

Nancy Clifton-Hawkins,  
Breast Cancer Survivor

# CITY OF TRIUMPH

When it comes to treating breast cancer, every story is uniquely complex. Which is why having options is key. Just ask Nancy Clifton-Hawkins, who developed heart problems during the course of her breast cancer treatment at City of Hope. Her team of experts, who focus solely on breast cancer, created a tailored plan that gave Nancy the strength to get back to doing what she loves — competitive open-water swimming. That's our goal. To give every patient the tools, and the strength, to triumph over breast cancer. **Read Nancy's story and learn more at [CityofHope.org/BreastCancerCare](https://CityofHope.org/BreastCancerCare)**



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# Hope in Health Care

How a Second Opinion From **City of Hope** Saved This Breast Cancer Patient's Life

By **City of Hope**



**Kommah McDowell was successfully treated for breast cancer at City of Hope.**

**K**ommah McDowell had just gotten engaged when she found the lump in her breast. Her doctors assured her she was too young to have cancer. She insisted they remove the growth, and that's when they confirmed what she had suspected.

Lacking confidence in her doctors, McDowell had her records transferred to City of Hope for a second opinion and treatment.

As a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center with a primary focus on cancer treatment and care, City of Hope's breast cancer program is uniquely positioned to provide personalized, world-class treatment. The multidisciplinary teams that lead each City of Hope patient's breast cancer treatment are able to deliver complex, tailored care because of their individual expertise.

McDowell was diagnosed with late-stage inflammatory breast cancer—a very aggressive cancer—and told she had a 5% chance of surviving two years. To further complicate her case, McDowell and her husband learned



**City of Hope is internationally lauded for advancing the field of breast cancer through groundbreaking research, innovative clinical trials, leading-edge treatment, and premier patient care.**

chances were slim she'd ever have a child given the intense treatment she'd have to go through.

"We were planning to adopt. But the radiation oncologist said he wanted to give me a fighting chance," McDowell notes. "He understood us better than we did ourselves. So, he covered my reproductive organs. He was doing his part to make sure that if I could have a baby, my organs would be healthy enough to do it. Caring forethought like that is what makes City of Hope so special."

With superior survival outcomes at all stages of breast cancer in the Greater Los Angeles region, City of Hope's aptitude for treating breast cancer stands on its own. In addition to a breadth of state-of-the-art surgical treatment options for breast cancer, City of Hope is home to 13 dedicated breast cancer physicians and surgeons.

The cancer center pairs its expert surgeons with the latest advances, ensuring its ability to meet each patient's individual treatment needs and achieve successful outcomes. The innovative surgical approaches available at all City of Hope locations include lumpectomies and total or minimally invasive skin- and nipple-sparing mastectomies, with or without breast reconstruction surgery.

To help patients and their families throughout their cancer journey, City of Hope provides supportive care and long-term follow-up programs to help manage the process of treatment and recovery. Its Women's Center serves as a central hub for breast cancer patients to have access to a wide range of resources, including psychosocial support resources, genetic counseling and screening programs, oncology-focused cosmetology, survivorship programs, healing arts workshops, fertility counseling, and more.

Exactly two years after her final radiation treatment, McDowell got an even more surprising medical diagnosis: She was pregnant. Her miracle son, Christian, has changed her life in every way.

Now completely cancer-free, McDowell says about her experience, "City of Hope treated me as a person. I wasn't just a patient or chart. I mattered. My team cared for me all through the journey. They knew what was important to me."

For more information, visit [CityofHope.org](http://CityofHope.org), or call **626-256-HOPE (4673)**.

