

https://www.bgdailynews.com/news/wku-alumna-creates-app-to-help-detect-breast-cancer/article_f82b6071-1717-5222-a0eb-c4cddb7d8e57.html

WKU alumna creates app to help detect breast cancer

IZZY LANUZA izzy.lanuza@bgdailynews.com

Jun 15, 2023

1 of 2




Jessica Baladad poses with her app "Feel For Your Life." submitted

While taking a shower before a class in 2003, Jessica Baladad, a freshman at Western Kentucky University, found a lump in her breast.

Shortly after, she had the benign tumor removed but it put her in the habit of conducting a monthly breast self-exam which ended up saving her life in 2018 and led to the creation of her app, “Feel For Your Life.”

In 2018, Baladad again noticed a lump in her breast but her practitioner dismissed it. That lump ended up being an invasive ductal carcinoma. Over the next four years, Baladad underwent 16 rounds of chemotherapy, a double mastectomy, 24 rounds of radiation, a hysterectomy and a 10-hour reconstruction surgery.



Murphy
BUSINESS SALES
Excellence in Business Transactions

When You're Selling or Buying a Business

*Choose a Broker with Knowledge, Integrity,
Dependability and Connections.*

Business Sales • Buyer Searches • Business Valuations
Mergers & Acquisitions • Business Consulting •
Machinery & Equipment Appraisals • Exit Planning

Brad Williams
CMEA, SBA, Business Broker
Licensed RE Agent

Murphy Business & Financial Services LLC
O: (270) 495-4462 • C: (270) 791-0107
b.williams@murphybusiness.com
murphybusiness.com/southcentralky

Before “Feel For Your Life” was an app, it was a social media movement. It began after Baladad informed her friends that she was diagnosed with breast cancer and that she was going through chemotherapy. They were shocked and confused and confided in Baladad that they had never done a self-exam.

“I thought this was just part of women's health and that we were supposed to be doing this (self-exams). I assumed that my friends and loved ones were doing this,” Baladad

said.

After this realization, Baladad came to the conclusion that there are three reasons that women are not doing self-exams. One, they are afraid of finding something and not knowing what to do because they are uninsured or underinsured. Two, no one taught them how. Three, they are ashamed or afraid to touch their bodies for different reasons.

“I wanted to change that. I wanted to do something about it. So I created ‘Feel For Your Life,’ ” Baladad said.



MAY 22 - JULY 31

EVERYONE who participates in Summer Reading gets a prize and gets entered to win a grand prize of their choice!

warrenpl.org/summer





During the pandemic, many women were missing their routine screenings and getting diagnosed with later stages of breast cancer. In 2020, Baladad began mapping out blueprints for an app to empower women to take their health in their own hands.

The app allows users to set goals for themselves — how often they want to do a self-exam, what they want to learn from the app and how they want to use it. Once that is set up, users can learn how to conduct a self-exam and access tools relating to risk-reducing measures.

“You can set reminders every month. You get to coordinate that with your doctor about when's the right time for you to do a self exam. Then as you're doing your self-exams every month, there's a tracker in there where you can keep notes and monitor your progress,” Baladad said. “For example, during month three everything's OK, but in month seven you notice something. You can go back and review your notes and see where you notice changes.”

Baladad's app has had over 10,000 downloads since its release in 2021.

"I've had women reach out to me who are saying 'because of your app, I am talking to my doctor about my genetic disposition' They have chosen to remove their breast to reduce their risk of breast cancer after downloading my app," Baladad said.

"(Around) 12,000 women under the age of 40 will be diagnosed with breast cancer every year. And yet screening for breast cancer is only recommended for women who are ages 40 and above," Baladad said. " 'Feel For Your Life' literally puts breast health advocacy in your hands by showing you how to do a self-exam and empowering you with the information to advocate for yourself."

[Privacy](#) - [Terms](#)