

# Personal cancer fight inspires fundraising

**Laura Nelson**

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ROBYN Cameron has beaten cancer not once, but twice, and her sheer will to survive is matched only by her determination to do something about the disease that almost claimed her life.

The senior lecturer in the Department of Accounting, Finance and Economics at Griffith University, was first diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 38 when she was raising two children, Jade, 5, and Ryan, 8, with her husband, Ernie.

"I was running half-marathons and there was no history of breast cancer in our family," she said.

The diagnosis came out of the blue and the fit, non-smoker and non-drinker, said the only risk factor box she could tick for breast cancer was that of being a woman.

After undergoing radiation treatment in Brisbane, she thought she had beaten the disease. However, in 2004, at the age of 46, she was again diagnosed with breast cancer.

With two teenagers to care for, the Ashmore mum was also working fulltime as a lecturer and undertaking a PhD.

This time, the disease and chemotherapy treatment hit her really hard.

"It was a lot more challenging and my running had to be put on the backburner," she said. "I had to take 18 months off work and delay the PhD."

Determined to fight back, she set about to personally raise a massive \$433,000 for research, which did not include funds raised on committees she chaired.

"I am not a scientist, so I can't find a cure but I can help fund research to find ways to prevent breast cancer and hopefully find that cure," she said.

Ms Cameron, a program director for the Bachelor of Commerce at Griffith, has been recognised for her stellar efforts and is now vying for the highly esteemed Gold Coast Women in Business Awards 2016 Community Dedication Award. She said her goal was to help create a world where no-one had to hear their loved one say they had breast cancer.

"I believe research will provide the key to unlock the



Robyn Cameron has raised more than \$400,000 for research into breast cancer.

Picture: REGI VARGHESE

## Top women to be honoured

LOCAL women who have made outstanding contributions to the city will be celebrated at the Gold Coast Women in Business Awards at Jupiters Gold Coast on October 28, 11.30am-3pm. These will honour visionaries, innovators, change makers, women of inspiration and aspiring, young achievers.

Official guests will in-

clude Federal MP Karen Andrews and Women In Business Awards ambassadors Sarina Russo, a business icon, and Pam Parker, a former Logan mayor.

**Tickets are \$139, corporate tables \$1300 and premium tables \$1400. Book at [goldcoasttickets.com.au/event/3594](http://goldcoasttickets.com.au/event/3594). For more details about the awards, visit [WIBAA.com.au](http://WIBAA.com.au) or phone 5504 6055**

mysteries of breast cancer," she said. "What keeps me driven is the growing number of young women I meet, who cannot have children due to the effects of their chemotherapy treatment, and the women we have lost because their cancer has spread."

Ms Cameron said she also wanted to see more research into ways to maintain women's fertility and why the disease spreads in some women and not in others.

Her impressive fundraising efforts have included being a founding member of the Gold Coast Mother's Day Classic, which is held around the coun-

try, and the National Breast Cancer Foundation's (NBCF) Gold Coast Global Illumination Campaign from 2008-10. Ms Cameron has maintained the tradition at the Smith St Bridge every October.

She has received numerous awards including a Pride of Australia nomination, a Patron's Award from the NBCF and a nomination for the Gold Coast City Council's Australia Day Citizen of the Year. She also supports other fundraisers as a guest speaker and the 2015 Pink Ribbon Cup Raceday was used to launch the NBCF's Pink Minnie Breakfast Tour.