



Survivor Story: Russell Steppe
San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (Retired), Captain, Fire Investigator, Rescue Tech
Diagnosed with Breast Cancer which resulted in a Double Mastectomy



On February 26, 2021, I was diagnosed with breast cancer (only 1% of men get it). I put the word of my diagnosis out to my fire department family. Soon one of our chiefs who also had breast cancer referred us to FCSN where my wife and I each received a mentor and our FCSN toolbox.

I was retired almost 7 years, separated from my FD love, but FCSN found me/us, they sent an FCSN toolbox to organize us, and provided firefighters and fire wives that have battled cancer to talk to us. They supported us just like the crews did when I was on the job. Our FCSN Toolbox is a daily reminder that we are not forgotten.

From the first time I was contacted by FCSN I felt like I was back in the fire station, back on the job, interacting with people who understood what I was going through. And on the day, I/we received our toolbox in the mail it was extra special to me and my wife. It was much more than just a box to put my cancer related stuff in, it was like the personal alert device on my SCBA had sounded and my FCSN brothers and sisters had come to say, "We've got you."

So, we keep our toolbox in our office in a place where we can see it as a reminder that FCSN has got us. We put all of my cancer related paperwork and even my meds in the toolbox, it's our special place that shows us and reminds us that we're covered.

My wife and I have been so blessed by the response that we've received from the FCSN that we both can't wait for the day that we get to be FCSN mentors so we can bless FF's and their families like we've been blessed.

Our Vision: To be the global leader in firefighter cancer support, awareness, and education.

Our Mission: To assist firefighters and EMS providers and their immediate families diagnosed with cancer by providing badge to badge support, training and guidance.