

# Evelyn Lauder's Healthy Drive

**Fight For Life:** The cosmetics executive added pink ribbon and cash to cancer war

BY MARILYN MUCH  
INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY

For Evelyn Lauder, it's about determination and reaching her goals.

Nowhere is that more apparent than in her war on breast cancer.

Lauder, who's senior corporate vice president at cosmetics giant Estee Lauder, has been at the forefront of breast cancer fundraising, research and education. Her husband, Leonard, is the chairman of the company and the son of the founder after whom it is named.

In 1989, Evelyn Lauder spearheaded a fund drive that raised more than \$18 million to equip the first breast and diagnostic center.

Completed in 1992, the Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City serves as a model for offering coordinated services for one disease under one roof.

Then Lauder pushed onward. As soon as the center was built, she sought more support for breast cancer patients.

Through exhaustive research, she found that no single organization in the U.S. was focused on breast cancer research nationwide. Drawing on her marketing creativity, Lauder, who's been a force in developing products at Estee Lauder, saw that void as a window of opportunity.

"If you see there's a hole in the market, it would be a sin not to actually fill it," she said in an IBD interview.

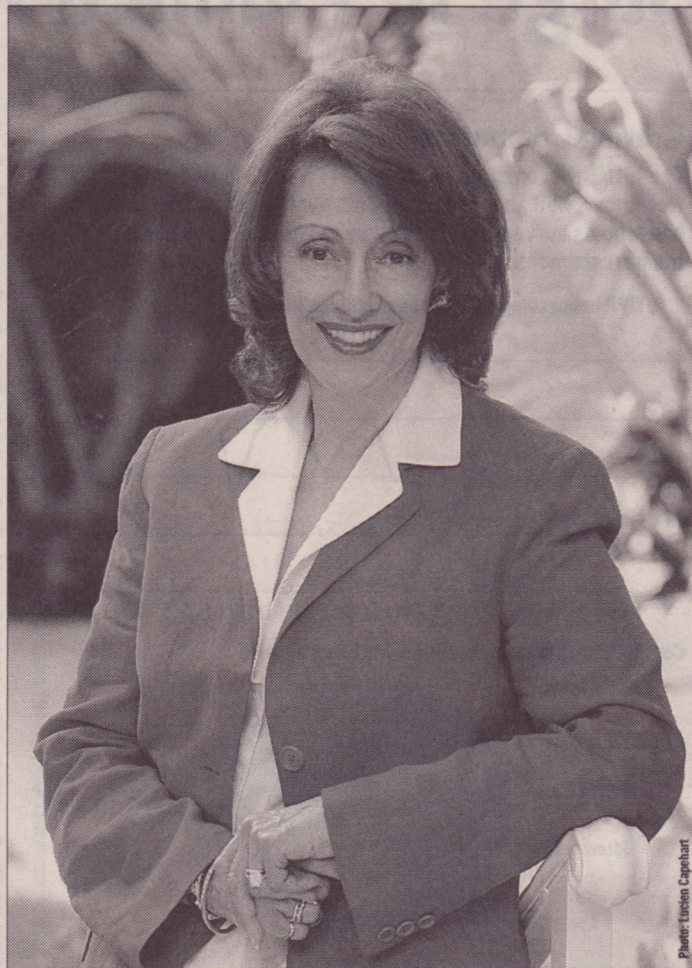
To fill that void, in 1993 she started the Breast Cancer Research Foundation, an independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to funding innovative clinical and genetic research. Today it supports medical center scientists researching prevention and a cure for breast cancer in our lifetime.

## The Prevention Side

The foundation funded a study that showed high fat in the diet increases the risk of a recurrence of breast cancer.

A minimum of 85 cents of each dollar donated to the foundation goes directly to breast cancer research and awareness programs. Under Lauder's leadership as chairman, the foundation has raised more than \$150 million. In October it awarded \$24.3 million in grants to 115 doctors, most of whom are in the U.S., with the rest in Canada, Latin America, Europe and Israel.

Lauder had to overcome some hur-



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she says applies to charity and business: Don't give up.

"Even though in the beginning it feels like you're never going to make it, you need to have the determination to follow through," she said. "One of the worst hurdles is your own doubt."

The money followed. In 1994 — only its second year — the foundation raised \$1.2 million. In 2006 it raised \$27 million.

Key to the foundation's success has been Lauder's approach to building it. She made sure she had strong leadership to oversee it — on the medical and fundraising fronts.

To assure she had the best doctors and researchers on board, Lauder consulted with oncologist Larry Norton, known for his work on breast cancer and now Memorial Sloan-Kettering's deputy physician in chief for breast cancer programs.

Lauder named Norton the foundation's scientific director, a title he continues to hold. He chairs the foundation's medical advisory board, which invites proposals from scientists with ideas they feel are

dation in many ways, including personal efforts. The royalties from her new cook book "In Great Taste" will go to the foundation — after her first two books produced money for it.

"I have a creative urge," she said. "By giving money to the foundation I feel I'm not wasting time on my own selfish things."

Then there are companies that donate a percentage of sales on certain products to the foundation. And during October, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Estee Lauder sells products within each of its brands that benefit the foundation.

Lauder's fight to eradicate breast cancer reaches beyond the clinical realm. Breast cancer used to be discussed in hushed tones. Lauder turned up the volume. In 1992, she and Self magazine editor Alexandra Penney developed the pink ribbon as the symbol of breast cancer health and awareness.

Lauder then spearheaded the distribution of hundreds of thousands of ribbons and breast self-exam instruction cards at Estee Lauder counters that October. In the 14

now extends to over 40 countries.

Lauder's inspiration to build breast cancer awareness came from observing AIDS activists.

"I found they were so efficacious in getting federal funding for treatment options and publicity," she said. "And I said, 'Why doesn't anyone do this for women with breast cancer?'"

At that time — the early 1990s — there were twice as many women dying of breast cancer as there were people dying of AIDS, she says.

"We at the company then started working at it with the awareness program," she said.

The ribbons were only part of the wake-up call. Lauder encouraged Estee Lauder corporate public relations officers around the world to pitch stories on breast cancer health to newspaper and magazine health and beauty editors.

She called on her many friends in the press to do stories that would raise awareness.

Before Lauder's program, stories in the press about breasts were about cosmetic surgery, not about the disease, she says.

People were avoiding the fear — and "everyone was terrified of breast cancer," she said.

Lauder aimed to reduce the fear. One way was through the media.

"All the health and beauty editors started to do stories about breast health and raised awareness," she said.

And so they made breast cancer acceptable in polite company — leading to more people in on the topic.

"The idea is if you have knowledge you have power, and if you've got the power you can be in control," Lauder said.

## In The Know

Patients who are more knowledgeable are more likely to cooperate. The crucial point: Women are more compliant about getting mammograms and doing breast self-exams.

Lauder came up with the under-one-roof idea by putting herself in the position of a doctor. "I said if I were a physician at Memorial Sloan-Kettering, where I was on the board, what would make my life easier with my patients?"

Her idea was to create what she calls a "one-stop shopping mall" for medicine where doctors could quickly get blood tests and provide patients with a nurturing environment that would include physical