



Division of Health

*Sedgwick County...  
working for you*

## National Public Health Week *April 2-6, 2018*

### **Doren Fredrickson – Lifetime Dedication to Public Health Award NOMINATION FORM**

Each year the Sedgwick County Division of Health recognizes an individual who has shown a lifetime commitment to Public Health (at least 25 years of service) with the annual Doren Fredrickson Award during National Public Health Week.

Please submit information for a nominee below and return electronically by close-of-business on Monday, February 19, 2018 to: [Valarie.florio@sedgwick.gov](mailto:Valarie.florio@sedgwick.gov)

Nomination made by:	
Your Name:	Teresa L Carter and Teresa L Jones
Your Organization Name:	Wichita Medical Research & Education Foundation
Your Email:	<a href="mailto:tcarter@wmref-ks.org">tcarter@wmref-ks.org</a>
Your Phone Number:	316-686-7172

Contact Information for Nominee:	
Name & Title:	Peggy L Johnson
Organization Name:	Wichita Medical Research & Education Foundation
Mailing Address:	3306 E Central Wichita, KS 67208
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:pjohnson@wichitamedicalresearch.org">pjohnson@wichitamedicalresearch.org</a>
Phone Number:	316-686-7172

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**Description of the nominee' career related to public health (please attach additional pages if needed):**

The Department of Defense records show that there were 58,220 US military fatal casualties during the total Vietnam War. Yet, during this same time period over 50,000 women died from breast cancer EACH year. In the mid to late years of the Vietnam War (1955-1975), Peggy Johnson was a young co-ed at Washburn University and then a young military wife stationed with her husband on military bases throughout the world. Nightly on the news, she heard about the number of soldiers dying in the war. Yet it occurred to her, even then, that many women, and more, were dying each year from breast cancer and no one was protesting, no one was marching, no one was even talking about it. What would in the 1990's become a major public health issue was even in 1975 a women's rights issue for Peggy Johnson.

Several years later, after the Johnsons returned to Wichita to settle and start a family, Peggy became a member of the Junior League of Wichita. She and several other members were charged with finding an event to bring to Wichita that addressed women's health. Peggy traveled to Peoria Illinois, to check out and observe an event, the Susan G. Komen Memorial Race for the Cure®. Peggy learned about Nancy G. Brinker who had promised her dying sister, Susan, that she would do everything in her power to end breast cancer forever. In 1982, Nancy Brinker, set out with \$200 and shoebox full of potential donor names and formed the organization Susan G. Komen. By the time Peggy went to Peoria this new organization was beginning to make an impact on the fight against breast cancer. What had been bothering Peggy since the Vietnam War was now being addressed and Peggy found her voice in Public Health.

Peggy went on to bring the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure event to Wichita and in 1990 it became the third Race in the nation and the 1<sup>st</sup> co-ed event. Peggy, then moved on to form the Komen Kansas Affiliate, became a volunteer at the national level of Susan G. Komen and eventually became the Chairwoman of the National Susan G. Komen Board of Directors. She has testified before Congress, lobbied for more research funding, attended countless meetings, given thousands of speeches, done hundreds of TV interviews, pleaded personally with vice-presidents, queens of foreign nations, ambassadors, senators and congressional representatives for more cancer funding. She sits on numerous cancer committees, both nationally and locally. She is a Komen Advocate in Science, and currently reads and helps award national breast cancer research grants. Because of Peggy's leadership, 45,000+ women and men in Kansas have received no cost mammograms. And this is just her volunteer work!

Submit nominations to Valarie Florio with the  
Sedgwick County Division of Health via email at [valarie.florio@sedgwick.gov](mailto:valarie.florio@sedgwick.gov).  
Questions? Please contact Valarie Florio at 316-660-7693.

Professionally Peggy Johnson is the Executive Director and COO of Wichita Medical Research & Education Foundation and has, with full support of the Board of Directors, taken the organization into the arena of Public Health. Under her direction the foundation has increased, its funding for public health educational events over 600%.

In addition to funding public health events, Peggy began the foundation's work in providing free Advance Directive documents to the general public to address health care issues for the elderly and terminally ill. She also began the organization's Annual Health Care Ethics Conference, which is now in its 5th year and brings healthcare workers, social workers, chaplains, adult home healthcare administrators and others together to learn about ethical issues in the public and private healthcare arena.

Peggy Johnson also serves the public health sector by severing as:

- Chair of the Health Equity Task Force for the Kansas Cancer Partnership
- Co- Chair of the Kansas Cancer Partnership
- Public Policy Chair for the Health Alliance of Sedgwick County
- Co-Chair of the South Central Kansas Cancer Coalition

After over 25 years of being a public health advocate, when most people would normally begin to feel they were ready to quit, Peggy was stricken by the disease that had consumed her time for so long. She was diagnosed with breast cancer. And not just the "normal" type that women her age are normally diagnosed with. She was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer; the one type that research hasn't made much progress on to date. After a year of surgery, chemo and radiation, Peggy, often sporting a scarf to cover the loss of her hair, put her soul back into her work in cancer. She continues to do everything she did before her diagnoses and more. This time pushing for more research into treatments for triple negative breast cancer, organizing local conferences on cancer survivorship, championing discussions on disparities in screening and treatment for minorities, participating in clinical trials, guest speaking at public health classes at WSU, and finally with a little prodding, allows herself to be called a "survivor".

Even today, 5 ½ years past diagnoses, Peggy continues to be the person in Wichita that newly diagnosed women call for help and a shoulder to cry on. She personally calms their fears, leads them to educational materials so they become educated about their illness, and shares her story of the fight into survivorship. Peggy is all about making sure the public is as well educated about their health as possible and is a great example of a person who has shown a life long dedication to public health. She is most deserving of the Doren Fredrickson Award in Public Health.

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