

DONOR DOLLARS at *Work*

Autumn 2025



Roswell Park is uniquely positioned to pave the way for the next great breakthrough in cancer care. As we enter the second phase of our Igniting Cancer Breakthroughs campaign, a campaign to change the future of cancer treatment, we turn our focus to training skilled cell production specialists and launching four key clinical trials.

Your generous gifts are about to bring the next generation of care to cancer patients.

THE GROUNDWORK FOR INNOVATION

Roswell Park's new GMP Engineering & Cell Manufacturing (GEM) Facility opened in January 2025 and saw the opening of 14 new cell manufacturing spaces — also called clean rooms — to expand the six already on campus. This robust new space allows for the in-house production of cells to drive innovation in cell therapy, an emerging and rapidly expanding form of immunotherapy. The GEM Facility is the first of its kind in New York State and will bring treatments and innovations to more patients in New York and across the country faster.

Your support of phase 1 of the Igniting Cancer Breakthroughs campaign made this possible along with an investment from New York State.

TRAINING FUTURE LEADERS

With the GEM facility being the first of only two cell and gene therapy hubs in New York State, few lab technicians have the skills and training necessary to uphold the facility's stringent operational and safety protocol. Through the development of a specialized training program, Roswell Park will arm new staff members with the skills they need to flourish in the field of cell manufacturing. This initiative will create job opportunities in Western New York while maximizing cell production and bringing innovative treatments to patients quicker than ever.

"It takes a lot of talent, commitment and unique donors to help," GEM Facility Technical Director Yeong Choi, PhD, MBA explains. "We have the leadership, we have the expertise, we have the passion, and we really need the donors to help make it possible."

Building the foundation for a new staff training program takes a significant investment of \$1.5 million and will support four key clinical trials.

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To learn more about the impact of your support, visit RoswellPark.org/giving

Roswell Park donors fuel groundbreaking research, promising clinical trials, innovative technology and compassionate patient care programs.



HYUNDAI

Hope On Wheels funds research for pediatric acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL)



Courage of Carly Fund member Alex places his handprint on a Hyundai vehicle.

Bringing Next-Generation ALL Care to Roswell Park's Youngest Patients

Dr. Lisa Niswander, MD, PhD, a Buffalo native, works in the Department of Pediatric Oncology at Roswell Park with a specialty in Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. Her goal has always been simple: to develop safer, more effective therapies for children with certain types of leukemia that can be particularly difficult-to-cure with traditional therapies.

The grant will allow Dr. Niswander to investigate the use of CAR T-cell therapy in combination with other precision medicine treatments to treat our youngest patients with ALL. CAR T-cell therapy enables a child's own infection-fighting T cells to recognize and attack leukemia cells. It has already shown incredible promise in treating pediatric leukemia but more research needs to be done.

"We have found that combining CAR T cells with other precision medicine treatments that specifically target 'miswired' communication pathways in infant leukemia works better than either therapy alone," said Dr. Niswander. "With this generous support from Hyundai Hope on Wheels, we will be working in the lab over the next year to establish and validate the most optimal combination strategies incorporating these targeted inhibitors with CAR T-cell immunotherapy to treat infant leukemia."

Building the Foundation for a Long-Term Cure

Niswander expects that these results will provide a strong foundation for new treatment options to help more infants and children with leukemia achieve a long-term cure. This news brings hope to caregivers like Jason Koepsell, the father of a pediatric patient named Hannah. Koepsell spoke at the 2025 Hyundai Hope on Wheels event about their family's story with cancer.

"Our story starts in June of 2022. At that time, Hannah was 11 years old. She played softball. She cheered. She danced," said Koepsell. "When she came home with elbow pain one day, we never thought that would lead to the worst words a parent could hear."

In February 2025, Hannah received a bone marrow transplant. Her little brother was her donor.

Inspiring Hope for Pediatric Cancer

Throughout the summer and into September — which was National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month — Hyundai Hope on Wheels traveled the nation to award impact grants to doctors who are advancing major progress in pediatric cancer research. This year's grant brings the organization's lifetime donation to Roswell Park to more than \$9 million.

"For almost three decades, Hyundai Hope on Wheels has driven hope in hospitals, homes and communities nationwide. But this story isn't about us. This is about the families who inspire us every day—and the scientific pioneers who are leading innovative and life-saving research," said Mark Delaney, Eastern Region Merchandising Manager at Hyundai. "More kids have a second chance at life. This is the beating heart of everything we do."





Life on donor-funded clinical trial: SurVaxM

Roswell Park patient Tracey

In January 2022, Tracey Kassman, then 64 years old, faced the reality that her life may be ending sooner than expected. She was diagnosed with glioblastoma after doctors uncovered a brain tumor. Glioblastoma has an average life expectancy of 12-18 months.

"I had sort of made peace with the idea that this is a terminal illness, but I also realized that there was a whole lot of other stuff that I wanted to do," said Tracey.

Tracey underwent radiation and chemotherapy at Roswell Park. Then, to her surprise, that April, she was presented with another option.

"Dr. Chinazom Ibegbu, whom I adore, said, 'I think you would be a good candidate for this vaccine that we're running trials on. Would you be interested in participating?' And I was like, 'Let's see ... it's a really bad prognosis if I don't do anything, so let's just do everything we possibly can to try to make sure that I have more birthdays.'"

And so, Tracey enrolled in the double-blind SurVaxM clinical trial. That was three years ago.

SurVaxM Brain Cancer Immunotherapy

SurVaxM is an immunotherapy for glioblastoma, a type of aggressive brain tumor. The new treatment option was created in a lab at Roswell Park by Robert Fenstermaker, MD, Chair of Neurosurgery at Roswell Park, and Michael Ciesielski, PhD, Director of the Neuro-oncology Lab at Roswell Park

Funding from donors like you played a key role in getting these trials off the ground. Donations have also been instrumental in advancing clinical trials and moving research from bench to bedside. In 2024, SurVaxM received Fast-Track designation from the FDA.

"When the opportunity came for me to have another way to extend my life, it was like I had to switch gears of, 'I'm going to die right away' to 'Hey, maybe not,' and I kind of liked that 'Hey, maybe not.' I felt so lucky. I felt lucky to be here. I felt lucky to be surrounded by people who cared at Roswell Park. I still feel lucky."

Life on a Clinical Trial

Since Tracey is on a blind clinical trial, she doesn't know for sure if she's getting the real medication or the placebo.

Today, Tracey is focusing on life beyond being a patient. She's diving into the things she loves most — a writing workshop, water aerobics and more time in her garden and with her family.

"This treatment doesn't interfere with any part of my life really, other than getting to Roswell Park two days every two months."

Message to Roswell Park Donors

Tracey believes supporting cancer research is more important now than ever before, and she is grateful to the people who support Roswell Park through donations.

"The thing that makes Roswell Park so great is that they're preeminent in the research field," she added. "Their reputation is great, but it's only great because they care so much about patients. Any effort that somebody wants to give, any money they want to raise ... has got to be fueled by a feeling that this [mission] is worthwhile. And, of course, it is."

After all, Tracey is just one example of how worthwhile those efforts truly are.

For every dollar donated to Roswell Park, our experts are able to leverage an additional \$23 from external grants for cancer research. This is thanks to the support of the Roswell Park fundraisers and donors.

"I don't know of any other charity in Buffalo that's as focused as Roswell Park is. That's how you know that any money being raised is not wasted. It's going to be used for patient support and staff support and research," Tracey exclaimed. "That gives you a great feeling. They grew SurVaxM right here. It's a homegrown thing. I'm all about that."

The phase 2B randomized SURVIVE trial, exploring the efficacy of SurVaxM, is currently underway with existing patients at Roswell Park and 10 other centers nationwide. Though the trial is no longer recruiting new patients, this phase opens the door to new possibilities for this cutting-edge treatment.



CARE SUPPORT
 PEACE EMPOWERMENT
 REFLECTION UNDERSTANDING
 EMPOWERMENT HEALING
 SUPPORT REFLECTION
 HEALING EMPOWERMENT
 UNDERSTANDING
 COMPASSION REFLECTION
 EMPOWERMENT SUPPORT
 PEACE COMPASSION
 UNDERSTANDING CARE

Look what you've made possible!

Curing cancer takes a village. We see that every day in the number of people who step up to support the mission to end cancer. At Roswell Park, your generosity enables researchers to overcome barriers and discover newer, better treatment options, igniting hope for cancer patients everywhere.

Over the last year, you've helped Roswell Park catalyze its impact. Every dollar donated and every dollar raised was invested into our mission — because it takes all of us. Thanks to the help of dedicated, compassionate donors like you, we're on the precipice of uncovering breakthroughs that have incredible potential to save lives.

We don't want another day to go by without you knowing what you made possible. Here are just a few examples of what you helped fund in just the last year:

- Seed funding for 30+ promising cancer research projects
- New state-of-the-art cell production facilities
- Cell therapy clinical trials for solid tumor cancers like lung and pancreatic cancer
- 60+ Quality-of-Life compassionate support programs including cancer coaches, salon and wig services, financial support for economically stressed patients
- Cutting-edge technology like Theranostics treatment for metastatic cancers
- Advanced training for our clinical care teams

Each of these investments was made possible **because of you.** Whether you fundraised for an event including Ride for Roswell, Empire State Ride or IceCycle, donated to a participant or directly to the Alliance Foundation, hosted a community event to benefit Roswell Park or volunteered your time and energy — your commitment fuels this critical mission and reminds us that we're not in this alone. You are part of a powerful community that believes in compassion, innovation and the importance of research.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING THIS IMPORTANT WORK TOGETHER IN THE YEARS AHEAD.



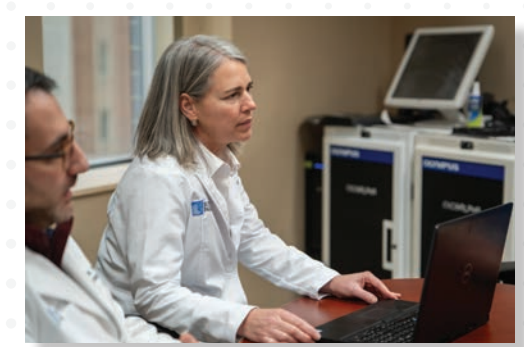
“Cell and gene therapies are redefining expectations of what is possible through cancer treatment. We look eagerly to a future where even the most hard-to-treat cancers can be successfully treated and cured.”

- Candace Johnson, PhD
 Roswell Park President, CEO and
 M&T Bank Presidential Chair in Leadership



“Roswell Park has been a tremendous help in my breast cancer journey. I wouldn't be where I am today without all the help I have received from my amazing oncologist and nurses.”

- Brooke Beatty, Roswell Park patient



“The stories where a cancer diagnosis is just a year away from a newer, better treatment happen all too frequently. We have to speed things up. We've got to do this faster, harder, more aggressively to continue to save people's lives.”

- Julia Faller, DO, MS
 Chief Medical Officer at Roswell Park
 Comprehensive Cancer Center



“It has really meant a lot to me to know that the Elevate Salon is there, especially for women. To know there's a place where they care about how you look and feel means a lot.”

- Annette Ford
 Roswell Park patient



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PROMISING CELL THERAPY CLINICAL TRIALS

Current cell therapy clinical trials are seeing an improvement in survival rates for patients with blood cancers. With those achievements in mind, Roswell Park researchers are now shifting focus to using recent discoveries to study CAR T-cell therapy, a type of cell therapy, on solid tumors.



Using CAR T-cells to treat solid tumors remains challenging, because many patients either do not respond or their cancer returns after treatment. Researchers are now working to improve CAR T-cell design to help them work better and last longer in the body.

Four clinical trials for solids cancers are in very early stages thanks to donor support.

SMALL CELL LUNG AND PROSTATE



Led by Drs. Renier Brentjens and Edwin Yau, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor of Oncology

This study will test new CAR T-cells in patients with chemotherapy-resistant small cell lung cancer and neuroendocrine prostate cancer, which can have prognoses of only months.

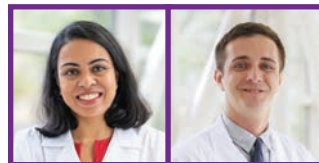
ADULT AND PEDIATRIC SARCOMA



Led by Drs. Brentjens, Ajay Gupta, MD, MS, and Joyce Ohm, PhD

Treatment options for cancer patients with bone sarcomas are limited, and the prognosis is poor. This study involves a novel dual-armored, dual-targeted strategy to overcome limitations in the use of CAR T-cell therapy for adult and pediatric sarcoma patients.

PANCREATIC CANCER



Led by Drs. Brentjens, Anu Krishnamurthy and Leonid Cherkassky

This trial will combine targeting of both pancreatic tumor cells and cancer-supporting cells called fibroblasts which prevent optimal T-cell function against tumor cells.

OVARIAN



Led by Drs. Marco Davila and Emese Zsiros

This trial is testing a new form of cell therapy for patients with platinum-resistant ovarian cancer, which has no cure and minimal treatment options.

Your continued support of Roswell Park's Igniting Cancer Breakthroughs Campaign will provide the funding needed to ensure these trials get to patients who have few options.