

# News and Events

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Ruth Frazier, Kendrick Frazier, Jaideep Malhotra, Narendra Malhotra

## **Documentary Film to be made about Michele Baldwin to raise Awareness, Treatment and Prevention of Cervical Cancer in India**

Mrs Ruth Frazier of USA visited Agra (Rainbow Hospitals and Malhotra Nursing and Maternity Home) in memory of Ms Michele Baldwin for making a documentary on cancer cervix awareness.

In October of 2011, Narendra Malhotra, MD, and Dr Jaideep Malhotra, Head of the Malhotra Nursing and Maternity Home, hosted Michele Baldwin, a 45-year-old American woman, attempting something never before done: to standup paddleboard 1,000 kilometers along the Ganga River to focus on the preventable cancer for Indian women, cervical cancer, from which Michele suffered in its terminal stage.

She completed her yatra on the river in 28 days, and set a woman's record for long distance paddleboarding. Michele returned to her home in New Mexico, USA, and died in February 6, 2012.

Now her mother, Ruth Frazier, 71, and Michele's daughter, Audrey Baldwin, 15, return to India to the Malhotra Nursing and Maternity Home in May 12, 2015, to continue Michele's message to promote awareness of and to advocate for prevention of cervical cancer in women in India.

Shortly before Michele's death in New Mexico, an American filmmaker, Frederic Lumiere, learned about her, came to New Mexico, and filmed long conversations with her and her family and friends. When she died he filmed her Buddhist open pyre cremation in Colorado, as Michele had requested.

Lumiere's purpose now is to complete a film about Michele's journey and life, called Lady Ganga. The idea is to have the film available in as many languages as possible, to reach as many women as possible. LadyGangaTheMovie.com.

Michele Baldwin's starry Ganga expedition was in collaboration with the [(GIAHC)—Global Initiative Against HPV and Cervical Cancer ([www.giahc.org](http://www.giahc.org))], an American nonprofit organization working in India to help prevent cervical cancer. Global Initiative Against HPV and Cervical Cancer was founded by physician and author Dr Shobha Krishnan. Cervical cancer is the second most deadly cancer among women worldwide, and is an especially serious problem in India, where it kills 74,000 women a year and accounts for the highest number of deaths for women there.

'This expedition was a selfless idea,' Dr Krishnan said. 'The river is sacred, and so are women's lives. Michele's dedication to the cause was remarkable, and we are grateful for her steadfastness to raise awareness about this disease. Hers is an effort that will go down in history some day. Millions of women will be grateful to Michele for saving their lives.'

Baldwin first traveled alone to and lived in India at the age of 19, where she met Mother Theresa and fell in love with the country and its varied cultures. She returned for an extended stay several years later. She trained and worked as a nurse, midwife, doula, realtor, ski lift operator, white water rafting guide, kayak river guide, and near the end of her life, as a paramedic and emergency medical services technician.

'It was August of 2011 when, 2 months after being told, there was no longer any treatment available for my cervical cancer, I came up with the idea of paddleboarding the Ganga,' Baldwin said before the Starry Ganga Expedition. 'It came to me like a little secret whispered in my ear. It is an original synthesis of pilgrimage, athletic challenge, and opportunity to raise awareness about the cancer I have, which kills 250,000 women a year worldwide. So it is not so much as a 'want' but something I feel I 'must' do.'

Ruth and Audrey returned to Varanasi to bring Michele home to the Ganga. Both of these relations of Michele's continue to spread Michele's message of healing which came from her Starry Ganga Expedition:

- Women, take care of your health, first. Then you can be the model for your husband, your children and your family.
- Cervical cancer is preventable. Vaccinations for young people, early detection for women, can stop this disease from being the killer that it is.
- Do what you love. Dare to think boldly.

