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By [Deborah Allard](#)[Print Page](#)

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## Fall River Re-Creation leader doing Fight for Air Climb in honor of aunt

When Annemarie Holly climbs up all 22 flights of stairs next month at the Omni Providence Hotel in downtown Providence, each step will give hope to someone special.

Holly is making the massive trek, along with more than 900 others, for the American Lung Association's sixth annual Fight for Air Climb. This will be her third such stair climb, but this year she will dedicate her steps to her aunt Gina Galanopolos, who was diagnosed with lung cancer in June.

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"I just want to do something to show her how much I care," Holly said. "I want to help send her positive vibes."

Holly is the youth leadership specialist for Greater Fall River Re-Creation, captain of this year's Greater Fall River Fitness Challenge team, and a member of Fall River Partners for a Healthier Community.

She sent her aunt, who does not live locally, a Fight for Air Climb T-shirt and told her she'd be thinking of her during the climb.

"She's excited," Holly said. "She was touched by it."

Holly described her aunt as a "very, very strong woman" and said she had an equally strong family rallying around her with support.

Holly and the others completed the stair climb in years past at the Industrial Trust Building in Providence, better known as the "Superman building." The building was recently vacated.

Holly said they climbed 29 floors in the old building, amounting to more than 500 steps.

"It was much more challenging that I thought it would be," Holly said.

She described the sensation in one's lungs from such a stair climb as "incredible." She said it gives climbers an idea of just how painful it can be to be unable to breathe.

This year, the climb at the Omni will be a bit shorter at 22 floors and just more than 400 steps.

The American Lung Association's Fight for Air Climb will be held on Saturday, Feb. 22.

Those who would like to participate are welcomed to join. Registration is open at [Climbofyourlife.org](http://Climbofyourlife.org) or at the kick-off of the Greater Fall River Fitness Challenge on Saturday, Jan. 11, at Kuss Middle School, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The climb is open to people of all fitness abilities. Climbers can compete as individuals or form teams.

The event will include a special Firefighter Challenge where teams of firefighters from the local area and beyond compete by racing to the top of the building while wearing full turnout gear.

Medals and trophies will be awarded to the fastest teams in several categories at the afterparty that is held immediately after the climb at Rí Rá Irish Pub, just a short walk from the Omni Providence Hotel. Recognition will also be given to top fundraisers.

The Lung Association encourages all to participate. They will welcome CrossFit teams, law enforcement and healthcare professionals to form teams and compete against one another. All participants must individually raise a minimum of \$100 by the day of the climb.

To register or make a donation, visit [Climbofyourlife.org](http://Climbofyourlife.org). To make a donation in support of Annemarie Holly, visit <http://go.lungne.org/hollyannemarie14>.

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