



**Survivor Story: Richard LeBlanc**  
**Lafayette Fire Department, Captain assigned to Engine Company 11**  
**Diagnosed with Large B Cell Lymphoma (Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma) 2018**

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In the beginning of November 2018, I had seen an Ear Nose and Throat Doctor for with what appeared to be tonsillitis. After testing, it had been confirmed that it was Large B Cell Lymphoma and not tonsillitis. The words CANCER affects you mentally just as much as it does physically. The first thing I thought was "why me?", and that is a question that no one can answer. Then fear set in, am I going to die, who's going to take care of my family, how am I going to pay for this, what do I do next? Well, a lot of these questions were answered by the dedicated support of Firefighter Cancer Support Network. I found so much information in the Survival Guide and Toolbox.

As a firefighter who was trained and taught to assist others, it was very hard to admit that I was now, the one that needed the help of others. After my oncologist set up my treatment plan, which included extensive chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant, a representative from FCSN, came to the hospital to meet with my family and me. His name was, Holden Leon, who is also one of my co-workers. He brought the Toolbox and Survival Guide to us and he let us know that he was there for anything we needed day or night. Holden called often to check on us. He even came to the hospital down in New Orleans, where I had my transplant to check in

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on me. I was so sick I couldn't really visit with him but, I know that he was a great comfort and assisted my wife during that time. She told me there were a few times that Holden was the one she could cry to and he was just there to listen and encourage her.

Not only did FCSN help me and my family, they were successful in lobbying and getting the state of Louisiana Legislators to pass the Presumptive Act for Firefighter Cancer. The type of cancer that I had and with the amount of years that I had worked fell under the Presumptive Act qualifications. Because of all their hard work all of my extremely expensive, treatments from chemotherapy to the stem cell transplant were all paid in full through workman's compensation. This was such a HUGE relief and one less stress to deal with.

This was not an easy process to go through and I know that I could NOT have done it without God on my side. He gave the doctors wisdom and me the strength that I needed daily to get through. I want to thank FCSN for all the hard work that they do to help those of us in need. God Bless you all.

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