

Fall 2018



Andy and JJ Dalton *Pay It Forward* to Roswell Park Patients

At the end of August, a little bit of football magic circled back to Roswell Park in the form of a generous gift from the Andy and JJ Dalton Foundation. JJ Dalton and other representatives of the Foundation visited the Katherine, Anne and Donna Gioia Pediatric Hematology Oncology Center on August 26 to announce their donation of an electronics Hub to Roswell Park's pediatric department.

The Hub is filled with tablets, Kindles, virtual reality headsets and gaming consoles to help keep kids and their families entertained during hospital visits.

Andy, quarterback for the Cincinnati Bengals and husband to JJ, developed a sudden and surprising relationship with Buffalo back in January.

After his last-minute, game-winning throw in the Bengals' final game of the 2017 season — which also happened to send Buffalo to the playoffs after a 17-year drought — Buffalo fans responded by giving more than \$450,000 to the Dalton Foundation in gratitude. Andy and JJ were so awestruck by this outpouring of generosity — from a different fan base, no less — that they started planning how to keep the cycle going and give back to the City of Good Neighbors.

“The Buffalo community has given so much to our Foundation. As soon as the preseason calendar was released, we circled this date and knew we had to do something special,” JJ said.

“We're so thankful that we partnered with Roswell Park; it's just been so amazing, and we're so grateful for that.”

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DONATIONS SUPPORT NEW TEST MATCHING PATIENTS WITH *Most* EFFECTIVE TREATMENTS

By the time Sara Sade learned that she had metastatic melanoma, hundreds of tumors had developed in her body, “from my feet to my head,” she recalls. “The disease had spread like wildfire.”

At that stage, Sara’s life expectancy was a year or less. But her doctor at Roswell Park treated her with a type of immunotherapy called a checkpoint blockade or checkpoint inhibitor. After four infusions, the tumors disappeared — and today, six years later, Sara remains cancer-free.

“Checkpoint inhibitors are the main type of immunotherapy used today,” explains Carl Morrison, MD, DVM, President and Founder of the Roswell Park precision-medicine spinoff company OmniSeq®. “They stand to replace virtually all chemotherapy in the next five to 10 years. In fact, they have already replaced half of chemotherapy in half of lung cancer cases, and they’ve become virtually the line of choice for metastatic melanoma.

“One reason checkpoint inhibitor therapy has radically changed the world of therapies is that for the first time, people are willing to say the word cure. Somewhere between 5 and 15 percent of these patients actually establish a cure, or at least long-lasting durable responses.”

PINPOINTING CHOICES FROM A GROWING LIST OF IMMUNOTHERAPIES

But there’s a hitch: Not all patients respond to all types of immunotherapies. Patients with colorectal cancer, for example, “have had a relatively low response to checkpoint inhibitors,” says Dr. Morrison; those patients often do better with more conventional therapies.

So how can doctors identify which treatments have the best chance of working in a specific patient? How can they quickly zero in on the best options on a list of immunotherapies that grows longer every day?

In June of 2017, OmniSeq launched a new test, Immune Report Card®, which identifies all immunotherapies — or combinations of immunotherapies — that are likely to work best in a specific patient with late-stage cancer. It analyzes tissue samples from the patient using five different, highly advanced testing methods to guide the creation of the best treatment plan.

Immune Report Card is not covered by insurance at the present time, but thanks to generous donations to the Roswell Park Alliance Foundation, funds have been set aside to cover the

cost of testing for 645 Roswell Park patients. To date, your donations have enabled testing for 350 patients Roswell Park doctors have determined might benefit from identifying precision-medicine treatment options.

In addition to giving access to this valuable test, your donations allow Roswell Park and OmniSeq to partner in the development of clinical utility information needed by insurance carriers to create coverage and medical policies.

Immune Report Card has already become a “high-demand test” at institutions across the country, Dr. Morrison says. It’s unique because “no one is analyzing multiple immune-related genes at one time and comparing the results to have a holistic view of the tumor microenvironment.”

Establishing each patient’s best options upfront is important in case the first treatment doesn’t work — or stops working. Some patients live many years by leapfrogging from one treatment to another. “But thanks to the community donations that are allowing us to provide this test, we can make the most of these first-, second- and third-line treatments from the very beginning,” says Dr. Morrison.



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Donor Support Helps Provide Extra Comfort for Radiation Patients



Sitting in the waiting room before radiation therapy can be scary, often bringing a harsh new meaning to the reality of a diagnosis. Roswell Park’s Teresa Kishel, Senior Radiation Therapist, had an idea about how to help provide comfort to these patients: soft, colorful shawls.

“A patient came in a few years ago wearing a shawl,” explained Kishel. “I thought it was a good idea. This wrap covers them, offers them modesty and keeps them comfortable while wearing a gown with an open back against chairs that can be cold.”

Kishel began this endeavor four years ago and secured significantly reduced pricing through Etsy. **A quality-of-life grant made possible by your donations is covering the cost.**

Feedback has been both positive and grateful. Patients are offered their choice of colors and may keep the shawl if they like. The shawls are also available through the Resource Center for patients receiving chemotherapy.





Pancreatic cancer survivor Jacqueline enjoying the sunshine on the MMB Patient Terrace.



Donor Gift Provides *Green, Peaceful Place to Relax*

The new MMB Patient Terrace at Roswell Park invites you to relax in an unexpected oasis of warm wood, cool shade, soft sunshine and gentle peace. Nestled between the Scott Bieler Clinical Sciences Center and the main hospital, it's the perfect place to escape to for a deep breath and a quiet moment, whether you're staying in the hospital, visiting for an appointment or accompanying a loved one. Which is exactly its purpose.

From its location on the second floor, you'll see beautiful views of the city skyline, Lake Erie, the horizon, Canada. Raised gardens wave in the breeze, and whimsical glass and metal flowers invite contemplation. You might sit in the sun (use the free sunscreen!) or in the shade, at a table or on a couch, enjoying a light breeze.

You can take that deep breath, quiet your mind and take a break from whatever your day is bringing you.

The MMB Patient Terrace was designed to be a serene, open-air space for meditation, contemplation and conversation. The product of a donation from a supporter who wishes to remain anonymous, it provides a way for patients, families and staff to escape the stresses of the clinical and hospital environments.

"It's almost like you're on a vacation when you are there," says Jacqueline Lipscomb, who was recently treated for pancreatic cancer. "It is so beautiful. It's like another world. You could tell that whoever designed it took the time to make it so relaxing and calming that I didn't want to leave."

Finding Comfort in Difficult Times

The anonymous donor was treated at Roswell Park more than 30 years ago. During her long stays in the hospital, she and her family found connection with other patients and families in a common room at the end of their hallway. It's a warm memory for her. There were board games, puzzles, a pool table and more. Being hospitalized for long periods was difficult, and the conversations that arose in that common room were comforting and healing.

She and her family have also enjoyed the beauty of Kaminski Park when visiting in more recent years. So for her, supporting the creation of a new haven at Roswell Park was a perfect opportunity. "MMMB" represents her initials and her parents', and holds a great deal of love and meaning for her.

Building Peace

Opened this past June, the terrace was designed by Jason Sobieraj, Roswell Park's Assistant Director of Planning and Institute Architect, following an open public design competition.

It's heavily accented with a wood harvested from Brazilian rainforests using sustainable forestry practices. The focal point of the terrace is the sculptural wood bench that rolls up from the decking and peels away from the building to expose a 30-foot-high stainless steel word wall, its message reflecting Roswell Park's core purposes: "healing," "reflection," "support," "compassion," "empowerment" and "care." The words stand tall on the hospital backdrop and can be seen from many areas within the Bieler Center and from street level.

"The space is beautiful and welcoming, but I think it most importantly is a place of calm and respite," says Shirley Johnson, MDA, MS, RN, Chief Clinical Operations Officer and Senior Vice President. "The natural materials, plantings and inspirational words put visitors at ease immediately and create an environment that encourages reflection. What a thoughtful gift from a very caring donor."

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52 Races. **52** Weeks.

One Woman's Race to Raise Funds for Roswell Park.

Stephanie holding a photo of her grandmother on vacation in Amsterdam. Stephanie did a custom two-day ride in the Empire State Ride this year, one of 52 events she's participating in while raising funds for brain cancer research at Roswell Park.

Personal trainer and massage therapist Stephanie Latawicz had always been close to her grandmother Theresa.

"She was the kind of woman who had a zest for life like no other person I have ever met," she says.

"I could never properly pronounce her name as a child, so she became T.T. to my brother and me. Even as a kid, I remember her always going away on exotic trips overseas and traveling the world. You would find her in her sunroom practicing yoga, socializing with friends and just living the life."

In the fall of 2016, T.T. developed glioblastoma, an aggressive form of brain cancer. Stephanie moved in with her to

"I think it's truly amazing what Stephanie is doing. Her determination will help us in the fight to find ways of treating brain cancer with new and promising types of immunotherapy. We are so grateful for the help."

— Robert Fenstermaker, MD, Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery and Director of the Neuro-Oncology Program

help out during this difficult time.

That meant she also witnessed her grandmother's battle up close. T.T. had multiple surgeries, two brain biopsies, gamma knife treatments and a host of other tests. "Watching her face all of that really brought a lot of perspective to my life," Stephanie says.

In November 2017, just days after her 80th birthday, T.T. lost her fight with this disease. Stephanie wanted to do something meaningful as a tribute to her grandmother and to support other brain cancer patients. That's how she came up with 52 races in 52 weeks to raise funds for brain cancer research at Roswell Park. "I decided to continue her story since she no longer could," she says.

Stephanie began her races in January 2018 with the goal of raising \$10,000 over the coming year. But before she started, she connected with Team Roswell.

Team Roswell provides support to community members holding their own fundraisers to benefit Roswell Park. These run the gamut from lemonade stands and birthday contributions to basketball games and golf tournaments. Team Roswell staff gave Stephanie fundraising guidance and lots of swag for her events — including balloons, fliers, banners, giveaways and a special Team Roswell jersey to wear during her races.

To her surprise, Stephanie surpassed her goal in July. So she raised it to \$15,000. She credits social media with spreading the word and catching the attention of local news stations. The new Facebook fundraising connection in particular has really helped. It's a great tool that connects her Team Roswell fundraising page with Facebook so supporters can donate to her fundraiser without ever leaving Facebook.

In addition to participating in organized athletic events, she has also leveraged community events to her advantage, like a pallet board art project with Buffalo Collective; a 50-50 raffle on a catamaran boat ride at Canalside; and fundraisers with LuLuLemon, Jada Blitz Fitness and Rebel Ride. Many of these businesses matched the participants' donations. Then there are the surprises, like her friend's kindergarten class selling cupcakes and another hosting her very own Bald for Bucks campaign — each bringing in more than \$1,000.

The response Stephanie has gotten has astounded her but also driven home what a compassionate community she lives in. "When people see how passionate you are, they will be passionate for your cause as well."

But the best thing about these races? Still, through and through, her first inspiration.

"Not only have I been able to showcase how wonderful Roswell is in terms of the care that they provide people for the community and those who are affected by cancer, but I really have had my own healing throughout this year after witnessing my grandmother's journey. This year has showcased the positive of what happened with my grandmother by turning it into something else. She inspires me. I feel like she inspires other people. She's the reason I'm doing what I'm doing.

"I hope my donations help create a better quality of life for patients and families who are affected with a brain cancer diagnosis. More importantly, I hope to be able to help fund the clinical trials that are currently underway at Roswell Park and find a cure for glioblastoma so that no one ever has to hear those dreaded words — 'You have cancer' — again."



Follow Stephanie's progress at give.roswellpark.org/52races

Your Donations Are in Good Hands

We at the Roswell Park Alliance Foundation are proud to share that we have attained the national rating bureau Charity Navigator's highest possible rating of four stars for our fourth consecutive year, demonstrating strong financial health and commitment to accountability. This seal of approval



indicates that we adhere to sector best practices and execute our mission in a financially efficient way, and verifies that we exceed industry standards. Only 14 percent of the charities evaluated have received at least four consecutive 4-star evaluations. Learn more at CharityNavigator.org.

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“The Hub will help kids be kids during adverse childhood experiences,” said Jessica Kraemer, Child Life Specialist at Roswell Park. “Treatment can be stressful for children, and the HUB helps change that. It promotes play, which allows children to feel safe, learn and grow just like their healthy peers.”

To put the icing on the cake, Andy made a surprise visit during the presentation that day in the Gioia Center, signing autographs and posing for photos to the delight of the Courage of Carly Fund kids — and many grown-ups — who were there.

The inundation of donations from the Buffalo fans shows “the impact that a sport can have on a lot of people,” Andy said. “It also shows generosity can go a long way, it’s contagious, one act of giving turned into over 18,000 people giving, and I think just the amount that was given is going to go such a long way and help so many kids that we’re just so grateful.”

The Dalton Foundation also made a \$25,000 donation to Roswell Park’s Angel Fund, which provides support to families who experience extraordinary financial burdens during their cancer journey. To keep this amazing cycle of generosity going, Roswell Park supporter and Angel Fund Founder Phil Hubbell pledged to make a \$25,000 donation to support Cincinnati families in return.



JJ and Andy Dalton, in black, with Courage of Carly Fund members on August 26.

Founded in 2011, the Andy & JJ Dalton Foundation seeks to provide opportunities, support and resources, along with life-changing experiences, to seriously ill and physically challenged children and their families.