



SHARSHERET®
Your Jewish Community Facing Breast Cancer

From College Philanthropy to my Personal BRCA Journey

by *Aly Book (Alpha Tau)*



When I was 18, I was a freshman at the University of Florida, excited to pledge Alpha Epsilon Phi, **Alpha Tau** Chapter. During my time in the sorority, I learned about Sharsheret through our chapter's philanthropic events. I became aware of the connection between Jewish women and certain cancers linked to the BRCA gene, including breast, ovarian, and pancreatic cancers. At the time, I didn't fully grasp just how closely this would affect my life down the road.

In 2007, I tragically lost my mom to pancreatic cancer. She was also BRCA-positive, which contributed to her diagnosis. At just 21 years old, I decided to undergo genetic testing, and during my senior year of college, I learned that I, too, carried the BRCA gene mutation.

As soon as I received my results, I immediately turned to Sharsheret. Because of my connection to the organization through Alpha Epsilon Phi, I knew they would have the resources and support I needed.

"Thanks to Sharsheret, I've been able to make informed decisions about my health."

Sharsheret helped me navigate this overwhelming new reality—guiding me through family planning, offering preventative care options, and giving me the tools to stay proactive in catching any potential cancer diagnosis early.

Thanks to Sharsheret, I've been able to make informed decisions about my health. In fact, I've decided to undergo a bilateral mastectomy in the next year to lower my risk of breast cancer. At 31, it's daunting to face these realities, but Sharsheret has made a world of difference by providing support, information, and hope.

This organization has meant so much to me—so much so that I ran the 2024 TCS New York City Marathon last year as part of a fundraising and awareness effort for Sharsheret. I'm beyond grateful for everything they've done to help me take proactive steps toward a long, healthy life—for myself and my two little ones, ages 1 and 3.

Sharsheret isn't just an organization – it's a lifeline. I'm thankful for the resources, the community, and the sisterhood it provides. If you ever need support, I can't recommend them enough.

Sharsheret, a national non-profit organization, improves the lives of women and families living with or at increased genetic risk for breast cancer or ovarian cancer through personalized support and saves lives through educational outreach.

Sharsheret has served approximately 270,000 women, families, health care professionals, community leaders and students in all 50 states over the past 20 years and the programs are free and open to all at no cost. As a national philanthropy of Alpha Epsilon Phi, Sharsheret strives to empower and educate sisters to safeguard their health and know that Sharsheret is always here to support them should they ever need us.