

# YOUR PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION 2017

THE ABRAMSON CANCER CENTER'S  
ANNUAL IMPACT AND PROGRESS REPORT



## PLANNED GIVING: BUILDING A LASTING LEGACY

An alternative, strategic, and highly personalized way to establish a lasting legacy—planned giving can directly impact important work in cancer care and research.

The Heisler Family made a planned gift in loving memory of Leslie Heisler that will immediately accelerate **KRAS mutant lung cancer research**—leading to significant medical discoveries and novel cancer targets.

The late Ms. Agnes S. Kelly and Ms. Dora Y. Lee have made planned gifts to the **Joan Karnell Supportive Care Program at the Abramson Cancer Center at Pennsylvania Hospital** providing real comfort to patients and families facing cancer, and also an overall experience of healing.

## COLLECTIVE POWER: FUELING INNOVATION AND DISCOVERY

By supporting the **Abramson Cancer Center Innovation and Discovery Fund**, Bob and Penny Fox are providing flexible, unrestricted dollars necessary for the ACC to seize opportunities and launch vital research projects. Giving unrestricted dollars accelerates the scientific discovery so critical to bringing lifesaving treatments from the bench to the bedside.

**Penn Medicine Giving Pages** are a powerful way to support an event, memorialize a loved one, and inspire others to join you in support of the Abramson Cancer Center. Hundreds of giving pages have been created and raised incredibly important support, but a few stand out:

Allen's Walk	Megan Scheib/Philadelphia Marathon
Harvey Cedars Police NO-SHAVE-NOVEMBER	Schiff Cutaneous T-cell Lymphoma Research Fund
Marge's Run	Wayne's Warriors
Marie Tumolo Fund for Hope	

**Community events** galvanize dedicated groups of supporters, champions, and advocates to raise critical cancer funding and awareness while honoring the journeys of loved ones who have faced cancer. A special thank you to:

A Love for Life	Presti Foundation's Taste for Life
Bala Golf Club Tournament	Run/Walk 4 Family and Friends with Cancer
Carol Fee's Zumba Marathon: Dance to Beat Breast Cancer	Sarah Rosato Golf Invitational
Get Your Rear in Gear	Stephen P. Schmitt Memorial Golf Outing
HeadSTRONG's Lime Light Gala	Steps to Cure Sarcoma
Jay Sigel Invitational	Tara Miller Foundation's Make the Best of It Bash
Kathleen Rotz Lung Cancer Research Fund	Marge's Run
Ladies of Cedarbrook Country Club Golf Tournament	
Moving for Melanoma Delaware	
Peggy Spiegler Melanoma Research Foundation	

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As the new Director of the Abramson Cancer Center (ACC), and a member of its community for more than 16 years, I am honored to build on our incredible advancements in cancer research and care. Remarkable things are happening here!

Our recent *US News and World Report* ranking as the #7 cancer program in the United States recognizes what we at the ACC have been doing for decades: practicing science-driven, patient-focused care. Our ranking has increased, because our mission has not wavered. And that is why we have been able to lead in a manner that befits the brilliance that lives in our labs and clinics—and the bravery in the hearts of our patients and families. Now is the time to do more of what we do best.

The best cancer treatments come out of collaborative, scientific thought that harnesses the entire **Abramson Cancer Center Ecosystem**. Together, we are going to continue to ask and answer big, challenging questions so we can explore new ideas and build on what we already know. And with our philanthropic community by our sides, the ACC will continue to provide our patients with tomorrow's therapies, today.

Every day I am inspired by my colleagues and invigorated by the united force of the Abramson Cancer Center. The most exciting and fulfilling part of my work is seeing patients treated with new, novel therapies go back to their everyday lives, not worrying about cancer like they used to. Our work is only possible because of you, our philanthropy family. Thank you!

Sincerely,

*Bob*

**ROBERT H. VONDERHEIDE, MD, DPHIL**

John H. Glick, MD, ACC Director's Professor  
Director, Abramson Cancer Center



"A REMARKABLE  
THING HAPPENED.  
THE CLOUDS  
WENT AWAY  
AND THERE WAS  
NO LEUKEMIA."

**CARL JUNE, MD**  
Richard W. Vague Professor  
in Immunotherapy  
Director, Center for  
Cellular Immunotherapies  
Abramson Cancer Center

ON THE COVER

**THE ABRAMSON CANCER  
CENTER IS ON FIRE!**

On August 30, 2017 CAR-T cell therapy became the first FDA-approved personalized gene therapy for cancer. The historic approval sparked Penn's ImmunoRevolution. Penn experts who developed the gene therapy are now advancing multiple technologies that harness the power of the immune system—the start of a whole new chapter for patients facing cancer, and other diseases.

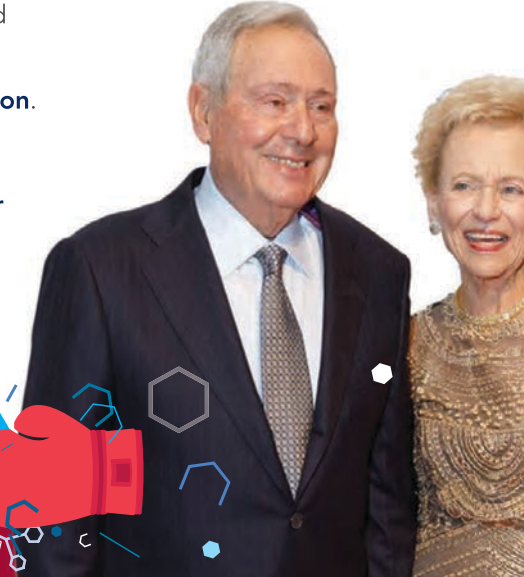
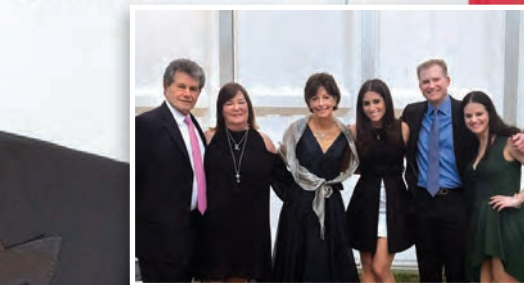
## PHILLY FIGHTS CANCER

On October 28, 2017, Philadelphia experienced another milestone in cancer. Over **1,600** people came together at the iconic **Navy Yard** for **Philly Fights Cancer Round 3!** The celebration helped raise more than **\$7 million** to support translational research and clinical trials at the ACC—bringing the total fundraising since Philly Fights Cancer was created to **\$16 million**.

Guests enjoyed a star-studded evening including the hilarious **Whoopi Goldberg**, the sultry sounds of **John Legend**, also a Penn graduate, the powerful voice of *America's Got Talent* star and cancer survivor **Caly Bevier**—and to top it off, the music of **Earth, Wind & Fire**. Inspiration was felt throughout the evening with stories of hope from people whose lives have been affected by cancer and those fighting beside them, including this year's extraordinary honorees: **Lynn M. Schuchter, MD**, and the **Tara Miller Melanoma Foundation**.

A special thank you to **Madlyn and Leonard Abramson**, **Nancy Wolfson**, **Missy Dietz**, the **Miller Family**, **Dr. Lynn Schuchter**, the **Philly Fights Cancer Committee**, and all of our generous sponsors and guests who helped bring research to life—advancing the ACC's ability to translate innovative scientific discoveries into humanistic, comprehensive, and compassionate care.

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2018







## HEREDITARY CANCER: ALL IN THE FAMILY

Penn alumni and Basser Center for BRCA founders **Mindy and Jon Gray** made a new **\$21 million** gift, bringing their total commitment to the Basser Center to **\$55 million**. The Grays' incredible generosity has cemented and propelled the Center's preeminence as a leader in research to improve treatment and prevention strategies for hereditary cancers.

Since its establishment in 2012 as the world's first center devoted to the study of BRCA-related cancers, the Basser Center has:

- **Become an incubator for many of the Abramson Cancer Center's priorities, from immunotherapy to precision oncology.**
- **Driven improvements in prevention, screening, and treatment for men and women with BRCA gene mutations.**
  - » Led clinical research of PARP inhibitor olaparib that resulted in the first FDA approval of a targeted therapy for BRCA1/2-related breast cancer.
  - » Developing a vaccine designed to prevent BRCA-related cancer before it begins.
- **Awarded grant funding to 43 scientists at the University of Pennsylvania and 17 institutions throughout the nation and around the world, including 5 Basser Global Prize recipients.**
- **Established international outreach initiatives and developed a vibrant social media network to connect communities around the world.**
- **Amassed influential Leadership and Young Leadership Councils who advocate and fundraise on behalf of the Basser Center through their personal networks as well as large-scale events.**



## IMMUNOREVOLUTION: HARNESSING THE POWER OF THE HUMAN BODY

One of the newest and most promising tools in our arsenal to fight cancer is immunotherapy—and Penn is leading the way. Philanthropy continues to help translate successes in leukemia to new treatments in myeloma and lymphoma, and work in solid tumor cancers.

**Jill and Jeffrey Weiss, Barbara Jordan, Susan B. Giesecke, MD, Sid and Sandy Brown, John and Rosanna Troiano, Stephen and Sandra Cozen, Research Foundation for the Treatment of Ovarian Cancer, and an anonymous donor** have provided funding for research that moves CAR-T cell therapy into **kidney, breast, mesothelioma, brain, and ovarian cancer**.

A handful of Penn Trustees including **Richard Vague, George Weiss, and Penn Alumni** made gifts totaling **\$2.5 million** to fully fund a **prostate CAR-T cell trial**. This collective and transformative philanthropy is what our community is capable of!

**PENN HAS A REMARKABLE** depth and breadth of past, current, and planned immunotherapy clinical trials in many types of cancer, including:

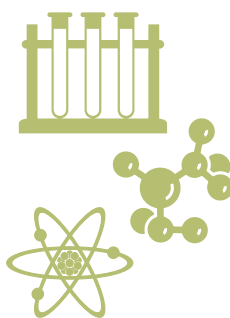
Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia	Melanoma
Breast	Mesothelioma
Brain	Multiple Myeloma
Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia	Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
Head and Neck	Ovarian
Lung	Pancreatic
Medullary Thyroid	Prostate
	Sarcoma

## BASIC SCIENCE: THE FOUNDATION OF IT ALL

Penn Medicine's basic science research enterprise is the engine powering the ACC's ability to provide novel clinical treatments to patients around the world.

**A Love for Life**—a non-profit organization created by **Christine Edmonds** to honor her late husband Kevin—is dedicated to raising funds for pancreatic cancer research. **The Michael J. Neustadter Pancreatic Cancer Fund** builds on Michael's legacy by supporting immunotherapy research performed in Penn's Pancreatic Cancer Research Center.

**Louis and Stacey Pellegrini's** support of the ACC's Sarcoma Program is providing the essential building blocks to understand this rare cancer that afflicts 14,000 new patients a year.



## TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE: BRINGING RESEARCH TO LIFE

Successes in translating scientific discovery into novel clinical treatments are possible because our trainees, researchers, basic scientists, and clinicians work together as a collective.

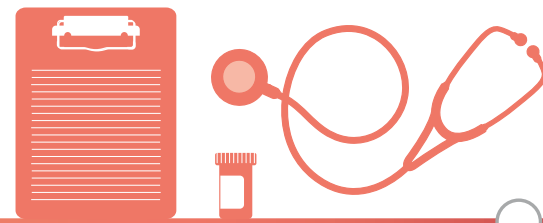
The **Tara Miller Melanoma Foundation**—a community championing revolutions in immunotherapy and targeted therapies for melanoma—provides crucial seed funding to translate scientific discoveries into clinical therapies, conduct history-making research, and better provide exemplary and compassionate care to our patients.

Initiatives like the **Translational Centers of Excellence** galvanize experts throughout the ACC and across Penn's campus to collaborate and accelerate the pace of discoveries that will help today's patients become—and remain—cancer-free.

**David and Nancy Presti Foundation: 2-PREVENT Translational Center of Excellence**  
**Biff Ruttenberg, John Donnelly, and Raymond Haupt: Hematologic Malignancies Translational Center of Excellence**

**Garry and Susan Scheib: Lung Cancer Translational Center of Excellence**

**Gerstein Family Foundation and Friends and Family of Marie Tumolo: Neuro-Oncology Translational Center of Excellence**



## MEDICAL ONCOLOGY: EXPERTS OF COMPASSIONATE CARE

Clinical research expands the use of targeted therapies, new screening protocols, and better ways to reduce symptoms for patients.

**The Berman Family's** collective support continues to advance novel research and clinical opportunities in lymphoma and chronic lymphocytic leukemia.

**The Casacio Family** supports novel clinical research that looks for new treatments for pancreatic cancer.

**Anne Drennan and the late Gary Kohler's** support propels exciting research advancements, including targeted therapies for multiple myeloma patients.



## GENETICS, PATHOLOGY, AND BIOINFORMATICS

The many dimensions of a tumor's unique genetic mutations are uncovered through next-generation sequencing and bioinformatics, the "number crunching" behind sequencing. Together they help physicians connect the genetic information of a patient's tumor with the right therapy.

**Thomas Rosato and Judy Eng's and Esther and Marc Kaplin's** support of the **Center for Personalized Diagnostics** will empower oncologists to refine diagnostics and tailor treatment according to the genetic makeup of their patient's cancer.

Philanthropic partners **Liquid Biotech, Mr. A. Carl Helwig, and the Laffey-McHugh and Arguld Foundations**, are supporting **circulating tumor material (CTM) research** and **technology** that paints a more precise picture of a tumor's ecosystem by detecting the materials it sheds into the blood.

**Harlan Stone** has provided innovation accelerator funds to sequence and analyze **head and neck cancer tumors**.

### ADVANCED SCREENINGS

Penn Radiology at Pennsylvania Hospital now features the expanded **Center for Breast Imaging**, a state-of-the-art facility designed to provide the highest quality of care and a streamlined patient experience.

**Laura Vague and Judith and Alvin Block** are supporting initiatives at the **Breast Imaging Suite** within Pennsylvania Hospital, including educational materials, equipment needs, and research support.

## RADIATION ONCOLOGY: BEAMS OF LIGHT SHINE BEAMS OF HOPE

With a relentless focus on innovative research and care advancements, Penn Medicine has established itself as a global leader, educator, and pioneer in radiation oncology.

The **Martinson Family Foundation** is supporting the advancement of education-related initiatives within the Department of Radiation Oncology.

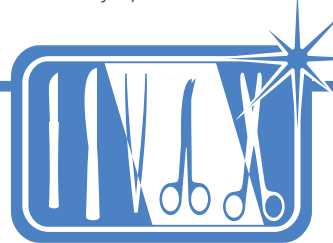
The late **Stella S. Jones, PhD**, provided financial support to study the use of **radiation therapy** in GI cancers and lymphoma.

## SURGICAL ONCOLOGY: PRECISION AT ITS FINEST

Surgery is one of the key components to treatment success in most cancer cases involving solid tumors, and the ACC is revolutionizing the way we perform surgeries and treat cancer.

The **John Templeton, Jr., MD Chair in Neurosurgery** was established in honor of Dr. Templeton, who lost his battle with glioblastoma in May 2015, to support a faculty member who performs research and clinical work in the area of neuro-oncology.

The **Steven and Ilene Berman Family Foundation** is enhancing surgeons' abilities to see and remove lung cancer tumors, and detect cancer cells that could otherwise be missed during surgery, through intraoperative molecular imaging.



## FROM NAVIGATING TO SURVIVING AND THRIVING

Our medical care teams organize individualized, patient support systems that offer critical guidance and timely access to quality, compassionate, and comprehensive health, nutrition, and psychosocial care. The ACC also provides educational and outreach efforts to benefit members of our Philadelphia community.

**Duncan and Laura Hennes** support coordinated integrative and wellness therapies that reduce side effects of cancer treatments, promote healing and recovery, and enhance patient quality-of-life and well-being.

**Gina and Stuart Shapiro, MD, and Dr. Lina Hartocollis and Larry Ceisler** are supplying necessary amenities, such as snacks and beverages, for the comfort and convenience of the patients in the ACC's outpatient infusion suite.

To honor Sarah Marie Rosato, who, at twenty-two, lost her courageous battle with sarcoma, the **Rosato Family** is in their 13<sup>th</sup> year of the **Sarah Marie Golf Invitational** to benefit the ACC's Survivorship Program, specifically young adult survivor initiatives.



## SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION

Our best chance in breaking through the remaining barriers in cancer research resides in collaborative teams that include the next generation of clinical and scientific leaders.

On September 17, 2017, the **Breakthrough Bike Challenge (BBC)**, a community organization dedicated to supporting cancer research at the Abramson Cancer Center, brought together faculty and staff with patients, families, and friends to raise vital funds for cancer research. Joining the BBC movement, **370 riders and volunteers**—including the **Gettis Family, Bill Barbour, and Josh Wolson**—gathered for a day of inspiration, all while raising **\$300,000** to support early-career basic scientists through the **Richard "Buz" Cooper Scholars Program**, named in memory of the cancer center's second director and beloved colleague.

The **Patel Family** is propelling graduate education support forward at Penn Medicine by supporting our brightest and most promising young graduate students within the Abramson Family Cancer Research Institute.



The BBC has raised almost **\$800,000** in 4 years.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
Sunday, September 16, 2018



## BASSER JEAN BASH

On November 14, 2017, **1,100 people** celebrated at Cipriani Wall Street in New York City and raised more than **\$7 million** to support the **Basser Center for BRCA** at Penn Medicine's Abramson Cancer Center.

Co-chairs **Mindy and Jon Gray** and **Shari and Len Potter**, as well as the dedicated **Gene Pool Committee**, and all of the **generous supporters**, came together in an inspiring display of community. The money raised will quicken the pace of transformative research and discovery for BRCA-related cancers. A special thanks to **Levi Strauss & Co.** for generously donating jean jackets customized with the distinct Basser logo, which were sold at the event.

Basser Leadership Council members **Raquel and Michael Haas** and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Emperor of All Maladies*, **Dr. Siddhartha Mukherjee**, were honored and brought home a message we believe in deeply at the Abramson Cancer Center and Basser Center—hope is real, patients help guide medicine, science delivers, and ultimately the **emperor's reign will and must come to an end**.

Emcee **Hoda Kotb**, co-host of NBC's *The TODAY Show*, captivated the crowd and ABC7 Eyewitness News reporter and Basser Center Leadership Council member **Stacey Sager** brought tears, laughter, and inspiration. The evening culminated with triple Emmy award-winning **Rachel Platten** singing her fittingly titled hit, "Fight Song."

The Basser Center will continue to fight until we eliminate BRCA-related cancers.



# THE ABRAMSON CANCER CENTER ECOSYSTEM