

THE
FOURTH
ANNUAL

Liz Holzemer



Mary Ellen Whitney



Woman's Day Awards

Rita Ungaro-Schiavone



Yvonne Pointer-Triplett

WOMEN
WHO
INSPIRE US

by Salley Shannon

Do you know someone who goes the extra distance and inspires everyone around her? We received hundreds of nominations from you telling us about just such women: mothers, daughters, friends and neighbors who spend their

days changing lives. The eight women we've chosen for this year's *Woman's Day* Awards are simply extraordinary. They have single-handedly championed causes, overcome obstacles and made a real difference in the world. In doing so they inspire the rest of us to look beyond our limitations, reach out to others and do more.

In recognition of the contributions of our four top honorees, each will receive a special award and a \$5,000 honorarium.

SHINING
STARS

Each of our four Shining Stars will receive a \$500 honorarium from Woman's Day.

Spreading Knowledge and Friendship

"My tumor was not a death sentence, but a life sentence: I know how to embrace life now:...When something goes wrong, I say to myself, 'You survived a brain tumor. You have your children. Relax!'"

Liz Holzemer

FOUNDER: Meningioma Mommas Foundation
Littleton, Colorado

NOMINATED BY: Lindy Klarenbeek,
online board member

about these tumors—which account for about a quarter of all primary brain tumors—to people all around the world. Liz was only 32 at the time, happily married and trying to have children. "My dreams of having children came to a crashing halt," she recalls.

She got herself together enough to learn that meningiomas are slow-growing, noncancerous tumors that generally aren't fatal. Even so, scary stuff can happen, either because of the tumor or the surgery to remove it: complications such as blindness, deafness, stroke, epilepsy and various kinds of paralysis.

"I longed to sit down with someone who had already had the surgery so that I could pepper her with questions," recalls Liz. But she couldn't find anyone to ask.

Within a year of her own operation, which left her with some facial paralysis and epilepsy, two neighbors were diagnosed with the disease. One of them, a man, banged on her door late at night, begging, "What can you tell me?" She knew she had to act.

Today, MeningiomaMommas.org is a place where women and men, in every stage of diagnosis and treatment, and their caregivers, can find information and talk online.

"I now understand how couples can fall in love over the Internet," says Liz, who recently gave birth to her second child, "because the Mommas are so precious to me." *WD* salutes Liz Holzemer for making those friendships possible and for curing some of the fear that comes with serious illness.

GET INVOLVED: Meningioma Mommas Inc., 137 W. County Line Rd., #320, Littleton, CO 80129; www.meningiomamommas.org

WHEN LIZ HOLZEMER's doctor phoned four years ago to tell her she had a baseball-sized meningioma tumor in her head, she had to ask, "How do you spell that? What is it?" Now the foundation and web site she created in 2003, Meningioma Mommas (www.meningiomamommas.org), is a source of information

Helping Child Abuse Victims Heal

Esther Deblinger, Ph.D.

CODIRECTOR: New Jersey CARES (Child Abuse Research Education and Service) Institute, Stratford, New Jersey

NOMINATED BY: Orien Reid, past chair of the Alzheimer's Association.

"When children suffer sexual abuse, they deserve the most effective treatment available," says Esther Deblinger, Ph.D.

For more than 17 years, Esther, codirector of the New Jersey CARES Institute at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-School of Osteopathic Medicine, has been working with her colleagues to reach out to as many

young victims of sexual abuse as possible. The Institute provides both medical treatment and mental health services, and helps more than 1,000 children who have suffered abuse each year. No child is turned away for lack of funds.

"The strength of the children motivates me," she says. Contact New Jersey CARES, 42 E. Laurel Rd., Ste. 1100, Stratford, NJ 08084.

