

BRAVE *like mom*

Mother's Day Campaign 2020

I was born May 8th and my family brought me home on **Mother's Day**. There was a big banner on our garage that said, "Welcome Home Dot and Tracie – Happy Mother's Day!" I was the "oopsie baby" to my parents in the early 60's, when it wasn't in vogue to have a baby at age 40.

When my mom was 70, she found a lump in her breast during a self-check. She was diagnosed with breast cancer, had a double mastectomy and survived it all. She NEVER complained and fought with dignity and strength. I'll never forget when she told me she had breast cancer. She only cried as she told me, ***"I am sorry to leave this legacy to you."***

My name is **Tracie** Lathram Shelby, I am a daughter, sister, wife, mother, and a **Breast Cancer Survivor of 11 ½ years**. My adventure with this disease began in September 2008 at the age of 46. A reoccurring, sharp pain in the right breast caused me to do a self-check which led to the discovery of a lump. In October of that same year, I was diagnosed with not one, not two, but three Triple Negative tumors across both my breasts. After an aggressive treatment regimen, and **testing positive for the BRCA 1 mutation**, I had a double mastectomy in November 2008, was part of a clinical trial, and had a full hysterectomy and reconstruction in July of 2009.

My husband, Brian, and my daughters, Christen and Paige, experienced this adventure with me. Because I tested positive for the BRCA 1 gene mutation, both my daughters decided to be tested as well. **My youngest daughter, Paige, tested positive**. Now my adventure had become hers. It was horrible yet bonded us in a unique way. It started with my grandmother, my mom, myself and now my baby, Paige. I found myself telling her what my mom told me years ago. ***"Baby, I am so sorry for leaving this legacy to you."***

At the young age of **24**, Paige made the informed decision and the very brave choice to have a **preventative double mastectomy** and reconstruction. She used her knowledge of having the BRCA 1 mutation as her power. It gave her the upper hand in her adventure and fight against breast cancer.

As Paige continues to live out her adventure, I see the same strength and dignity that I saw in my mom, Dot. Yes, having the BRCA 1 gene mutation can be genetic but **the bigger picture here is the inherited strength, bravery, and the power of maternal love that is passed on from great grandmother, to grandmother, to mother, to daughter**. I love you more, Paige. **Happy Mother's Day**.

Tracie L. Shelby, Breast Cancer Survivor since 2008

Paige S. Simpson, Breast Cancer Previvor