Celebrities Join the Ultimate Walk to End Pancreatic Cancer at PanCAN's PurpleStride

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network's fundraiser takes place in over 50 communities across the nation on April 25.

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LOS ANGELES, Calif. (March 12, 2026) — Today, the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN) announced the celebrity ambassadors participating in this year's PanCAN PurpleStride, the ultimate walk to end pancreatic cancer. Taking place in more than 50 communities across the country on April 25, 2026, PurpleStride is an inspirational day to celebrate survivors, honor those we've lost and raise money to fund life-changing programs and services for patients with pancreatic cancer and their families. The signature fundraiser and largest community event of the year aims to raise $17 million.

Notable people with a personal connection to the disease who are lending their voices this year include "Days of our Lives'" actor Stephen Nichols; TV host from the Food Network, Jeff Mauro; reality stars Joan Vassos and Bailey Taylor Brown; actors from "Star Trek," including Kitty Swink, Armin Shimerman, Jonathan Frakes, John Billingsley, and TV writer-producer Juan Carlos Coto, who lost his brother to the disease, "Star Trek Enterprise" Executive Producer Manny Coto.

"We are honored that our celebrity ambassadors have chosen to stand with us in the fight against pancreatic cancer. Their personal connections to this disease make their advocacy incredibly meaningful, and their voices are helping amplify the urgency of our mission," said Julie Fleshman, President and CEO of PanCAN. "PurpleStride is about the power of community: survivors, families and friends, researchers, advocates, and supporters coming together at events across the country to fight back against this devastating disease. Every step taken on April 25th represents hope, progress, and a shared commitment to changing the future of pancreatic cancer. When people unite in this way, we accelerate research and expand support for patients and families."

Celebrities participating in PanCAN PurpleStride include:

- Jean Trebek: Shortly after her husband, "Jeopardy's" Alex Trebek, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2019, she stood by his side when he bravely took the stage at PanCAN

PurpleStride Los Angeles. Jean has supported PanCAN ever since and will attend PurpleStride Los Angeles.

- Lisa Niemi Swayze: Writer, director, actress, dancer and wife of the late actor, Patrick Swayze, who passed from pancreatic cancer, will participate in PurpleStride Los Angeles. Lisa is a longtime ambassador of PanCAN.

- Star Trek Team: For the sixth year in a row, Team "Trek Against Pancreatic Cancer" will participate in PurpleStride Los Angeles. Jonathan Frakes ("Picard," "Star Trek: Strange New World" Season 2. "Star Trek: Fleet Academy"), Armin Shimerman ("Deep Space Nine"), the inspiring Kitty Swink, a 22-year pancreatic cancer survivor from "Deep Space Nine," John Billingsley ("Star Trek: Enterprise") and TV writer-producer Juan Carlos Coto, who lost his brother to the disease, "Star Trek Enterprise" Executive Producer Manny Coto, will boldly go where they've gone before: PanCAN PurpleStride!

- Joan Vassos: Reality star of "The Golden Bachelorette" lost her husband John Vassos to pancreatic cancer in 2021. She will be leading the team "It's Just A Sprain."

- Bailey Taylor Brown: Bachelor Nation favorite from "The Bachelor" and "Bachelor in Paradise," whose father, NBA referee Tony Brown, passed away from pancreatic cancer, will be fundraising in his honor as Team Captain for "Team Tony Brown #6Strong."

- Stephen Nichols: "Days of our Lives'" actor, who lost his co-star Drake Hogestyn and his father-in-law to pancreatic cancer, will be leading the team "Hogey's Home Runners."

- Jeff Mauro: Food Network star, whose father passed away from pancreatic cancer in February 2025, is team captain of "In Gus We Trust" in honor of his father, Gus.

- Rosa Blasi: Actress and author, who has a family member and friend impacted by pancreatic cancer

Pancreatic cancer is one of the most difficult cancers to detect and treat. It is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States and is on track to become the second. It remains the only major cancer with a five-year survival rate below 20%. Because symptoms are often vague and mimic other conditions, most patients are diagnosed in the later stages, when tumors are inoperable and treatment options are limited. Detecting the disease earlier, when surgery is possible, is critical to improving outcomes. There is no standard screening strategy for pancreatic cancer and few treatment options, highlighting the urgent need for increased funding and awareness to improve patient outcomes.

PanCAN PurpleStride is PanCAN's largest community event of the year. More than 60,000 people nationwide are expected to participate this year to support and honor everyone affected by the disease. It's a family-friendly day filled with fun, hope and the power of community. PanCAN PurpleStride is generously supported by our Leading National Partner, Revolution Medicines and National Sponsor, AbbVie. To register for free, donate, or learn more, visit purplestride.org. For those who can't make it in person, you can still participate by registering for PurpleStride Your Way — wherever you are and in any way you would like.

For anyone impacted by pancreatic cancer, contact PanCAN Patient Services to be connected to a case manager who can provide compassionate support and free, one-to-one, personalized information about the disease, treatment options, clinical trial searches and more to patients and families.

For more information about the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network and its urgent mission to save lives, visit pancan.org or follow PanCAN on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

About the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN) is the leading organization dedicated to advancing progress against pancreatic cancer. We unite the pancreatic cancer community and push every boundary to create a world where survival is the expectation — not the exception. PanCAN empowers patients and caregivers with the resources and knowledge they need to advocate for the care they deserve. We are pioneering the advancement of an early detection strategy for pancreatic cancer and revolutionizing the development of advanced and personalized treatments; and we are building and mobilizing the pancreatic cancer field to ensure better outcomes for all those who face pancreatic cancer today and all those who will fight this disease tomorrow.

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