

Donor Dollars at Work

Spring 2015



Inspired to carry on his *Wife's legacy*

Committed Roswell Park donor and volunteer Phil Hubbell was motivated to give back by his late wife's battle with cancer.

When Jayne Hubbell was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005, her husband, Phil, was motivated to start volunteering at Roswell Park. He dedicated his time to visiting patients and helping them through tough times, and he started serving on the Roswell Park Alliance Foundation Board.

After the cancer spread throughout Jayne's body, she and Phil knew that her prognosis was poor, so they decided to get together with some of their favorite people and hold a celebration of Jayne's life. Many in attendance made gifts to Roswell Park in Jayne's honor.

Jayne and Phil decided to use those donations to start a research endowment for Roswell Park in 2009, and made their own personal contribution. Jayne passed away that summer, knowing that her family's gifts would make a difference.

After Jayne's passing, Phil continued to be a dedicated supporter of

Roswell Park, volunteering and making numerous gifts to help individuals fighting cancer.

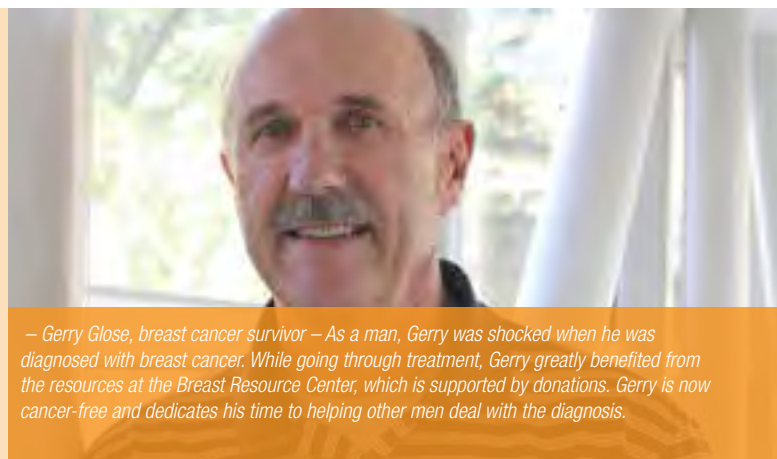
"I'm inspired by my wife to give back and help," Phil, who recently received the Outstanding Philanthropist Award from the Associate of Fundraising Professionals' local chapter, said. "Now, it's up to me to do good work with the time I have."

Most recently, Phil has provided new funding to provide for new, more comfortable patient gowns in the breast and mammography clinics. Phil came up with the idea for the gowns, which are styled like robes, and hopes to bring them to other clinics in the future.

"I want to make our patients feel more special and comfortable," Phil said. "Roswell Park takes good care of its patients and this is just another way that we can do that."

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“Not only did I get great medical care at Roswell Park, but they also helped me address my social and emotional needs. They pay attention to a patient's whole self.”



— Gerry Glose, breast cancer survivor — As a man, Gerry was shocked when he was diagnosed with breast cancer. While going through treatment, Gerry greatly benefited from the resources at the Breast Resource Center, which is supported by donations. Gerry is now cancer-free and dedicates his time to helping other men deal with the diagnosis.

Alliance Foundation Wins Top Award for Ethics and Leadership

The Roswell Park Alliance Foundation received the first and only prestigious award presented by the Better Business Bureau Foundation to a charitable organization that has secured key attributes in its giving programs. This coveted “Torch Award for Philanthropic Excellence” was scored by an independent judging committee that reviewed applications from throughout the 48 counties of Upstate New York.

“We are humbled and honored to receive this award for philanthropic excellence and celebrate with staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure that the dollars raised are done so with the highest ethics and cost-effectively,” said Lee Wortham, Chair, Roswell Park Alliance Foundation Board of Directors. “Everyone is touched by cancer and donors have a right to know that their hard working dollars, given from the heart, are rapidly applied to the most promising research and wide reaching quality-of-life programs for those individuals whose lives will never be the same after a cancer diagnosis. It is extremely fulfilling to be recognized by such a prestigious organization as the Better Business Bureau and is validation to the team that our efforts for cancer patients are among the best practices in the country.”

The Roswell Park Alliance Foundation was founded in 1991 by Anne and Donna Gioia after Katherine Gioia, Anne’s then four-year-old daughter, was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer at Roswell Park Cancer Institute. Anne, who became a volunteer in the newly created Development Department at Roswell Park, developed the idea for the Alliance Foundation as Roswell Park’s first community-wide volunteer organization as a memorial to Katherine, who lost her battle with cancer less than one year after being diagnosed.

Anne enlisted her sister-in-law, Donna, to co-found the Alliance to engage other community leaders who felt lives lost to cancer deserved to have better fighting tools to conquer this disease. Their drive to develop funds to accelerate the discovery for better diagnostics therapies and treatment led to a groundswell of support for this Western New York cancer charity 25 years ago.

Today, the Roswell Park Alliance Foundation raises and accepts contributions that are put to immediate use to increase the pace from research trials into improved clinical care, to ensure state-of-the-art facilities, and to help improve the quality of life for patients and their



Torch Award for Philanthropic Excellence
Mission • Ethics • Leadership

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families at Roswell Park. Donors of the Alliance Foundation support the most promising and impactful initiatives of Roswell Park, the only comprehensive cancer center in Western and Upstate New York.

“Our organization is proud to honor the Roswell Park Alliance Foundation as our first Torch Award for Philanthropic Excellence winner,” said Shawn Stover, director of Better Business Bureau Foundation of Upstate New York. “Developing this award and the criteria was an exciting initiative for us. It is designed to recognize best practices within the charitable community and Roswell Park Alliance Foundation is one of the organizations leading the way in these practices.”

The Torch Award brings attention to the practices that nonprofits employ to generate a high level of trust among employees, board members, donors and communities. An independent judging committee reviewed applications received by Better Business Bureau Foundation of Upstate New York and scored each organization to identify the winner. BBB accredited charities that met all 20 Standards of Charity Accountability were eligible to be nominated for this award.

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Cancer Survivor Gives Patients a Way to Celebrate

“ I started looking and I found a bell online from Europe with four angel warriors on it. I chose that one because I really liked what it represented.”

Brain cancer survivor Janice Trudnowski poses with the Victory Bell she donated to Roswell Park. All patients are invited to ring the bell to celebrate when they receive good news or go into remission.

Janice Trudnowski, a brain cancer survivor, went through 33 rounds of chemotherapy and radiation — and when her treatment was finished, she wanted to celebrate. That desire motivated her to give other patients a way to celebrate, too.

So she began doing research and quickly discovered patients at many cancer centers across the country ring a bell when they finish treatment. The practice symbolizes the restoration of harmony and balance.

“I started looking and I found a bell online from Europe with four angel warriors on it,” she said. “I chose that one because I really liked what it represented.”

Janice mounted the bell on a wooden plaque, inscribing “Victory Bell” on it. She also added a poem — “Ringing Out” by Irve Le Moyne — to the plaque. **The poem reads:**

*“Ring this bell
Three times well
Its toll to clearly say,
My treatment’s done
This course is run
And I am on my way!”*

The Victory Bell, which was dedicated during a ceremony in February, is temporarily located on the main floor, past the main elevators near Phlebotomy in the north clinic hallway while a permanent location is being prepped.

“Roswell Park is so incredibly grateful to Janice for this donation,” Kara Eaton-Weaver, Director of Patient and Family Experience, said. “Our cancer patients face many challenges during their treatment and the opportunity to celebrate when they receive good news will mean so much to them.”

Janice knows how meaningful that experience will be for cancer patients.

“It’s a big shock when you’re perfectly healthy like me, and then you are diagnosed, and you wonder, ‘why me?’” she said. “It’s scary, but you have to have a positive attitude. You have so many negative things happen to you, and then finally, you get some good news — and you want to celebrate. Hopefully, this bell will give patients a way to do that.”

All patients who want to mark the end of their treatment or the completion of one chapter of their journey are being invited to ring the bell. Amy Barker, a breast cancer survivor, was one of the first patients to ring the bell after it was unveiled. To memorialize the occasion, she brought her family, who supported her throughout her cancer journey.

“After finishing 100-plus visits to Roswell Park, the ringing of the bell represented success, a symbol of my personal accomplishment — a victory over cancer,” Amy said. “This was my goal. Ringing the victory bell was my way to move forward with my life and begin to put cancer behind me. It has been a rough time and I am looking forward to a healthy year ahead.”



Cancer survivor Amy Barker was one of the first patients to ring the bell, and did so alongside her brother-in-law, Bob Helsel, a bladder cancer survivor.



Drs. Hershberger and Seshadri analyze an image as part of their collaborative research project, which was funded by donations, on the prevention of oral cancer.

Donations Fuel Nine Most Promising Research Initiatives

Like many of the world-renowned physicians and researchers at Roswell Park, Drs. Mukund Seshadri and Pamela Hershberger have a new, innovative research idea that could change the course of cancer treatment and lead to cancer cures. But without funding, their idea would never get off the ground.

That's where Roswell Park donors and fundraisers come in.

Thanks to them, the nine most promising research proposals at Roswell Park — including Dr. Seshadri's and Dr. Hershberger's project — have recently received over \$700,000 in funding. The money was entirely raised through donations and special events, like The Ride For Roswell and Go in' Bald for Bucks.

The researchers applied for the funds as part of a competitive process that takes place twice per year. A Scientific Advisory Committee, made up of objective Roswell Park staff and faculty, reviews the applications, and donor representatives — like Pam Jacobs Vogt, who serves on the Roswell Park Alliance Foundation Board of Directors — are invited to attend the meeting.

"I was so impressed by the collegiality within the group of researchers and in the range of free discussion," Pam said. "There were differences of opinion on the submitted proposals, but the comments were so valuable because they had a common purpose to further strides in cancer research."

In the fall, the Scientific Advisory Committee received 39 applications for funding. The body, led by Candace Johnson, PhD, President and CEO, and Wallace Family Chair in Translational Research, met to discuss the projects and score them on their potential to change the course of cancer treatment and find cancer cures.

The top nine projects received funding based on available resources from donations.

"The Scientific Advisory Committee ensures that donations are put to the best possible use and the most promising research projects receive funding," Dr. Johnson said. "These projects, which have the potential to find cancer cures and save lives, may not have received funding without support from our generous donors."

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Donations Lead to Prestigious Grant in Ovarian Cancer Research

In the early stages of his research on ovarian cancer, Dr. Kunle Odunsi and his team relied on support from the community. Donations made to Roswell Park and fundraising revenue from events like The Ride For Roswell were pooled together to allow the team to develop and grow their ideas.

And now, because that initial support made their work possible, the researchers have received a prestigious grant of nearly \$12 million from the New York State Stem Cell Science Program to fast-track the project. The initiative is direly needed, as it aims to develop new therapies for ovarian cancer, an aggressive disease that's typically fatal.

Led by Dr. Odunsi, Chair of the Department of Gynecologic Oncology, the team will use an innovative approach to utilize a patients' own stem cells in the fight against cancer. The strategy has proven successful in preclinical studies as a way to not only eradicate existing cancer, but to prevent new cancer cells from developing, as well.

"This Roswell Park-developed, Roswell Park-led initiative is just the latest example of the ingenuity Dr. Odunsi and his team bring to the pressing challenge of how to develop better and more effective therapies for cancer," said Candace Johnson, PhD,

President and CEO, and Wallace Family Chair in Translational Research. "We are enormously grateful for the leadership Gov. Cuomo and NYSTEM have shown in dedicating these funds strategically to address high-priority medical issues, and to the numerous individual and corporate donors whose contributions to the Roswell Park Alliance Foundation enabled the laboratory advances that Dr. Odunsi and his team will now be able to bring to patients."

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Roswell Park staff and faculty said they've already received a lot of positive feedback about the gowns.

"Coming to Roswell Park for treatment or screening can be stressful," Dr. Ermelinda Bonaccio, the Director of the Mammography Center, said. "But thanks to Phil's generosity, our patients now feel more at home and at ease."

Phil has made many other generous donations to Roswell Park. His gifts have funded the

StoryCorps Legacy experience, which allows patients to record and preserve their most precious memories. And his donations have also gone to research projects – including a study on a brain cancer vaccine and projects seeking new treatments for aggressive breast cancer.

One research project funded by Phil's donations recently uncovered new information about breast cancer genetics and how the risk for the disease may vary among women of different ethnicities.

These researchers are now planning follow-up studies, and the project may lead to the development of new, critically preventative strategies. Preliminary studies like this one are often made possible by gifts to Roswell Park, and without donors, they may not otherwise receive funding.

"I've seen firsthand what makes Roswell Park so special," Phil said. "Jayne and I wanted to invest in research that was so very needed to help others."



“ My attitude totally changed when I came to Roswell Park. They don't just give up. They just seem to keep going. They gave me my life back, which I didn't think I would have. I have only one life to live. I'm going to give it the best shot, my best shot is Roswell Park – no doubt in my mind. ”