

Share *your* story



Keith Kaplan, Pathologist and Laboratory Medical Director, First-Time Rider



While speaking with a fellow cancer researcher I mentioned that I would be completing two 200-mile bike rides on the East and then the West Coast with several hundred other riders to raise awareness and funding for breast cancer. He questioned why I would do such a thing – ride a bike on both coasts, pedaling for hours, perhaps in poor weather or challenging road conditions, as well as shipping my bike to both locations. Then there is the issue of actually training for the ride and the harder part, raising enough funding to accomplish that goal that each rider strives towards.

I answered honestly that first and foremost it was part of an overall health strategy to be more active while giving back to an organization that I believe in, the Young Survival Coalition. *Still, the cancer researcher didn't understand the premise. He didn't see the "value" of making and taking the time to do this for the past 6 months. He suggested to me, "Next year, write these people a check for \$5,000 and call it even."*

The three-day bike ride, the sun, wind and the occasional near miss with another cyclist, car or obstacle were **nothing as compared to the experience after the ride**. Many people were riding for someone, perhaps in honor of someone who is still alive or in many cases, someone who had passed.

Some of these women did the ride a year ago and now people were riding in their memory. Standing around a pickup truck after the first day drinking cold beverages, I heard about the sisters, sister-in-laws, mothers and daughters who people made sure to remember on their bikes, their jerseys and in their hearts.

Dinner as a group was filled with more stories from caregivers, families and friends. Honestly, this was harder than peddling a bike, even into a headwind, with sore legs and bottom. **It made riding a bike seem pedestrian compared to what some people face with the toll it takes on their families and ultimately their life**. It makes you appreciate the health you have, the ability you have to ride for others who cannot. Those 50, 60 or 100 miles are quickly forgotten when you hear about journeys that aren't solved by shifting gears or conveniently pulling over for some carbohydrates and hydration.

As a tissue pathologist, these experiences remind me that "every slide is a life" in a way you cannot see in a laboratory alone. And something I would not have experienced had I simply mailed a check and "called it even".

Our team "Why We Ride" raised over \$100,000 for YSC! See you all next September!

Share your story with us [here](#).

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