



**SPEAKER PACKET**

Leader,  
Survivor,  
Luminary

**PAULA SCHNEIDER**

President & CEO  
Susan G. Komen



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[LinkedIn](#)

**OFF THE CLOCK**

When Paula isn't busy running the world's leading breast cancer organization, she enjoys:

- Playing tennis
- Hanging with her dogs, Cooper and Bugsy
- Playing pickleball
- Exploring the latest fashion



**As president & CEO of Susan G. Komen, Paula Schneider is responsible for day-to-day operations, strategic direction, and is accountable for the world's largest breast cancer organization.**

Komen has made more than \$3.5 billion in investments in breast cancer research, advocacy and patient support since its founding in 1982, helping reduce the breast cancer mortality rate by 42%.

As a breast cancer survivor, mother of two daughters and having lost her own mother to metastatic breast cancer, Paula's work is personal as she brings a unique combination of business expertise and real-world perspective to Komen's mission.

During her tenure, Paula led Komen through an enterprise-wide restructuring, transforming Komen's national network of independent local affiliate organizations into a single, united entity, leveraging shared operational functions while maintaining local development and mission teams across the country. Under her leadership, Komen today serves as a trusted health care guide, providing millions of people with safe, accurate, evidence-based information and education—as well as direct patient support services including financial assistance, patient navigation, emotional support and resources. Komen also remains focused on accelerating breakthroughs for the most aggressive and deadly breast cancers, and eliminating breast cancer disparities through focused interventions that break down the barriers for Black people across the U.S.



“When life feels turbulent, you must put your oxygen mask on first. You can't take care of others until you properly take care of yourself.”



Schneider is widely regarded as a business expert in organizational management and finance. Prior to Komen, she served as CEO of American Apparel, which was the largest vertically integrated clothing manufacturer in the U.S. with over 8,500 employees and 600 retail stores internationally. In this role, she navigated one of the most notable turnarounds in the retail sector, executing and emerging from prearranged Chapter 11 proceedings while burgeoning the brand's importance. She previously served as president of the Warnaco Swimwear Group, the largest swimwear company in the world, with brands such as Speedo and Calvin Klein. As these were each public entities, her responsibilities comprised all facets of corporate governance and business oversight to include maximizing operational efficiencies, developing relevant marketing strategies and producing inspirational product offerings. Subsequently, Schneider became a senior advisor at the private equity firm, The Gores Group, where she created platform strategies for best-in-class operations and potential acquisitions. Schneider became the first female CEO in The Gores Group's portfolio of companies.

Schneider is a sought-after public speaker on impactful leadership and women's health. She has been a featured speaker at such thought leadership events as Fortune's Most Powerful Women, Yahoo! Finance, Women in Retail, Milken Institute and Dreamforce. She is currently a member and keynote speaker of C200, the preeminent global organization for the advancement of women business leaders. Paula also serves on the Bloomberg New Economy Forum's International Cancer Coalition and is a member of Fast Company's Impact Council.



“Life is not only about what you accomplish, but what you help others achieve along the way. Find some place to do good.”

# DISCUSSION THEMES

## LEADING THROUGH UNCERTAIN TIMES

“Once you’ve experienced something so personally challenging against your control, you start to sit comfortably around a thousand fires burning at once, and you can remain perfectly calm. That memo that went out two days late, or that board presentation that fell a little flat; none of those things were going to cure cancer. That’s the small stuff you don’t need to sweat.”

## DISRUPTING YOUR OWN STORY

“I spent decades in retail, and it surprises people to see me running the world’s largest breast cancer nonprofit as my ‘second career.’

But no matter where you start, everyone has a magical transferrable skillset that can lead you to a new professional vocation. It’s so important to market yourself, but also have faith in the process.”

## HUMAN-CENTERED SALES

“There’s a massive culture shift happening in our society. Our employees and customers expect more from the companies and brands they love. People want to be more than a paycheck, more than a product they buy. They want proof that the companies and products they support reflect their own personal values.”

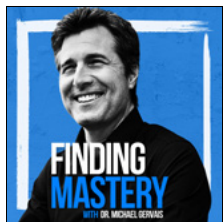
## SURVIVING AND FIGHTING CANCER

“Cancer is the biggest lesson in humility. You learn how to feel empowered when you are truly the least physically powerful of your life. To think, only 40 years ago, women were experiencing breast cancer silently and oftentimes, alone. Since then, we’ve come a far way in treatment, chance of survival and quality of life. But there is still so much work left to do, and it’s going to take a village.”

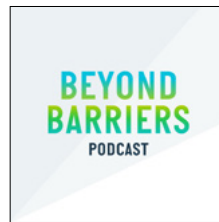
## WHAT IT TAKES TO CURE BREAST CANCER

“With any complex problem comes a complex solution. Komen is the only breast cancer organization taking a comprehensive, 360-degree approach to fight breast cancer across all fronts. This means we drive research; we provide care, financial assistance and endless resources to patients; we advocate for policies and protect patient rights; and we unify communities bonded by this disease so we can make an even bigger, collective impact.”

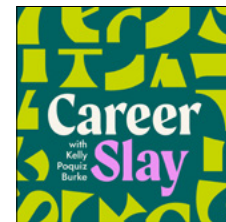
## PODCASTS



[A CEO’s Battle Through Cancer and Corporate Turnaround](#)



[From Fashion to Philanthropy: An Inspiring Career Transition](#)



[Curing Cancer Featuring Paula Schneider](#)

## BYLINES



[Imposter Syndrome: The Dave Grohl Predicament](#)



[The Hidden Barriers to Surviving Breast Cancer](#)



[How Cancer Made Me a Better CEO](#)

## IN THE NEWS

**The New York Times**

[Paula Schneider on Running American Apparel and Fighting Cancer](#)

**NonProfitPRO**

[The Great Resignation Hits the C-Suite](#)

**Forbes**

[What Happens When CEOs Get Sick?](#)

## CONTACT

If you are interested in featuring Paula on your podcast, at your company events or other speaking engagements, please fill out this [brief inquiry form](#).