



!Gothenburg native launching 'Sock Monkeys Against Cancer' campaign

With his wild green and orange hair and his squishy blue body, NoMo would bring a smile to even the saddest, grumpiest heart.

There's something just as lovable about Phoenix, with his red snout and unruly mop top.

The duo is cute, cuddly and cheerful but don't be fooled by their light-hearted demeanor.

They mean business.

Hopefully, big business.

NoMo and Phoenix are sock monkeys but they're not your average stuffed animals.

They're on a mission.

Jennifer Stauss Windrum grew up in Gothenburg and has since followed a career path of public relations and social media entrepreneurship in Omaha.

When her mother, Leslie Stauss Lehrman, was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2005, Windrum

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promised to make it her mission to make a difference.

She vowed to crusade for the need for early detection of lung cancer, better screenings, more research, more money, more attention.

<p>HOW TO HELP</p> <p>Jennifer Staus Windrum will launch the SMAC! Sock Monkeys Against Cancer campaign Nov. 1 on the Start Some Good platform at http://startsomegood.com/.</p> <p>Supporters can pledge to the start-up campaign via PayPal.</p> <p>If's best, Windrum said, to pledge online to keep the campaign momentum going but for those who are simply check-writers, there is an option.</p> <p>Checks may be written to Gothenburg State Bank, Leslie Lehman SMAC! Memorial Fund and mailed to P.O. Box 81, Gothenburg, NE 69138. Please add a sticky note with the message: "To be deposited into account # 84041."</p> <p>Those who write checks are not eligible for campaign rewards but those funds will still help send SMAC! monkeys to cancer patients at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.</p>	<p>LOCAL SMACI-DOWN</p> <p>In addition to raising funds online, Windrum is also encouraging others to throw SMACI-downs.</p> <p>Basically the event is similar to a Girls Night Out, Business After Hours or in-home jewelry type party with a social good twist to it.</p> <p>Windrum will host a SMACI-down in Gothenburg 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 15 at the Wild Horse Golf Club clubhouse.</p> <p>The public is invited and encouraged to come meet NoMo and Phoenix. Windrum said she is hoping to bring</p>
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In 2009, Windrum waged a high-tech attack on lung cancer—namely the lack of funding for research—when she launched WTF? (Where's the Funding) for Lung Cancer?

The campaign gained national notoriety as a finalist in the Mashable's Awards for most creative social media campaign.

All of the money raised through the WTF social media campaign goes to the Lung Cancer Alliance.

Windrum still touts the WTF campaign but is now in the process of mobilizing a whole new way to attack all types of cancer.

With sock monkeys.

SMAC! is an acronym for Sock Monkeys Against Cancer and the idea came from a pair of very ordinary, old-fashioned sock monkeys that Windrum's daughters had given her.

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“My mom lives 1,200 miles away, making all of her cancer tests and treatments that much harder for both of us,” Windrum said.

Lehrman lives in Phoenix and while Windrum makes several trips a year back and forth, she can't be there every minute.

So she gave her mom the pair of sock monkeys as buddies, something she could hug to remind her that Windrum is always with her.



“I wanted to give my mom something she could keep,” Windrum said, “something filled with comfort that she could hold onto.”

The next thing she knew, NoMo and Phoenix were born.

NoMo, the ringleader of SMAC!, and his monkey pal, Phoenix, are mobilizing to help cancer warriors SMAC! cancer with tangible love and comfort along with some major sock monkey mojo.

“They are a reminder that no one fights cancer alone,” Windrum said.

She is getting the campaign off the ground Nov. 1 through a relatively new avenue called crowd funding on the platform Start Some Good.

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Crowd funding connects social entrepreneurs with regular people who want to help make their startup/idea/invention a success.

“Funds pledged to my SMAC! campaign on the Start Some Good platform are used to launch my SMAC! Sock Monkeys Against Cancer product line,” Windrum said.

She has one month to raise \$35,000 to get the monkeys off the ground.

If Windrum reaches the \$35,000 mark, production of the monkeys will begin immediately and all those who pledge between \$50 and \$1,000 receive the SMAC! monkey of their choice and can determine how many monkeys they wish to keep and/or to be given to someone fighting cancer

If the \$35,000 goal is not met, donors will receive their money back and Windrum will take a new route.

The SMAC! campaign has several goals:

Tangible support: Provide constant comfort, sock monkey “mojo” and a cancer-crushing companion to those moving through their cancer journey.

Giving: One SMAC! equals two. Following the model set by Warby Parker Eyewear or TOMS Shoes, with every monkey purchased, a second monkey will go to someone else with cancer.

Social change: By giving to those impacted by cancer, you will also be contributing to advances in cancer research and programs as a portion of the proceeds will go to the National Coalition of Oncology Nurse Navigators program and The Nebraska Medical Center for lung cancer research.

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Elite team: Windrum wants to partner with health-care providers to create an entire line of SMAC! monkeys to be delivered to each of their cancer patients with a custom monkey for each type of cancer.

“We want the SMAC! gang to unite those with cancer and those affected by cancer with tangible love and comfort,” Windrum said. “We want to serve as a bridge between health care organizations and the patients they treat and we want to create social change.”

Prototypes of NoMo and Phoenix have already made their way into hospitals and offices around the country.

Windrum has taken them on several business trips and Lehrman takes them to all of her doctor visits and for hospital stays.

“That way, she feels me with her,” Windrum said. “Mom and I believe everyone impacted by cancer deserves to feel the same, and to hold in their hands or hug snugly in their arms these soft, cuddly creatures whose hair is as crazy as their determination to SMAC! this disease.”

Time is of an essence, though.

“My mom is now in hospice care,” Windrum said. “I am working as quickly as I can to launch the campaign and make it a reality while she is still with us.”