In Health (AIH) comes in, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization offering financial assistance for non-medical expenses to cancer patients currently being treated in the Phoenix area. AIH is able to provide approximately 60 \$250 monthly grants to help patients cover the cost of rent, gas, food and any other non-medical expense.

On Oct. 2, AIH will host its second-annual Project Pink, a charity fashion show at the Wigwam Resort & Spa and presented by [Cancer Treatment Centers of America](#). Starting at noon, attendees will be able to mingle with one another for the hour-long cocktail reception sipping bellinis and pink lemonade.

This will also be the second year the event is held at the Wigwam, bringing more attention to the West Valley. "It just gives us a great opportunity to liven things up on the west side," says Meredith McGuire, AIH Arizona president and Project Pink co-chair. "There are so many events on the other side of town." During the cocktail hour, there will be plenty for guests to do; St. John Boutique will host a trunk show featuring their new collection; there will be a wine pull with more than 200 premium bottles and Project Pink Mystery Boxes featuring Kendra Scott jewelry with \$100 worth of items; and raffles.

At 1 p.m. the main event will begin, starting with introductions. While Project Pink is not in honor of a specific person, the organization still looks to spotlight someone every year. "This year, our honorary chair is a Phoenician," McGuire says. "Her name is Dr. Marnee Spierer [of Cancer Treatment Centers of America], and she works with a number of breast cancer patients throughout the Valley, and we'll also be spotlighting [Robyn Taylor,] one of the patients she has worked with."

Afterward, lunch will be served—a colorful salad designed and prepared by the Wigwam's Executive Chef Rich Hinojosa—and Fashions by Robert Black will take over the runway. While the clothes will be vintage-inspired, McGuire says they won't really know what Black's theme is until the clothes hit the runway. "Robert chooses clothes based on what he thinks will wow the audience. Will we get a famous designer in the finale or something truly Hollywood glam? We don't know! Can't wait to see." As for goals, AIH hopes to raise \$50,000 this year, topping the event's \$44,000 last year. McGuire also says the ultimate goal would be that, one day, AIH would be able to fulfill all the grant requests, but she recognizes that it's near impossible as the amount of grant requests is on the rise every day. Still, she can hope.

To learn more: azaih.org facebook.com/ProjectPinkAZ.