

**B**RAVEWELL FORMED IN 2002 with the intention that one day it would no longer exist.

“I think one of the smartest things we did was to put a timeline to our efforts,” explains Christy Mack. “We knew we didn’t want a never-ending story. None of us wanted that. So we gave ourselves ten to fifteen years to change how Americans thought about their health and the kind of healthcare they received, and to bring about the cultural change necessary to create a healthier nation.”

“The decision to have a firm beginning and ending kept us focused,” adds Christy. “We all knew time was of the essence. It also kept us from taking on additional projects that we did not have either the money or the time to take on.”

True to this sentiment, when their principal strategies were completed and integrative medicine was finally part of the national conversation on healthcare, Bravewell members took note and collectively decided that the time was right to sunset the organization.

“Our mission was to try to quicken the pace of bringing integrative medicine into our healthcare system, make people aware of it, and make it part of everyday life,” adds Bill Sarnoff. “We helped that along. There can be discussions about how much or how little, but clearly we did have some effect.”

## **WITH GRATITUDE FOR ALL INVOLVED**

“Integrative medicine is now part of mainstream culture and that is



largely due, not only to Bravewell, but to all those involved,” says Penny George. “This includes the clinicians, the university professors, the researchers, the authors, the healthcare and hospital executives, the patients, and the media—everyone who championed the cause.”

“We will be forever grateful,” adds Christy Mack. “Together, we made huge strides in making prevention, patient empowerment, and healthy living part of the nation’s priorities. And together we developed the core template for care that addresses not just the body, but also the patient’s mind and spirit.”

Bravewell closed its doors in June 2015.

In contemplating Bravewell’s absence, Christy adds, “Progress will continue. The ranks have swelled, and now thousands of others are carrying the torch forward.”

## **DEMONSTRATING A NEW MODEL OF PHILANTHROPY**

In a 2015 letter to Bravewell, Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD, wrote, “Back in the old days, when I was a student at MIT, I once attended a talk by Jay Forrester, a pioneer of the Sloan School there, who said that he thought institutions should be designed to dissolve in their seventh year, which should be ample time to make the contribution that they set out to make and then dissolve. But to my knowledge, no one has ever done that, in seven years, or in seventy years. So you have pioneered a model that we all could learn from, and in the process, have changed the world of medicine and healthcare, and even more, the mind set and heart set of the field and in no small way, the world.”

