

10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY REPORT

*Changing
many lives
begins with
changing
one.*



www.hncliving.org

*There's an envelope on the kitchen counter
you're scared to open. You're scared to open
it because it's from the hospital, and you know
whatever the amount inside, it's too much.*

It's all been too much. The shock of the diagnosis. The cruelty of the statistics — the breathlessness that comes with knowing the median 5-year survival rate is little more than a coin flip. Then there's the anxiety of relaying that prognosis to the people who love you — who depend on you.

But you're a fighter, so you endure the endless chemotherapy treatments. You endure the claustrophobia that comes with being bolted to a table while a radiation mask is molded to your face, restricting your movement to mere millimeters.

Physically, emotionally, and spiritually you are unable to move. And now, there's that envelope. The one that contains more suffering...

...ENTER HNC LIVING FOUNDATION.

Dear Friends,

We have to do something. Five words. Spoken at a time least expected. We have to do something. These five words are the genesis of HNC Living Foundation. These are the words spoken to me by Teresa as we waited for yet another of Teresa's 30 radiation treatments. For it was Teresa, fighting cancer herself, who recognized that other patients around us did not appear to be recovering as well as she was. We soon understood that many of them were missing treatments. Thus our journey began.

Fast forward ten years and HNC Living Foundation has become the national resource helping head and neck cancer patients live life fully through financial aid. Since our founding in 2014, HNC Living has assisted over 4,700 individual patients across the United States with over \$3 million in financial aid to provide:

- Dental care
- Prescription assistance
- Travel assistance
- Nutritional supplements
- Co-Pays and deductibles
- Medical supplies

Our Mission is to help head and neck cancer patients live life fully during and after treatment by providing financial aid.

Without you, none of this would have been possible. We may have identified an unmet need in the head and neck cancer care sphere, but your belief in us has changed the lives of patients and families all across our country.

The list of people to thank is almost unending; our dedicated team in the office, our Medical Advisory Board, our volunteers, our board of directors, our strategic partners and our donors. You make HNC Living Foundation. We're proud to help you.

With our deepest respect and admiration –

Tom & Teresa





OUR STORY

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, HNC Living Foundation began when Teresa underwent treatment for squamous cell carcinoma in her jawbone. After discovering many fellow head and neck cancer patients faced more challenges related to their cancer, Teresa looked at Tom and said “We’ve got to do something about this!”

The experience of her treatment's emotional, physical, and financial toll inspired the Walshes to establish the foundation in December 2013. Their aim was to provide financial aid to head and neck cancer patients, supporting their treatment, recovery, and overall quality of life.

Obtaining nonprofit status in July 2014, the foundation has since assisted over 4,700 patients with more than \$3 million in aid.



Teresa is now celebrating ten years of being cancer-free. Her firsthand battle and successful recovery fueled the Walshes' commitment to the cause. Witnessing the challenges faced by head and neck cancer patients during her treatment motivated them to create an organization addressing both medical and financial obstacles.

HNC Living Foundation's new Overland Park office is home to six full-time staff members and offers elegant meeting spaces for donors and grant-makers.

DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS,

As we reflect on the incredible journey of HNC Living Foundation, I am filled with immense gratitude for the community we have built together.

Your unwavering support, generosity, and commitment have enabled us to make a profound impact on the lives of countless individuals facing head and neck cancer.

Over the past decade, we have achieved remarkable milestones, providing essential financial assistance for critical needs. Our mission to improve the quality of life for those affected by head and neck cancer has been greatly enriched by your compassion and dedication.

As we look ahead, we are inspired by the possibilities that the next ten years hold. However, to continue our mission and reach even greater heights, we need your help. Our goal is to expand our support network, reach more patients, and provide even more comprehensive care. This is a pivotal moment for HNC Living Foundation, and we are asking you to join us in reaching our next milestone.

Your contributions, whether through donations, volunteering, or spreading awareness, are crucial in helping us achieve our vision. Together, we can ensure that no one faces the challenges of head and neck cancer alone. With your help, we can continue to provide hope, support, and essential resources to patients and their families for the next decade and beyond.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Danielle Puzio
CEO, HNC Living Foundation



Thank you for being an integral part of our community. Your support makes a world of difference, and we are deeply grateful for your partnership. Let's continue this journey together, bringing hope and healing to those who need it most.

A DECADE OF MILESTONES

Up and to the right. That's the trajectory of HNC Living Foundation since its inception in 2014 when Teresa Walsh uttered those now-famous words: "We have to do something."

Together with our generous founders, donors, partners, and staff, our organization has distributed over \$3 million in assistance to deserving cancer patients and the medical community that supports them.

June 2013

Teresa Walsh Squamous Cell Carcinoma diagnosis

July 14, 2014

"We're 501(c)3 official!"



Spring 2015

First MASKS for AID fundraising event



Spring 2018

First golf tournament hosted in Santa Fe

December 2013

"Tom, we need to do something about this!"

-Teresa, seeing that some of her fellow patients were skipping treatments due to the costs



Fall 2015

First grant given away to Cancer Action

Spring 2018

We awarded our first individual grant, marking the beginning of our mission to help patients in need.



Summer 2021

First Delta Dental grant received



Winter 2023

Sets new record for annual fundraising!

Our Next 10 Years

While we're thrilled by this first decade of milestones, we know the HNC Living Foundation story is far from finished. With your financial support, this organization can grow into the philanthropic exemplar that head and neck cancer patients so desperately need.

Winter 2018

\$1 million in grants distributed to patients!

January 2019

Launched nationwide individual patient care

Spring 2020

Adopted strategic grant guidelines



Spring 2022

HNC Living Foundation grows to four full-time staff members

January 2024

HNC Living Foundation is in All 50 States!

HNC Living Foundation served the first of many patients from Utah, reaching the significant milestone of helping in all 50 states!



WHAT WE DO

HNC Living Foundation supports head and neck cancer patients who may be under-insured, or lack the financial resources necessary during treatment and into survivorship.

To date, we have provided more than \$3 million to directly improve the lives of people living with head and neck cancers.

We provide financial support for individuals during their treatment and recovery, funding the following vital services:

- Medical expenses and copays not covered by insurance
- Patient-centered specialized therapies that aid in recovery
- Transportation to and from appointments
- Medical supplies needed for recovery
- Dental services
- Nutritional supplements and meal replacements
- Medication



Make your impact today.
Visit hncliving.org/donate



OUR IMPACT

HNC Living Foundation's first 10 years has been filled with inspiring stories of patients battling this brutal disease and, through our help, returning to lives fully lived. But the data below is just the beginning.



36,214 days of nutrition provided for patients



4,700 total patients served across 50 states



Over **\$3M** in distributions to patients



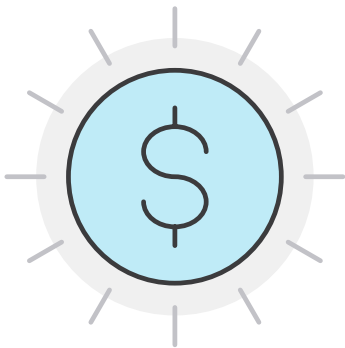
8,158 critical dental services paid



42,031 paid trips for cancer treatment



9,249 days worth of prescriptions



To date, we have raised **\$8,079,178** from 620 donors across 2,378 donations.

MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD

The members of our Medical Advisory Board are specialists in the field of oral and head and neck cancer. Their leadership, expertise, and first-hand experience with patient treatment is a valuable resource for HNC Living Foundation and its Board of Directors. With their counsel, we grant funds to proven programs and treatments best suited to benefit head and neck cancer patients.

- Dr. Brian Burkey**
MD, FACS
- Dr. Mark S. Chambers**
D.M.D, M.D.
- Dr. D. Gregory Farwell**
FACS
- Dr. Dennis Kraus**
MD, FACS
- Dr. Bill Lydiatt**
MD
- Dr. Terrance T. Tsue**
MD, FACS
- Dr. Bruce Cummings**
D.D.S

CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors comprises accomplished professionals who are passionate about helping fulfill our purpose and mission. Our Board is responsible for all decisions related to organizational grant funding and financial assistance for individuals. They guide our leadership team and ensure we’re accountable to our donors, partner organizations, and patients.

- Thomas J. Walsh**
Teresa Walsh
Dr. Terry Tsue, MD, FACS
Rachel Cannon
- Brad Scott**
Kristin Tyson
Bill White
Janice Benjamin
Banks Floodman
- Mandy Roe**
Gail Gottlieb
Debby Easum
Monica Nguyen-Francis

100% *Board
Giving Rate*

\$509K *in
Board Donations*



“For over 30 years, I have been taking care of patients with head and neck cancer. It is a very debilitating disease. It is one that, fortunately, we have a pretty high cure rate but the downside is the impact on the quality of life; the high rates of depression and anxiety with it. So part of my focus has been to amplify anything that I can to improve a patient’s quality of life.”

Dr. Bill Lydiatt

Gifts of Time and Treasure

OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS



Dr. Mike Dix, Grant Committee Volunteer

Tom and Teresa Walsh have had the same dental provider for a number of years who they respected and trusted. As Teresa became suspicious of a spot in her mouth, her dental provider Dr. Mike Dix, DDS referred her to specialist after specialist to help her find out more about what would later be diagnosed as squamous cell carcinoma.

As the Walshes created plans to find a way to help patients facing the overwhelming financial burden of head and neck cancer, they enlisted the help of friends, family, and expert providers to build a robust agency to serve today's patient. Dr. Dix was one of the first friends of the foundation—volunteering his time and knowledge to assist on the grants review committee. In 2022, Dr. Dix became even more familiar with the struggles of head and neck cancer, as he faced his own thyroid cancer diagnosis. Today, Dr. Dix is a longtime friend, volunteer, donor, and advocate of the mission.

It never ceases to amaze us how many kindhearted individuals find their way to HNC Living Foundation. Every year we're blessed by a growing network of volunteers with a deep belief in our mission. They give their time, voice, and talents to amplify our reach and impact.

Dr. Karl Frees, Grant Committee Volunteer

As an oral cancer survivor, Karl was part of a video presentation for the first Masks For Aid event in 2015. It was a transformative experience that gave him a sense of agency over his cancer. Once Laura, Karl's wife, and Karl, became more acquainted with the work of HNC Living, they continued attending Masks for Aid events to help support the foundation's wonderful work on behalf of head and neck cancer patients. In 2018 Karl joined the grant review committee. Now Karl is one of our longest-tenured volunteers. For him, being able to work with the talented and tireless foundation staff has been amazing.



"I have had a front-row seat to the huge and positive impact HNC Living has made in the lives of so many cancer patients, survivors, and their families. HNC Living is quite simply the only way some cancer patients can get their treatment started, and HNC continues to be there for them with ongoing support to help restore them to the best health and wellbeing possible. It's not just about the funds made available to them; it is the kindness, the compassion, the care that every one at HNC extends to every person they help.

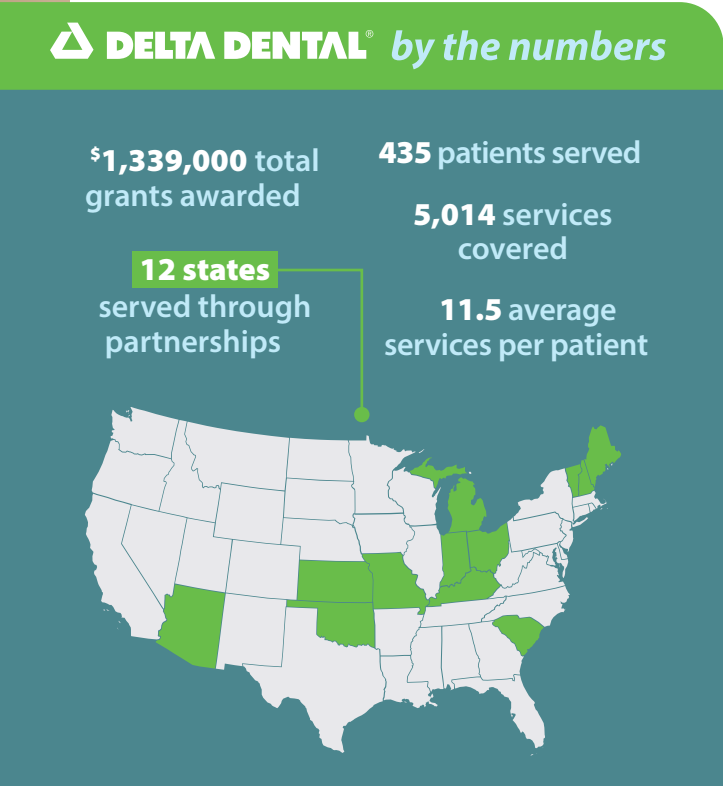


If you would like to volunteer in patient care, event planning, or HNC operations, please write to us at info@hncliving.org.

Partner Spotlight

DELTA DENTAL

If the telltale sign of a life lived fully is a smile, then we can imagine no better partners than our friends at Delta Dental, who have restored 435 smiles across 12 states since our partnership's inception. The dental issues caused by head and neck cancers are often not covered by insurance, yet the problems can be among the most psychologically severe for patients whose appearances can undergo drastic changes from the disease. We are deeply grateful for Delta Dental's generosity and friendship over the years.



"Our company's mission is to improve health through affordable and quality benefits, exceptional service and a seamless user experience. Kansans with greater access to affordable dental care are more likely to visit the dentist and reduce their risk of experiencing serious health conditions. Our partnership with HNC Living Foundation provides critical, affordable dental care to Kansans necessary to receive their cancer treatment."

-Dean Newton, Chief Executive Officer of Delta Dental of Kansas

Member Spotlight

MONICA NGUYEN-FRANCIS

Monica Nguyen-Francis joined HNC Living Foundation’s Board in 2020. Her first engagement with HNC Living Foundation was in 2018 as a donor at MASKS for AID. Eight months later, Monica learned firsthand how head and neck Cancer devastates a family.

Her father Tony was diagnosed with stage 4-A squamous cell carcinoma of the mouth. As a patient-advocate, Monica adds valuable perspective on patient needs as well as the benefits HNC Living provides. Monica’s father Tony received transportation and equipment support from HNC Living Foundation, and it thrills us to report that Tony has now been cancer free since 2019.



Patient Spotlight

MANDY LINNEBUR



A wry grin spreads across Mandy Linnebur’s face as she whoops and waves a three-foot-tall poster of her daughter Kaylee high overhead. It’s Senior Night at Ozark High School, and the star goalkeeper shoots back a sheepish glance from the field that every mom knows:

“C’mon, Mom...”

In truth, Kaylee’s grateful for the opportunity to be a little embarrassed. Mandy’s attendance at this particular Senior Night – and the big smile that now drapes her face most days – were not always assured.

Mandy was diagnosed with Squamous Cell Carcinoma when Kaylee was a freshman and her older sister, Kenzie, was a senior in high school. At her family’s nudging on Thanksgiving, Mandy made an appointment to have what she thought was a nagging strep throat evaluated.



More than 8,158 expensive dental services like Mandy’s have been covered by HNC Living Foundation since 2014.

Within days, she and her husband of 21 years, Brandon, were preparing for surgery – and the beginning of what would be a very difficult road.

“I had a neck dissection to remove over 40 lymph nodes as well as a radical tonsillectomy, which involved removing most of the inside of my throat,” Mandy remembers. “Then, I had proton radiation every day, five days per week for six weeks.”

Those treatments were in St. Louis, Mo. – four hours from the family home and the beautiful, faith-filled life her and Brandon had built together. Layer in the Covid pandemic’s travel and visitation restrictions and this was an impossibly difficult, lonely, and stressful time for the Linnebur family.

“For the first few hours of her surgery I was getting regular updates from the doctor,” Brandon remembered. “And then they stopped. That’s when it sunk in that I could be alone with the girls. The stress of holding the family together, traveling to see Mandy, ensuring my girls had

everything they needed – it was a lot.”

Thankfully the Linneburs had silent friends in the background – the HNC Living Foundation.

“HNC Living Foundation took care of everything for us,” Mandy remembered. “They paid for our travel and lodging during my treatments, all of that expensive dental work, everything. They even helped place me with a Nurse Navigator.”

“HNC Living Foundation took care of everything for us. They paid for our travel and lodging during my treatments, all of that expensive dental work, everything.”

“I don’t even remember seeing a bill,” Brandon said.

Today, Mandy is cancer free. And while she still has severe trismus because of the surgeries and proton radiation, the gratitude and quiet presence she now feels doing “normal” things with her family brings immense peace.

HNC Living Foundation has provided thousands of families like the Linneburs the financial and emotional support they need to focus exclusively on their recovery.



Make a gift today at hncliving.org/donate. Because every goalie deserves to see Mom on Senior Night.



Patient Spotlight

**CHRISTIE
ARNOLD**

Glass of rosé in hand, Christie Arnold smiles as she thinks about her recent five-year clean PET scan.

These peaceful days were impossibly hard earned.

At the age of 40, Christie found herself grappling with a challenging cancer diagnosis that led to 37 radiation treatments and three cisplatin chemotherapy sessions. She was constantly in pain, filled with fatigue, and distressed by the skin sores that emerged from her many treatments.

“HNC Living Foundation changed my life – and I’m excited to now pay it forward.”

As Christie looks back, she emphasizes the importance of proactive pain management, ensuring adequate nutrition, and maintaining a positive mindset for expediting the healing process. Her words carry the weight of experience as she encourages others not to endure the treatment’s challenges in silence.

HNC Living Foundation entered Christie’s life after the completion of her treatments, providing a crucial lifeline where Wyoming’s aftercare programs were notably lacking.

With her additional medical costs and transportation expenses covered, Christie was able to focus exclusively on her recovery.

Celebrating a recent five-year clear PET scan, Christie’s journey also witnessed a remarkable



HNC Living Foundation has paid for 42,031 trips to cancer treatments like Christie's in our first 10 years.

recovery in her kidneys, progressing from level four to level two after the cisplatin treatments weakened them. Since working with HNC Living Foundation, Christie has moved to Florida which has brought new friends, a fulfilling career, and a profound appreciation for life.

Through her journey, Christie has emerged not just as a survivor but as someone who seeks to make a

positive impact on others facing the challenges of this type of cancer. Her newfound purpose revolves around helping those who tread a similar path, a testament to the strength that can be found in overcoming adversity. HNC Living Foundation played a pivotal role in her story, highlighting the importance of support networks for patients living with head and neck cancer and the after affects that come with it.



“I can’t encourage people strongly enough to donate to this wonderful organization. No matter if your contribution is big or small, I assure you its impact will be lasting.” Donate today at hncliving.org/donate



**Katie Drablos,
Dancer and Survivor**

Katie Drablos is a professional dancer and choreographer in New York City who battled tongue cancer at 34 years old.

In 2023, HNC Living asked Katie Drablos to join us for MASKS for AID as a dancer and swiftly became a cherished friend and dedicated supporter of the HNC Living Foundation.

To honor her third year cancer diagnosis anniversary, she organized a benefit show called "Only the Best" to raise funds and awareness for HNC Living Foundation.

We're thrilled Katie is again bringing her talents to the 2024 Masks for Aid event in Kansas City.

Tragedy to Triumph

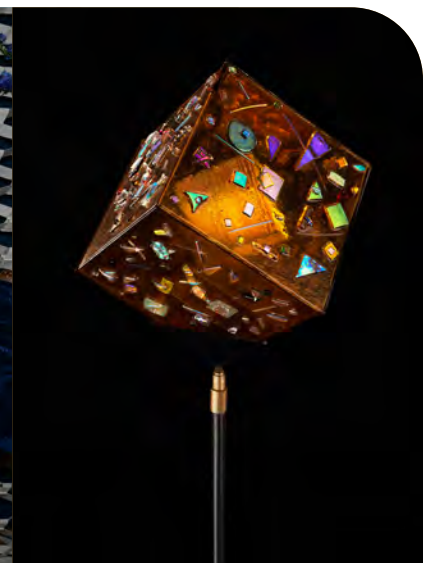
CELEBRATING COURAGE BEHIND THE MASK

MASKS for Aid is the inspiring brainchild of our founder, Teresa. Radiation masks for head and neck cancer patients are the resulting artifacts of a brutal process. Patients are bolted to a table and unable to move for several hours while being fitted.



One day, Teresa decided to flip the script; after all, what better way to restore the power for which cancer robs so many than to create a beautiful work of art?

Since its inception in 2015, the Masks for Aid fundraising event has become a signature annual gathering for HNC Living Foundation. With an average attendance of more than 200 guests, the event has grown into a highly anticipated occasion that not only entertains but also serves a critical purpose – raising more than \$3.1 million for HNC Living Foundation. The event showcases the artistic talents of the community, featuring stunning mask designs that symbolize resilience and hope in the face of this challenging disease.



Remembering Mike Romero

SOFTBALL STAR SUPPORTS HNC

Two-time NCAA National Champion and 2020 Olympic softball star Sydney Romero was always prepared to overcome adversity on the diamond.

What no one could prepare her for was the decade-long battle her father, Mike, endured with head and neck cancer. Mike underwent extensive chemotherapy and radiation for Stage 3 tongue cancer but eventually doctors ordered a neck dissection where more than 30 nodes were removed. Like many other head and neck cancer patients, feeding restrictions, breathing difficulties, and extensive medical treatments became his new norm.

HNC Living Foundation is grateful for the contributions of Sydney and her siblings via the Athletes Unlimited Softball organization, which



donated 100% of her end-of-season bonus to the non-profit of her choice. Because of people like the Romeros, the next family who is dealt this heartbreaking hand will have the financial resources they need to focus exclusively on recovery.

Mike fought valiantly for 12 years before his passing earlier this year. The entire HNC Living Foundation extends its heartfelt condolences to Sydney and her siblings, Sierra, Sophia, and Mikey, and Mike's wife, Melissa.

HNC Living Foundation is grateful for the contributions of Sydney and her siblings via the Athletes Unlimited Softball organization, which donated 100% of her end-of-season bonus to the non-profit of her choice.

Sydney Romero and Alyssa Lavelle, Director of Marketing and Special Events, HNC Living Foundation

Putt With Purpose

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Since its inception in 2018, The Annual HNC Living Foundation Golf Invitational has quickly evolved into one of our premier fundraising events.

Exclusively invitation-based, this annual gathering unfolds at prestigious golf clubs that offer participants a can't-miss experience. Unlike other charity tournaments, ours is marked by fast-paced gameplay, spirited competition, and unique wrinkles that ensure +8 and +28 handicaps, alike, have a great time.

Post tournament, attendees convene for a social networking hour, which provides a platform for meaningful

connections and a deeper understanding of our mission.



The event seamlessly weaves together high-quality golfing, competition, and a commitment to the foundation's cause, making The Annual HNC Living Foundation Golf Invitational a standout affair that not only generates funds but also heightens awareness for the foundation's ongoing support for those affected by head and neck cancer.

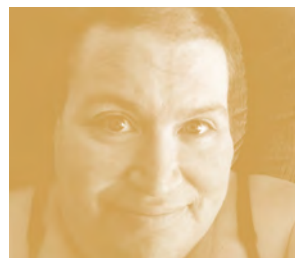
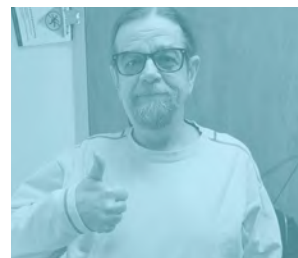
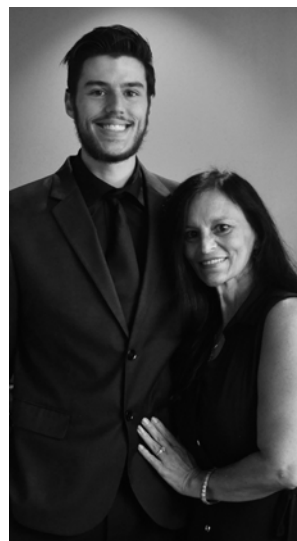


Since inception the event has raised \$889,000 and hosted over 116 different golfers.



If you want to make an impact with our patients, visit hncliving.org/donate

"People who have not had issues with cancer and their teeth really don't understand what this diagnosis does to their self esteem. Without this grant, I don't know what I would have done!"
- Kristina B.



Praise For HNC Living Foundation's Mounting Support
**THE MANY FACES OF HEAD
AND NECK CANCER**

"I can't tell you how much we appreciate your help. My brother was able to get dental quickly, so he was able to quickly start his radiation."
-Anita M.



"I often cry, not tears of sadness or depression, but tears because my heart is so greatly touched by the kindness of HNC Living Foundation and its people." -Donna W.







Your support is critical to our mission
– helping more head and neck cancer
patients conquer the burdens related to
their treatment and recovery. Whether
your gifts are of time, treasure, or
assistance in spreading our brand far
and wide, join us in making a difference
in the lives of head and neck cancer
patients everywhere.

hncliving.org/donate



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