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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Author, professor and cancer survivor Dr. Elizabeth Alexander selected as Fort Worth's face in national Race for the Cure ad campaign**

FORT WORTH, Oct. 4 – Dr. Elizabeth “Betsy” Alexander, assistant professor of history at Texas Wesleyan University, is currently the face of breast cancer survivors in the national Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure ad campaign, which is appearing in magazines all over the U.S., including *Fitness*, *Health*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Living Fit*, *More* and *O*. A breast cancer survivor herself, Alexander says she has been cancer free for 46 months.

The mission of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation is to eradicate breast cancer as a life threatening disease. It is a national, nonprofit organization that began the Race for the Cure in Dallas in 1983, in honor of Susan G. Komen. Rozanne Rosenthal chartered the Tarrant County Affiliate in 1992, in honor of her friend Joan Katz, three-time survivor of breast cancer. Alexander was first associated with the Komen Foundation through her daughter, Lauren Lawhon, who started working for the foundation in 1997, three years before Alexander was diagnosed with lymphatic breast cancer.

“They were such a great resource for me,” says Alexander of both the Komen Foundation

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and her daughter.

Alexander underwent ten months of aggressive chemotherapy and radiation to combat the disease. To this day, her hair has yet to grow back, and she has a continuous tingling sensation in her fingers and toes. Alexander jokes good-naturedly that while this condition is not a usual result of chemotherapy, it is a possible side effect and beats the alternative.

Alexander's positive outlook on her situation is evident to everyone around her.

"I was in [Dr. Alexander's] class when she was undergoing chemo, and not only did she never miss a class, but she was always energetic and gave her students 100 percent," says Linda Lee, director of alumni relations and Wesleyan alumna class of 2002. "I'm so grateful that I had her as a teacher and have gotten the chance to know her. She is just amazing."

Despite her illness, Alexander was always available for her students, and still is, saying that her favorite moment in any given day is when a student really understands and applies what he learned in her class.

"She is truly an inspiration," says Dr. Allen Henderson, Alexander's friend and provost at Texas Wesleyan. "It has been my great pleasure to know Dr. Alexander for the past three years. She is a dedicated, respected history professor, published author and an admirable human being. Dr. Alexander is known for her thoughtful and caring style of interacting with people of all ages and backgrounds. Every chance she has, she encourages students and faculty colleagues."

Henderson and Alexander share a common goal: to fight cancer and raise awareness. Henderson has served on the board of directors for the American Cancer Society for almost 20 years and has dedicated much of his time prior to board membership as a volunteer.

Hoping to raise breast cancer awareness and help other women like her, Alexander

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volunteers for the Komen Foundation and frequently participates in the Race for the Cure, which she plans to attend in Dallas on October 16 and in Fort Worth on April 10.

“It’s important to remember that breast cancer is more common as you get older, but young women can have breast cancer too,” says Alexander. All women should do self-exams and schedule regular doctor’s visits. ... It can happen to anyone. If they find something, insist on having it checked. Don’t ignore it.”

Aside from her work with the Komen Foundation, Alexander has been involved with a variety of community organizations and served as the Adopt-a-School chairman, Planning and Zoning Committee representative in Cleburne and a docent at the Kimbell Art Museum.

A graduate of TCU, with a PhD in history, Alexander has been teaching history classes at Texas Wesleyan for seven years. She is a published author and in 2001, her most illustrious book, *Notorious Woman: The Celebrated Case of Myra Clark Gaines*, was nominated for the National Book Award by its publisher, the Louisiana State University Press. In 2001, it was selected to receive the Langum Prize for Historical Literature, and in 2002, was awarded the Willie Lee Rose Prize for the Best Book on Southern History, written by a woman. Other professional awards include Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant in History from TCU in 1997, the Ben Procter Award from the Southwest Social Science Association in 1996, and Best Paper in the Professional Scholar Competition at the Visible Women II Conference of the Southern Association of Women Historians in 1999.

Alexander holds her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in teaching from Vanderbilt University and lives in Cleburne with her husband Jim, who co-authored a paper with her on Sacagawea following a trip they took retracing the footsteps of Lewis and Clark. The

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Alexanders will present their paper at the Medicine in the Era of Lewis and Clark convention in November, sponsored by the Medical College of Pennsylvania. Betsy and Jim have two daughters, Lauren and Elizabeth.

To join Alexander and thousands of other women in the Race for the Cure or for more information on breast cancer awareness visit [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org) or call the Komen Foundation at (817) 735-8580 (Fort Worth affiliate) or (214) 750-7223 (Dallas affiliate).

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