**Further Together: The ORAU Podcast**

**Anjee Davis, CEO of Fight Colorectal Cancer, and Ryan Vieth, guest co-host**

**March 5, 2024**

00:01.14

michaelholtz

Welcome to Further Together: The ORAU Podcast. As ever, it's me your host Michael Holtz from the communications and marketing department at ORAU and I am kind of vibrating with excitement, I'm not going to lie ,about this episode um for a number of reasons. Um, for those who have been listening. You know that I've had the opportunity to bring on experts and leaders from the cancer advocacy organizations that I've been working with for the last several years. This is another one of those episodes where we're going to talk about an organization called Fight Colorectal Cancer and through that organization I met my co-host, my best friend in the world, Ryan Vieth. Welcome buddy.

00:53.42

Ryan Vieth

Um, good morning. Thank you very much I'm glad to be here I'm glad to be here with Angie. Fight CRC has been so critical to my health and us.

00:53.92

michaelholtz

Welcome Buddy I'm so glad you're here. Right? exactly.

01:09.47

Ryan Vieth

Meeting each other and all of that. So.

01:12.40

michaelholtz

Absolutely so we met um as part of ambassador weekend in 2023 when we were Fight CRC ambassadors. Of course we are still ambassadors once an ambassador always an ambassador but 2023 was our year and we met in Branson, Missouri and just kind of hit it off which has been kind of awesome. So so here we are a couple of years later year and a half almost two years later doing some great work together and we couldn't do any of this without our guest.

01:35.46

Ryan Vieth

Definitely.

01:49.29

michaelholtz

Anjee Davis, who is the CEO of Fight CRC. Welcome to Further Together.

01:54.21

Ryan Vieth

Um, welcome. Um.

01:55.37

Anjee

Um, thank you for having me This is an excellent um duo here that I get to talk to. I'm really excited to be here and I love our ambassadors so you all would have found your way either way, but we're really glad to that you're a part of the Fight CRC family.

02:13.92

michaelholtz

Absolutely so glad to be part of it. Um, Angie, you are the CEO of Fight CRC. Gow did you get to be where you are today?

02:26.79

Anjee

Um, gosh That's a long question. Um, it ages me by um I'll answer it for you. Um I've been in cancer for a couple decades now. Actually I started in clinical trials.

02:31.68

Ryan Vieth

Um.

02:43.70

Anjee

Um, initially as a clinical trials. Um administrator and then I moved to the University Of South Carolina where I had the opportunity to work for Dr Frankbergger who's a basic scientist. Um, and he had a multicancer um multidisciplinary group. Scientists at the University Of South Carolina um focused just on colorectal cancer and that's sort of where I had my first real introduction to the research behind cancer treatment cancer. Um, in general.

03:07.81

michaelholtz

Um.

03:18.68

michaelholtz

Got her and how did you find Fight CRC then.

03:27.32

Anjee

Actually I was a scholar so I was at the University Of South Carolina and so as a federally employee you can't or a state employee. You can't lobby and so um.

03:37.00

michaelholtz

Right.

03:40.71

Anjee

I was young and excited to be a part of the Colorado Cancer Community and I found a group that was called C3 at the time and I applied for a scholarship to go to Washington Dc and hear about policy my background's in public policy. So I was interested in like what is the intersection between. You know the research that I'm seeing done and policy efforts in Washington d c so I applied and I basically said um, you probably want these fellowships to be for survivors I'm not a survivor but I'm very committed to the cause please please please I would really like to go because i. Husbands in grad school and this is the only way it could go. So um, they accepted my application and I was actually a scholarship to call on congress um, back in 22009 my gosh.

04:24.60

michaelholtz

Um.

04:31.83

michaelholtz

Um, okay.

04:36.00

Ryan Vieth

Um, wow.

04:37.72

Anjee

Thousand and nine

04:41.28

Anjee

Um, yes, and so what.

04:41.32

michaelholtz

Um, nice and.

04:43.45

Ryan Vieth

Um, so you were on that side with the research and that and then you came over into this advocacy side.

04:50.47

Anjee

Yes, and so when I went to University Of South Carolina the first thing I did was I said hey well where are all the patients because I walked into this big building with lots of labs and I said well where are all the patients and so Dr Burger said I don't. I don't have patience because I had moved from Missouri to South Carolina for this job and so um, he was like no no, no, no, no, we we do basic science so we have mice. Um, and so I was like oh well this was a little different than what I expected and so over the.

05:11.98

michaelholtz

Companion.

05:20.35

michaelholtz

Are you.

05:28.18

Anjee

Decade that I worked for work to there. Um, my job became not only administrating the core facilities. So providing services to young faculty members that were starting up their labs but bridging the science to the Community. So. My background was not in basic science. Um, and so I gravitated to it and just like every good you know, scientist and Academic Dr. Burger said if you can find the money you can do it. So Do whatever you want to do just find the money on your own and you know keep me posted So ah.

05:57.75

michaelholtz

Right.

06:01.40

Anjee

That's when I started writing for writing grants and finding opportunities and ultimately bridging that basic science research unit into the community and we got a million dollars in perpetuity from the state of South Carolina to kickstart a coial cancer screening program. So. You know it's the perfect marriage at the time in South Carolina that we had the credibility of the university and the researchers and the public health workers. Um and we were able to pull in the gastrorology community um and survivors. Actually ultimately a survivors who got the funding from the state. Um, but to justify just how important colorectal cancer prevention is in the state of South Carolina

06:39.86

michaelholtz

For her.

06:51.95

Anjee

And then we were able to evaluate the success of the program and and ask for additional dollars but it was a great effort and that's where where I got started and then after that I um. Met the president at c 3 at the time not quite caloricial cancer and Nancy Roach who is the founder of Fight C Orc and um I hadt just had a child and I said no I think I want to. Do something new and different and really work with survivors more because that's what kind of where my heart was and they said well why don't you come to fight c sea and commute from charlesson South Carolina to Dc it was like okay okay, let's give it a whirl. Okay.

07:25.59

michaelholtz

Um, listen.

07:38.25

michaelholtz

Um, and here you are.

07:38.91

Anjee

Um, and here I am.

07:40.93

Ryan Vieth

Um, and so obviously Michael and I in working with you and invites herec. You've got such a big heart and as you've talked about the advocacy and the work with those of us who have kids you're in are working with that. What was the progression towards the Ceo position that you've taken with fight Crc and you know what did that process look like what is that brought forth in fight Crc and you know helped you and. And the different things that you've you've done for the community.

08:21.89

Anjee

You know when I first started at fight coloral cancer. The first thing I did was probably mary my background sort of the academic world. You know, sort of process to what we did at fight cloical cancer. Um, we did hope focus groups. Around the country both rural urban East Coast west coast you know midwest and did focus groups with survivors because the first thing I did was I had a screening background but I didn't really understand the pe majority I had a core group of survivors in South Carolina that I worked with that really. Changed my trajectory of like where I wanted to be um, personally we had a postdoctoral fellow that was a chemist um who was diagnosed with coloral cancer stage 3 his wife was a primary care and I worked really close with him. Um. At the time that I was at the university and um, he literally passed out by the toilet bleeding um and he just didn't want to tell anybody that he was having challenges and didn't want to burden his wife who was also pregnant. Um and had.

09:21.37

michaelholtz

Oh wrong.

09:30.51

Ryan Vieth

Sure.

09:33.23

Anjee

We had a baby or was going to have a baby and so um, Mark just hid all these sentences for so long and then came to me and said hey I'm in ah I'm in a spot and so I ended up losing Mark to colorectal cancer. A year and a half later and he just really, um, you really just showed to me that it doesn't matter what your socioeconomic background is doesn't matter if you're black brown white purple. Whatever um, you're a stigma associated with colorectal cancer that was very different.

10:03.43

michaelholtz

Um, move.

10:12.89

Anjee

Two decades ago um and so I ended up really thinking. How do we change the face of this disease because that's really kind of the first step we had um. Support groups in South Carolina and 1 person would show up and if you went to a breast cancer support group 25 people would show up so I started like asking and digging in like why is this happening? um.

10:30.32

michaelholtz

Um, the sore.

10:41.30

Anjee

And so along with an answer to your question is that those connections those real barriers to me really like drove that public health ah mindset that this is a disease you can prevent. It's a disease you can literally. It's like 1 of 2 cancers. You can prevent. The second leading cause of cancer death and I know that you all know these facts but why is the country not paying attention to this and so I think that's what really drove me and then talking about stigma my father-in-law. So I have been working in colorectal cancer for 5 years talked about it all the time. Like literally had blue on all the time with the words fullectal pizz on my t-shirts and he came to me after his colonosc me said oh I had 8 pops but I always have polyps and I said how many polyps have you had and he's like oh I've had over 13 polyps and I was like what.

11:17.81

michaelholtz

Um, let's move.

11:34.10

michaelholtz

Whoa.

11:36.14

Anjee

And he was like oh yeah, we don't We don't talk about that like you know and so I immediately got my husband's scream and ah because he was.

11:40.19

michaelholtz

Um.

11:48.53

Anjee

Said were they precancerous polyps were they serrated Polyps What kind of polyps were these were these by Benign Polyps and he literally looked at me as if I have no idea but I'll send you my records and you can read them. Um, and so he did have some precancerous polyps. And so as you all know with early age onset at the time early age onset was still not. You know, discussed the way it is national fee now. Um, but I had a good friend who was a gastrogerologist and I said hey like he had precancerous polyps in this. Um.

12:08.92

michaelholtz

By.

12:20.54

Anjee

Early 50 s I would like to get my husband screened earlier so we waited you know until until we could. But that's I mean the level of not talking about it I mean is very different than other cancers and I think that was a challenge I was willing to take on at that point.

12:36.74

michaelholtz

Yeah I remember sorry go ahead Ryan.

12:39.20

Ryan Vieth

Um, well and your personality and your warmth in your heart and your honesty in the way you speak and talk and work in this environment. That's something that's I know it's drawn me personally. 2 fights so you see I'm I'm known for being that person that that isn't exactly the norm but you're exactly right in regards to colorectal cancer. You know talking about poop and rear ends and and all of those there's that stigma that's. That's um, tied to that and then you add into it. You know Michael and I were talking individually this week about you know there? if you just you don't want to bring these things up. You don't want to share those those things about yourself. You don't even want to like you had mentioned. Say that to those who are closest to you because on 1 hand, you're trying to protect them from having to deal with what you're dealing with but then on the same side you're uncomfortable sharing those things but being able to have that personality that warmth and that you know all the things that.

13:35.16

michaelholtz

A friend.

13:54.33

Ryan Vieth

Like colorectal cancer is done in this environment of being able to share those things and allow people that it's almost a permission that's given where people are able to give and share that information and see that.

14:00.86

michaelholtz

Um.

14:08.37

michaelholtz

Yep.

14:12.63

Ryan Vieth

This isn't just me on an island dealing with this and as you mentioned you know it's becoming so big of a deal society wise in regards to the number of people that are so young that are that are having to deal with this.

14:18.79

michaelholtz

Um, content.

14:30.81

Ryan Vieth

As well as how many people are have are suffering and eventually passing away from this and it's something that we have to talk about. Um, you know it's easy for people to talk about other body parts. But.

14:39.48

michaelholtz

So.

14:47.33

Ryan Vieth

To talk about this and to share that it's uncomfortable for people but you've given an environment that really allows people to share about it and to advocate for it particularly like you said with with the laws and the rules and regulations and the things that we.

15:05.38

Anjee

Um, you know I think it really changed I don't know how how you feel about this. But um I think over the last decade We saw a real shift in Survivor boys.

15:05.55

Ryan Vieth

Really need to put on this.

15:22.98

Anjee

Coloral cancer and I think that has been huge I mean you talk about like authenticity and like that warrant it I feel like it comes from our survivors. Our ambassadors are the folks that are willing to kind of raise their hand and say I'll share my picture with you I'll share my life story with you I'll do a strong arm selfie.

15:23.29

michaelholtz

Um.

15:36.66

michaelholtz

Um, yeah, yeah.

15:42.58

Anjee

Because um, when we did those focus groups early on they were like oh this so intimidating like I don't know anybody who's had colorectal cancer I don't I've never seen this before I've never seen an ostomy I don't know what that is like um I don't say the word constipation or like whatever. Ah.

15:58.10

michaelholtz

Right? right? Diarrhea you know.

16:01.70

Anjee

You know weird things yeah like poop oh my gosh so ah I know I'd like my son got in trouble because he's this poop and butt and all that stuff all the time so and he's like Fargan's great so ah we were so we were intentional.

16:08.24

michaelholtz

Are.

16:14.62

Ryan Vieth

Um, ah.

16:20.10

Anjee

Because at the time the National Colorctal cancer roundtable had been formed. The American Cancer Society has had supported that um Colon cancer alliance was was actually our mothership right? So fight Colorertal cancer was birthed out of that.

16:30.81

michaelholtz

Okay.

16:35.31

Anjee

Organization and and coing cancer coalition was hosting five k races around the country. Um, but there wasn't a face to the disease yet even though Katie Kurrick had had a colonoscopy. It wasn't a face to somebody who was fighting the disease and so I think it was really important over the last decade that we. Saw this sort of strongarm selfie was bert out of the survivor who said I asked her this is so funny I said what is the picture of a colorectal cancer survivor and she went like that and so I was like oh okay, she goes because I'm tired of being.

17:05.96

michaelholtz

Um, ah yep.

17:12.21

Anjee

Seen as you know you know don't talk about it or I'm embarrassed to say rectal or um, you know all these things so she she her she brought her sister and mother with her. Um and then at the same time we had an advocate for New Jersey Rose Houseman who

17:16.59

michaelholtz

Um, this.

17:31.31

Anjee

Went on the capol steps and did a strongarm fthy and I was like this is it like this is the story right? like the survivors are straw. There's over 1000000 of them. They aren't like cowering to this disease they're proud of you know fighting this disease and they're living longer and. That picture meets a lot because I met a gentleman who is from Alabama and he said okay I've never met another poor recctal cancer survivor so you know similar to what you you experienced it ambassador if he met another survivor and he said that that particular survivor said oh I went golfing yesterday.

17:57.59

michaelholtz

Um.

18:07.46

Anjee

Did 18 mold and this gentleman who was from Alabama said that was all I needed to know is I was gonna have my life back. It wasn't about the treat it wasn't it was like there is life after cancer and for po oricial cancer patients I think that picture so important.

18:14.42

Ryan Vieth

Um, yeah.

18:15.11

michaelholtz

Um, yep.

18:21.45

Ryan Vieth

Um, absolutely when we talk as as people who are like with me with my stage 4 You know it's every 2 weeks I'm dealing with something Michael is twelve years out the

18:22.23

michaelholtz

Absolutely and.

18:35.38

Ryan Vieth

There is a normal that takes place after cancer. It may be a new normal but it is there I mean you think about it even in the midst of my treatments I was able to do climb for a cure for you guys last summer and climb well over twelve thousand feet of a mountain even in the midst of this.

18:36.73

Anjee

Um, yeah.

18:48.59

Anjee

Um, yes, incredible.

18:55.14

Ryan Vieth

And I think the difference I think that dawning that's taking place is it's not that there aren't colorectal patients out there or it's not that you don't know color colorectal survivors or people that are dealing with it. It's that. You don't know that they're dealing with that you know them you know I was pushing hard on my neighbors to get their colorectal examinations. My neighbor 2 doors up found Out. He has colorectal cancer and that wouldn't have been caught if we weren't.

19:16.32

Anjee

Exactly exactly.

19:17.33

michaelholtz

Um, person.

19:33.58

Anjee

Out.

19:33.97

Ryan Vieth

Talking and communicating about those things and it's it has It's become it I mean all of us know someone who is dealing with this disease or know someone who knows someone but it's not talked about and organizations like fight colorectal cancer. Those of us who are advocates in this world.

19:40.73

michaelholtz

Um, yeah, so.

19:53.31

Ryan Vieth

Talking about it sharing about it and working around and sharing our experiences really gives people that opportunity to say you know I do know someone or I have dealt with this or those types of things.

20:07.62

michaelholtz

You know.

20:12.27

Ryan Vieth

And fight colorectal cancer has really been at the forefront of allowing those of us. You know as ambassadors or like you said just people who are involved and volunteering and working with the organization to share those stories and give a face that isn't.

20:24.43

michaelholtz

Sp me.

20:30.50

Ryan Vieth

This horrible thing you know you you do have life after dealing with these things and even in the midst of.

20:40.31

Anjee

Um, you look like a healthy person like you know what? I mean you you look and so I think that there's this perception of like a 72 two year old man that has colorectal cancer because that's what you know youfc the fats with the average eightctal.

20:43.92

Ryan Vieth

Um, yeah, absolutely. Um.

20:50.39

michaelholtz

Um, yeah, ah.

20:51.30

Ryan Vieth

Um, yep.

20:56.42

michaelholtz

Withering away and yeah, all that you know.

20:57.51

Ryan Vieth

Absolutely.

20:58.48

Anjee

And but um, it's sort of changing that it could be your your brother your uncle your mother like um, that's in their 50 s or younger and just being more attuned to it because I think what we see is you have to know your risk right? like if you have blood in your soul. What's the risk.

21:14.10

michaelholtz

Right.

21:18.30

Anjee

At Hand and so if I got a colonoscopy would that save me from a different diagnosis. You know stage of diagnosis. So I think the better we are as health communicators as communicators in general about this disease that I think the more lives that can be saved.

21:24.20

Ryan Vieth

Absolutely.

21:35.85

Anjee

To your point Ryan like could your neighbors know that hey this is real I gotta go get 3

21:40.22

michaelholtz

Um, yeah, yeah, yeah, and I I.

21:42.26

Ryan Vieth

Absolutely and the the work that you guys do you know it's it's also helping in the medical field. You know those of us who are in this role or in this fight you know we even have oncologists and doctors and people who. As you had mentioned they see it as this old person's disease even now it's like no, it's not this is young and you know the point of having a quote normal life moving forward for somebody who's 50 or 40 or 30 or 20 is very different. From a normal life for somebody that's seventy or eighty or those types of things and being able to be involved and communicate that information and those changes that are taking place within the the disease and those that it's impacting is so critical. Not just for those of us who are dealing with it. But.

22:24.96

michaelholtz

Um, food.

22:39.59

Ryan Vieth

For those that are helping us in the medical and the research field.

22:43.85

Anjee

I couldn't agree more I think that's one of the things that I love about the work that we do at fight Crc is that we have this amazing disease awareness arm where we empower survivors to talk about the disease and empower them with you know the richness of tools.

23:00.38

michaelholtz

Um.

23:03.50

Anjee

Like how do you find your physician. We have a provider finder. How do you find a clinical trial. We have a clinical trial finder we have resources that they can access but then also on the research side We have a whole other effort of training research advocates so survivors to engage in the research process.

23:05.53

michaelholtz

Um, my.

23:21.76

Anjee

And then we have our path to a cure which is a report that outlines how do we get there. So what is that? What is that step forward that we need in 4 main buckets. So if etiology and biology. So why is it happening screening and prevention um treatment and then survivorship. So those are the 4 buckets of research we think are really important. Um, and the way we approach research is a little bit different than other organizations. We are not trying to be a $100000000 organization. We are trying to be a catalyst for good work. Um, in the research community and and move that forward. We a hundred percent believe that by convening researchers by getting people talking by. You know, probably goes back to that multidisciplinary approach of like bringing people from.

24:07.70

michaelholtz

Are.

24:17.57

Anjee

Radiology oncology hematology immunotherapy and saying hey with everything that we know how do we better understand the biology of colorectal cancer and then how do we attack it? um. And so that's what we've done in the last year we focused on or actually the last five years we focused on early age onset and brought in think tanks and researchers together this last December we brought in another think tank in June. We'll have a global discussion virtually around early age onset. Bringing in researchers from around the world. Last time we hosted a global discussion. It was right when covid hit and we had 400 researchers from around the world but they had nothing to do so hopefully they couldn't leave their house so we had a captive audience. Um.

25:00.27

Ryan Vieth

That.

25:06.20

michaelholtz

Um, right.

25:11.77

Anjee

So hopefully this june will have the same reception from our partners but value Kvalaustralia a rubpacolan global calling cancer alliance and all these groups that are we're all dealing with the same thing and and we got to. Have the same language and the same research questions to make it effective so we're excited to continue to push the agenda around early agenda.

25:36.59

michaelholtz

And and she and she were at this place too where it's there's this critical juncture right of like we've been saying as advocates you know coloretal cancer is going to be the number 1 killer cancer killer of people under age 50 by 2030 but then new data comes out and it's already the number 1 cancer killer of men and it's 2024 and it's number 2 among women. So. There's this like speed right? that things are happening and.

25:57.91

Ryan Vieth

Um, it's happening now.

26:08.93

Anjee

Um, oh yeah I mean it's getting real fast. Um.

26:12.87

michaelholtz

It's getting real fast and to Brian Ryan's earlier point doctors some doctors still aren't aware that like the screening guidelines are 45 and at some point right? Those screening guidelines are probably going to have to get reduced.

26:29.95

Ryan Vieth

Um, even more different.

26:31.10

michaelholtz

Because the need is obviously there.

26:33.72

Anjee

I think the one thing that we also have to distill is that there's screening and there's diagnostics so a pure screen would be. You know someone with no signs and symptoms. But the most majority of patients that are under 45 did have a symptom that got gaslighted. So.

26:39.28

michaelholtz

Right. Sure.

26:53.56

Anjee

I Do feel like there has to be an educationary on what are those signs and symptoms. How do we get physicians to sort of remove those biases that they have when when looking at a healthy. Oh she runs Marathons or she just had a baby or he you know looks generally healthy. There's no reason he's too young. To have colorectal cancer concern like rather than doing that say. Okay, let's get them to a Cul let's like rule out colorectal cancer rather than just assume it isn't that um so I do agree with you I Think there's a lot of work that could be done there and then add on there that we know there's a genetic component.

27:17.20

michaelholtz

Right? yeah.

27:29.64

Ryan Vieth

Um, right.

27:30.59

Anjee

Why are we not flagging history and really like going around the room and saying hey like we need to talk to your parents did you have did they have Polyps did they have a family history of Colic cancer. Um, to put you at a higher risk and I think that.

27:30.99

michaelholtz

Um.

27:38.68

michaelholtz

Right.

27:46.46

Anjee

If we would do a better job of treating patients and adding that level of urgency. Um, we could save a lot of lives there too while we wait for the federal government to catch up with us right? because like the Us preventive task force slows molasses. So I mean there's things we.

27:58.25

michaelholtz

Um, writes right? right? right.

28:00.50

Ryan Vieth

Absolutely.

28:03.56

Anjee

Do and I think that's 1 thing that to your point like as advocates we have to stop like saying oh when you get to it but like there are things you can do right now. So do it right now.

28:13.36

michaelholtz

Today.

28:16.56

Ryan Vieth

Um, absolutely well and so many people you know when you talk about it. People are wondering you know one of those biggest questions that I get all the time is that Well why is this happening and we're like.

28:28.40

michaelholtz

So yeah.

28:32.36

Ryan Vieth

We don't know but we know that it's happening and this is and to the point you had sitting so many of the symptoms of this and even in the midst of it are symptoms that they've attributed to other things and they don't bring. Colorectal cancer as you said well let's rule it Out. You know I I just had brain surgery because I had a tumor from my colorectal cancer that spread to my brain but the symptoms they initially attached to stress because they were the same type of symptoms. As a massive stress headache and they're doing the same thing with like you said with the gas with the nausea with all of those events that happened particularly with these younger people let's face it their their diets a lot of them aren't great and they attribute them or they gas like them with.

29:21.99

michaelholtz

Um, beautiful.

29:30.72

Ryan Vieth

It being these other things when it could be really serious but we could catch it so early and get rid of the problem for these people so that they can move on without having to deal with those things that those of us that are in the midst of this at stage 3 or stage 4 are having to deal with and. Fight Colorectal cancer is helping give those resources to those of us who are touting that message to be able to do that.

30:00.57

Anjee

I agree with you I mean wholeheartedly and I think that sort of takes us to sort of what is the next step but like how do we make this argument and make it actionable. Um, and so last year we were able to meet with the white house about how important colorectal.

30:16.53

michaelholtz

Um, with them.

30:18.15

Anjee

Is in the rise of early age onset and the moonshot program even though a lot of folks are talking about the moonshot program I think it's important to note that the moonshot program is not a funded program. So. It's not a program that has a lot of leverage as it relates to funding research projects. So we went to them and said okay, um, well fight Kinzor um wants to convene leadership around this and so we did take that opportunity to pull people from industry to say hey like engage in this fight and the reason why we did that was we.

30:40.55

Ryan Vieth

Are.

30:56.96

Anjee

Because our partners have data and data is King So like we were very strategic in who we brought to the table because we really wanted to say to them.

31:01.85

michaelholtz

Um, with who.

31:14.17

Anjee

If you really believe in this are you willing to share your data with us to see what is happening in the in the country. Um as it relates to the treatment and screening of colorectal cancer. So we've been working for the last year on this. Sort of as a shepherd of this group to say hey we aren't data scientists but you are um, will you share the data will you pull the data will you analyze the data will you tell us what it is and to give you a little bit of background like breast cancer. So breast cancer has a framework.

31:39.30

michaelholtz

Well.

31:52.17

Anjee

That the world health organization had adopted which is very clear on time to treat so time to Mammogram time to treatment and they have sequence and time associated with it. So.

32:03.83

michaelholtz

Um, okay.

32:06.93

Anjee

Should taking ninety days through this one hundred days of you know it's very clear how they put it so we took a step back after that meeting with the white house and we said well what is good cared for colorctal cancer patients given that there's all these delays and all these challenges like what should it be and um, we challenged our partners.

32:17.66

michaelholtz

Are.

32:26.46

Anjee

To help us find out what that looks like and so we hope this coming year will be have will have the same framework to say if you had a non-invasive screening test and you need a colony you should get it in this this many days if you are positive and you've been diagnosed with fluorical cancer.

32:31.91

michaelholtz

Um.

32:37.81

michaelholtz

Um, oh.

32:46.25

Anjee

It is important to get it in this money because the thing that we see and I think this is part of that survivor story is if you go to a hospital system and say oh well we can get you in in six months and what do you do like? we don't know that six months is too long.

32:47.53

michaelholtz

Um.

33:03.47

Anjee

When I start getting the message out to patients to say if you go and you say it's time for my colonoscopy in they six to six months that you should be empowered to say no, it's really important that I get it done in ninety days or it's really important that I get it done in the next two weeks or whatever that timeframe is um. To help advocate for yourselves.

33:22.35

Ryan Vieth

Um, okay, that sounds it's a made like you said that data is so important for us to move forward, but and along those lines we were talking about it before how busy March is going to be.

33:39.93

Anjee

Oh my gosh so bit.

33:41.71

Ryan Vieth

With all of those things that we're doing to share that information and to get this message out and to work with those people you know, tell us a little bit about those things particularly for fight colorectal cancer I mean the United in blue event and then call in congress and those things that fight colorectal cancer is. Doing to share that data and the message and get us in front of those people that can push these things forward based upon that information and that data.

34:09.61

Anjee

That's a great question. We're really excited about this March so we have um March colorectal cancer Awareness month will kick off for us in Washington Dc the week of March tenth so if anyone is interested joininging us. We'll be putting twenty eight thousand flags to pull a few flags on the national mall to represent the likes that we could save by 2030 and to your earlier point I think if we get on it and start pushing this agenda we we should be able to save more lives than that. Um. We'll have over 200 survivors come out. This is the biggest call in congress we've ever had. So I think we're at over 182 so um, and I think we have over 200 volunteers coming out.

34:47.37

Ryan Vieth

Um, Wow It's gonna be crazy.

35:01.55

Anjee

To united in blue to help us. But but we need more so I'll just say if you're interested, please come? Um, and then we'll have online actional arts to remind our members of how important it is to fund research to support our Cdc our public health service. Ah community. And um, we're also asking for a specific line item of funding within the dod um to fund research for our active war fighters. So we're going.

35:24.91

michaelholtz

Are.

35:29.76

Ryan Vieth

Well and isn't colorectal cancer. One of the few of those top cancer killers and events that doesn't have that dedicated resource particularly. And yeah.

35:39.88

Anjee

That's one ah hundred percent for so what we've seen is that with the dod it's high risk high-reward research and so that's why we want Dod funding. It also impacts active duty members I think we've heard with the burn pits. Um.

35:45.97

michaelholtz

Right.

35:50.62

Ryan Vieth

Um, absolutely.

35:56.92

Anjee

You are seeing higher risk of colorectal cancer. So we really want to better understand that. But what we learned is that when Dod funds research it benefits all of us because it is a different mechanism of funding it attracts young scientists. It attracts researchers.

36:04.59

michaelholtz

Absolutely.

36:08.52

Ryan Vieth

Um.

36:14.44

Anjee

So we really want that Dod funding for colorectal cancer and when pancreatic cancer was funded um tens of millions of thousands went to pancreatic cancer above and Beyond what had been done prior so we see that when you get your own line item.

36:27.72

michaelholtz

Me.

36:33.14

Anjee

Funding gets directed directly to that particular disease. So we're really excited to push that and I think we think it's very important. Um, and then we have a congressional caucus dedicated to colorectal cancer. So we'll be conveing them. But we're March is sort of the. Big shiny month but we hope that it's just a ah first step for people and they'll stay engaged year-round.

36:57.96

Ryan Vieth

1 that that's that the important part is keeping it at that forefront I know those of us that are involved with particularly on that col conder side. You know one of the things that they keep talking about is you know? Yeah, we're we're doing this as part of.

36:58.00

michaelholtz

Absolutely. Me.

37:16.76

Ryan Vieth

Colorectal care or awareness month. But it's something that we have to constantly keep at that forefront and communicate about and share about not just to help the general public but to keep it at the forefront of everything that is going on with these people that are able to you know.

37:30.93

michaelholtz

Um, yep.

37:35.65

Anjee

Um I agree.

37:35.94

Ryan Vieth

Fund or set this information up. It's something that has to be done all the time.

37:39.70

Anjee

I agree and just as a reminder I mean online will be super active. Strongarm fthies are so encouraging for those who can't come to Washington Dc and to our earlier point about. Destigmatizing I just love those stories um of seeing people share their lives with us. Um, and then I think that you know right? after call congress and right after March we'll have ambassador open up again. So for those survivors that are interested I think there's more opportunities to to get engaged after march.

38:07.56

michaelholtz

Um.

38:13.38

michaelholtz

And I think what's cool about what fight crsc does from a at from an advocacy perspective is you can get involved as little or as much as you want right? So if you're only comfortable shooting out an email.

38:31.29

Anjee

Yeah, if that's it.

38:31.30

michaelholtz

Taking a stronger selfie and posting it. You know to the to the Graham um, that's awesome. But if you want to come to Dc if you want to be an ambassador and you know, kind of dedicate a lot a year of your life to you know all things fights here see. That's an opportunity that you have as well. So it really runs the spectrum which is awesome. So.

38:56.39

Ryan Vieth

Well and you you talked about how you particularly on the research side. You're not the you know these big group but there's so much that fight colorectal cancer offers from not only the missional standpoint but like.

38:56.67

Anjee

Ah, hundred percent

39:15.29

Ryan Vieth

Michael had said you know whether it's just posting your song on Selfie on the graham or those types of things but you've got the resources the different meetups that you do all of those different types of things that you bring in that people need to be aware of and it's.

39:24.88

michaelholtz

Who.

39:27.77

Anjee

Um, oh yeah, for sure. Yeah.

39:35.00

Ryan Vieth

Just 1 more way they can be involved or help themselves as they're dealing with this or their family is.

39:36.50

michaelholtz

Absolutely and meet meet other people right? Which as we talked about earlier is so important is to meet other survivors other people who are in the thick of it. So yes.

39:48.95

Anjee

I agree it also caregivers I mean like for caretakevers to be able to kick out and this year we have a junior advocates program for kids that you know want to be more engaged, um and meet other kids who've experienced colorial concern through you know.

39:54.53

Ryan Vieth

Um, big time.

40:07.50

Anjee

Having parents go through treatment. So we're really excited about like being able to be the ah community I mean I think that that's what you know we're not um, we're not a direct support organization. But I do think we do a good job of.

40:24.38

michaelholtz

Um.

40:26.37

Anjee

When people are ready to have a sense of Community. We're there for them. Um I always say like we're sort of the grateful Dead. You know what? I mean we have like this cult like following and you know we attract like a certain type of person. That like wants to be engaged and wants to have a ah tribe to connect with.

40:45.28

Ryan Vieth

When there's so much to that that you provide those tools and those those ways of people connecting and really allow it to.

40:47.11

michaelholtz

Um, and I think that's true. Yeah.

41:02.20

Ryan Vieth

Michael and I have talked about you've allowed it to grow organically in a way that keeps people engaged because it really is something that's important to them and to those of you that are involved from the quote corporate standpoint of. Like colorectal cancer as an organization you have your ties to it as well and all of that has grown sort organically across it. You know there's an emotional and a mental and a. You know all of those things come into play and like you said with caregivers with the children with those things you're really bringing in those pieces that not necessarily everyone thinks about everybody thinks about the person that's individually dealing with it. But like you said it's.

41:46.90

michaelholtz

Are.

41:55.17

Ryan Vieth

Everybody around them that is dealing with it. It's just what are they dealing with in regards to it and by providing resources to those people and having them engaged it really does help all of us in that regard.

41:59.73

michaelholtz

Um, yeah.

42:14.82

Anjee

And just being able to connect like you all you know, just those friendships you would have never made. Um I love that I mean we have so many people from all over the country that can connect online to connect in person. They have these opportunities to.

42:17.44

michaelholtz

Um, right.

42:30.17

Anjee

Support each other and I think that's really meaningful because you know in in any category that you feel caregiver patient child friend. Um, you kind of like meeting someone who's been in your shoes and gets it and so you don't have to explain yourself. You don't have to like.

42:41.62

michaelholtz

Ga.

42:45.17

Ryan Vieth

Um, who.

42:49.00

Anjee

Qualify anything you kind of just get to be this new version of yourself having been impacted by colorectal cancer or Cancer. So We find it to be very Meaningful. We really feel like activation is a priority. So If. We're gonna come together and we're gonna be a community.. Let's do something together. Um and help that next person that's diagnosed with Flu. So That's really core to the mission of the orientation is that what we need to do as a.

43:09.53

michaelholtz

Listen.

43:25.75

Anjee

National organization with a community that is in at all 50 seats and globally that we need to make sure that we're moving it forward and I think that that's really really important I mean I know that it's a disease that we could defeat. With the energy and support of the community that we have.

43:44.77

michaelholtz

Right? And I think you know and what you said about um, bringing people together I mean you know when Ryan and I were at ambassador weekend I mean the the thing about like ambassador weekend and call on congress and. And even the meetups that you know that happen on a regular basis is because you already have this thing in common it sort of cuts through the small talk and the you know bike you you you? we It's like trauma trauma binding trauma bonding you know, sort of instantly. But but also you know oh my gosh you know who I am like immediately without having to like.

44:25.58

Anjee

Um, yes, yeah, no, it's that's very real.

44:39.36

michaelholtz

Here's where I come from and you know here's my backstory and like all of that comes later but immediately you have this instinct connection. Yeah.

44:42.90

Ryan Vieth

Um, go through all of that and deal with all that well and Michael and I know what we're dealing with and we know what we're dealing with as men but the opportunity for us to meet others. In the fight colorectic cancer community that are women in the different things that you have to deal with in regards to that or you know like you said the different communities persons of color and in in those environments and in those communities those are things that I never.

45:06.87

michaelholtz

Um.

45:15.14

michaelholtz

Absolutely.

45:16.77

Ryan Vieth

Really thought about but now have a passion and a heart for really spreading it out across those different types of persons and we never would have had that opportunity without that community basis to it.

45:25.40

michaelholtz

Even.

45:33.11

Anjee

I Love that because advocacy I think is so much storytelling. Um, and so the more engagement you have with people. Um, you get to tell their story. So even if they're not there. You can like advocate on behalf of all these different communities. All these different individuals that you've met.

45:42.68

michaelholtz

Yeah.

45:50.66

Anjee

You know what? they've experienced. You know what their lived experience is so we're we're really grateful for the the work that you all do um and the advocacy that you promote um by sharing your stories because I think those are the things that really change the world.

45:53.41

michaelholtz

Um, right.

46:10.18

michaelholtz

Angie is there anything we have not talked about in the last in the last bit of time that we want to make sure we cover.

46:16.14

Ryan Vieth

Um.

46:16.48

Anjee

I Don't think so I think we've covered everything don't you I mean it was awesome.

46:23.14

michaelholtz

Absolutely and so just for for people's awareness if you want to learn more fight colorectal cancer dot org um marches colorectal cancer awareness month we will be in DC for call on congress so pay attention to.

46:23.16

Ryan Vieth

Um, yeah, oh absolutely.

46:41.12

michaelholtz

Um, the website and our social media channels to see what we're doing and how you can get involved in you know, sending action alerts while you're at home. Um, if you're in the dcareaunited in blue needs help getting set up so you know. Come out and plant some flags on the national mall. Um, did we talk about what united in bluetos I know I had to step out for half a second. So um, but united in blue being the the installation of flags on the national mall and. What that represents cool. So um, so there you go it is oh my god.

47:23.74

Ryan Vieth

Um, and it's It's so impacting to see all of that in it in the in that area. It's It's just it's unbelievable.

47:28.16

Anjee

Oh my gosh. It's so movie even if you can't put plant flags in you're in Washington d c the first two weeks of March to see the installation and all the flags. That's it's beautiful. So encourage you to to go visit the installation while you're out there.

47:45.12

michaelholtz

Um, yeah, it's gorgeous. Yes.

47:47.43

Anjee

And we have a true people so our wall of so if you have a survivor in your life and you can either still time to put a picture um and be a part of that that visual representation on the national law in march.

48:00.85

michaelholtz

And so you can again, you can be part of it whether you're in Dc or you're in California on the same day. Your story matters. Every story makes a difference and there are so many ways you can share your story as part of calling congress and. Colorectal cancer awareness month and then all year long so there is so much that fights herecy offers Angie and I'm so glad that we got the opportunity to talk about all of that today. Thank you so much for your time.

48:32.47

Anjee

Um, well thank you for inviting me. This was so fun. It's so good to see you both? Yes yes, great to see you.

48:37.49

michaelholtz

It's good to see you too and we'll see in a couple of way.

48:38.90

Ryan Vieth

Um, see you too. Yeah, it's crazy have a good day. Absolutely it was fun by light.

48:42.68

michaelholtz

Thanks Angie will be assumed. Thank you Ryan I appreciate it bud see all I just need you all to hang on for just a second after I hit stop just to make sure.

48:47.76

Anjee

I.