What inspires you to do this work? Years ago, I heard a speaker at a national conference share information regarding the new HPV vaccine and how although it could prevent a cancer the vaccine was met with great criticism and confusion. I recognized my role as a facilitator in helping to promote the correct information and to combat the misinformation, often associated with new medical breakthroughs. I felt a personal commitment to ensure that the public, women in particular, were being presented with proven scientific data and knew their options to prevent cancer for themselves, for their daughters, and now for their sons.

What accomplishments/successes are you most proud of from your work with cervical cancer prevention and advocacy? I am delighted being able to meet and interview cervical cancer survivors, and to make sure that their voices are being heard. Providing a library of taped interviews with these brave survivors and sharing their personal stories has been not only rewarding but also helped spread awareness.

What is your personal philosophy?
Be proactive - when I served in the General Assembly I didn’t always choose the more safe and less controversial issues to advocate but I went with my heart. As a woman, a mother, and a female legislator, I felt that I had a responsibility to advance women’s and children’s health and safety issues. That commitment remained a driving force when I was in public office and now in my advocacy work with the SCCCAI.

What might we be surprised to learn about you?
I have 3 wonderful children who are now outstanding adults. My greatest accomplishment is certainly in raising them to be successful and contributing citizens. I always encouraged them to give back and to be involved in their communities. They have remained involved in community service and I am very proud of them and their continuing commitment to the world around us.

What advice would you give your fellow CCFSC members?
Strength is in numbers and that is the strength of the coalition of all cervical cancer prevention organizations diligently working together and speaking with one voice.

Whether you are an advocate, an activist, or a survivor, it is important to not be afraid to ask questions. Get your screenings, consult with your doctor, don’t suffer in silence. Be assertive about your health and determine your own future.

For more information about Joan Brady’s initiatives
http://scccai.com/
Email Joan Brady