

SPOTLIGHT

A chance to get to know the young adults with cancer in your community

**For the May 2021 Spotlight, we could not be more thrilled to feature
Denise Moreno**



Denise is a 39 year old stage IV colon cancer survivor. She was diagnosed at 32 and underwent chemotherapy. We're so grateful to enjoy Denise's company at AYA@USC!

AYA@USC: What was the last day before your diagnosis like?

I had an unbearable pain throughout my stomach all around to my back. Only thing that would take the pain away was a warm bath or curling up in a ball.

AYA@USC: What has been the 'Rose' and 'Thorn' of your cancer experience?

The thorn about this was losing pretty much everything i had and the amount of hospital bills i have now. Bright side of it all I'm able to watch my kids grow. I see life different now.



AYA@USC: What is one thing you wish people knew about cancer?

Cancer has no age

AYA@USC: Are there any quotes or sayings that you have remembered or found helpful?

"For I walk by faith not by sight"



AYA@USC: Do/did you have any animals that have helped you through cancer?

Yes, a Yorkie named Marley

AYA@USC: Was there any art that helped you or that you would recommend? Did you have any musicians/songs that you found yourself listening to? Books that you found yourself reading? Movies/TV shows that you found yourself watching? Comedy, art, theater, etc.

Listening to music has been my therapy.

AYA@USC: Do you have any 'cancerversary' traditions?

Yes, I go on vacation with my family. We always pick somewhere new and different.

AYA@USC: Between need to do, have to do, and want to do- how do you spend your days?

Watching my kids Mia 14 and Levi 9 grow each day.



AYA@USC: Have you been forced, or chosen to change your life in any meaningful way because of your diagnosis?

Yes. I appreciate life a lot more. I take lots of pictures.

AYA@USC: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Never give up.



You can learn more about the AYA@USC program by visiting
<https://aya.usc.edu/>



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