



## Runway For Recovery

By Remy Ferber

It was a night of triumph, optimism, inspiration... and great looking clothes. On Thursday evening, October 16<sup>th</sup> the Nashawtuc Country Club was the scene of “Runway for Recovery,” a foundation established to advance the cause of breast cancer awareness. Survivors and daughters “strutted their stuff” in a grand fashion show to raise money for “Runway for Recovery”, and the effort was incredibly empowering for everyone.

The heart and soul behind this effort is Middlesex’s own Olivia Achtmeyer. This non-profit effort is Olivia’s tribute to her mother, Candace Achtmeyer, who passed away from breast cancer in 2001. After her mother’s passing, Olivia was able to reflect upon the many people who had supported her family as she dealt with her mother’s illness and subsequent passing. Among them was her mother’s doctor of ten years, Dr. John Erban at The Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center, who is responsible for creating The Patient Caregiver Fund, a center to help families support their brave mothers, sisters, aunts, or friends fight their battles. The Patient Caregiver Fund, the sole recipient of all proceeds of “Runway for Recovery”, supports families and caregivers of breast cancer patients, specifically by assisting in the education and training of caregivers, as well as providing necessities not covered by patient’s insurance, such as wigs and prosthetic devices.

At this year’s event, rooms were decorated in bright pink balloons, black and white polka-dotted table cloths, with jars of pink and white candy set up for tasting. While 125 donators enjoyed cocktails and hors d’oeuvres, they bid on various items in a silent auction, while a number of girls from Middlesex’s senior class volunteered to welcome guests and photograph the event. The atmosphere buzzed with inspiration and

optimism, moods which were further heightened by the hopeful, happy attitudes of the beautiful models as they walked down the catwalk.

While many of us know her as a teacher, coach, and advisor, Ms. Achtmeyer has taken a very personal tragedy and channeled her grief towards a cause which creates hope and provides for a better future for families and caretakers of breast cancer victims. Ms. Achtmeyer is truly a heroine within the Middlesex community. The women who braved the runway in honor of all the mothers, sisters, aunts, and daughters affected by breast cancer are also role models within our society.

As a result of the efforts of these women, volunteers, and attendees of “Runway of Recovery,” Ms. Achtmeyer will be able to donate approximately \$20,000 to The Patient and Caregiver Fund at the Cancer Center at MGH. The contributions made by volunteers to organize the event and donate money will impact many lives in future years.

To learn more about “Runway for Recovery” or to donate money to The Patient and Caregiver Fund please visit [www.runwayforrecovery.com](http://www.runwayforrecovery.com).