Powerhouse Pan-Mass Challenge raises $56 million, surpasses $654 million since 1980

Every Pan-Mass Challenge (PMC) rider has a story to tell, and Maura Shaughnessy, proud to have completed her 25th PMC in 2018, is no exception. “Both my parents had cancer, and my maternal grandmother died of ovarian cancer when my mom was just a teenager,” she explained. The day before her second PMC in 1991, Shaughnessy made a visit to Dana-Farber’s Jimmy Fund Clinic and was forever changed by the experience. “I saw firsthand what these struggling kids and their brave parents went through, as well as the great care they received. I knew that as long as I was able, I would be riding the PMC.”

The PMC is the nation’s most successful athletic fundraising event. On August 4-5, more than 6,300 riders chose routes ranging from 25 to 192 miles, powering past their $52 million goal to raise an extraordinary $56 million and surpassing $654 million in cumulative funds raised for adult and pediatric cancer care and research at Dana-Farber since the event’s inception in 1980. Riders hail from 43 states and 10 countries, and many are cancer survivors or current patients who provide Living Proof of the PMC’s impact.

“The PMC community is filled with dedication—from our riders, to our volunteers, our supporters, and our sponsors, everyone involved commits themselves to the fight against cancer,” said Billy Starr, PMC founder and executive director, and a Dana-Farber Trustee.

One hundred percent of every dollar raised by riders goes directly to Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund, thanks to the generous support of presenting sponsors the Red Sox Foundation and New Balance, as well as 200 corporations that provide more than $7 million in products and services each year.

Maura Shaughnessy rides with the team fielded by her employer, MFS Investment Management (MFS), a 20-year sponsor of the PMC. Team MFS has raised over $8 million in total for Dana-Farber, with 1,200 riders participating since 1999. This year, 80 MFS riders generated nearly $679,000, and Shaughnessy led the team with more than $86,300, bringing her personal total to more than $1.2 million. “Riders like Maura exemplify what it means to be a part of the PMC, and we are so grateful to have people like her and her team from MFS on the road with us each August,” Starr said.

MFS was the presenting sponsor of the PMC’s Pedal Partner Program, which connects teams with pediatric oncology patients at Dana-Farber’s Jimmy Fund Clinic. “As a parent who has seen a child experience a serious medical issue and remembering that visit 24 years ago, the Pedal Partner Program brings this full circle for me: to save kids today and tomorrow and to help ease their parents’ burden, too,” Shaughnessy said.

This was the third PMC for Dana-Farber President and CEO Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, and her husband, Gregory Petsko, DPhil. “The PMC is an exhilarating experience,” said Glimcher. “All of us at Dana-Farber recognize the impact of the PMC riders, volunteers, and donors. Their dedication advances the field in scientific discovery and provides critical support for our exemplary patient care, and we are truly grateful for their partnership.”

PMC Founder and Executive Director Billy Starr with Team MFS member Maura Shaughnessy, who has personally raised more than $1.2 million in her 25 years riding the PMC.
Dear Friends,

In my 21 years at Dana-Farber, I’ve never ceased to be amazed by the brilliance and dedication of our physician-scientists, the compassion and expertise of our caregiving teams, and the overwhelming generosity—and vision—of our donors. The Institute’s many achievements in both patient care and research over the years were made possible by the support of so many special people—you, our generous donors.

This issue of Impact is filled with wonderful examples, like the committed riders of the Pan-Mass Challenge (PMC), who this year generated an absolutely astonishing $56 million for the Jimmy Fund. With the help of generous sponsors and volunteers, 100 percent of every dollar raised by riders goes directly to patient care and research at Dana-Farber.

With President Gilmcher’s launch of the new Strategic Plan earlier this year, and a comprehensive capital campaign gearing up to support it, Dana-Farber has set ambitious goals which include recruiting and retaining the very best physician-scientists. To that end, Institute Trustee Richard Lubin and his wife, Nancy, have generously endowed a faculty chair which will enable a superlative scientist or clinician to pursue the most promising initiatives. Their transformative gift of $10 million, establishing both the Richard and Nancy Lubin Family Chair and Research Fund, will have a permanent impact on the Institute, and we are grateful for their foresight.

Another vote of confidence comes from those who know the Institute best, our senior faculty and executive leaders. One hundred percent of Dana-Farber’s Executive Leadership Team, Faculty Campaign Committee, Chiefs and Chairs, and Senior Vice Presidents have made personal gifts totaling nearly $1 million in early support of our upcoming capital campaign. These cancer experts, already dedicating their careers to Dana-Farber, are also providing critical financial momentum to our efforts and underscoring that conviction that this is the place to change the paradigm in the fight against cancer.

The Lustgarten Foundation, our partner in so many groundbreaking research projects over the years, aims to strike a blow against pancreatic cancer with a grant of $1 million. They are proud to be funding a promising study of the fundamental biology of cancer, which uses a new research technique invented right here at Dana-Farber and has the potential for impact on many different forms of cancer. It is with such bold, innovative research that we will make the greatest strides.

As I prepare to leave the Institute later this year, I want to thank all of you for the part you’ve played in propelling Dana-Farber forward in the ever-changing landscape of cancer science and medicine. Just a few of the advances you have made possible over the past 21 years are highlighted in the timeline below. Your passion for our mission, your faith in our abilities, and your unflagging generosity have been a powerful inspiration each and every day. It has been an honor to work by your side.

Sincerely,

Susan S. Paresky
Senior Vice President for Development

21 years of achievement, fueled by philanthropy

Over the past 21 years, Dana-Farber has made tremendous advances in cancer research and patient care thanks to the support of our generous donors. Here is just a sampling of what you have made possible.

1997
Generous donors give a total of $32.3 million to Dana-Farber.

2000
The Leonard P. Zakim Center for Integrative Therapies opens, providing state-of-the-art space for more than 500 Dana-Farber researchers.

2001
Dana-Farber Basic scientists discover how a protein called PD-L1 helps cancer cells evade detection by the immune system, leading to FDA approval of the first PD-1 Inhibitor immunotherapy drug in 2014.

2002
Dana-Farber Launches its new Mission Possible: to drive a patient’s disease into remission.

2007
Dana-Farber launches the first $1 billion capital campaign in New England hospital history. By its close in 2010, the campaign’s total reached $1.18 billion.

2008
Dana-Farber scientists achieve a medical first: using a “targeted” drug to drive a patient’s metastatic melanoma into remission.

UPDATE ON FEDERAL FUNDING AT DANA-FARBER

Study finds inherited gene variants in 10 percent of pancreatic cancer patients

A large study of pancreatic cancer patients has found that almost 10 percent harbored inherited genetic variations or mutations that may have increased their susceptibility to the disease. In addition, some of these mutations were associated with more favorable responses to certain chemotherapy agents, according to the scientists from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Funded by the National Cancer Institute, the Lustgarten Foundation, and the Hale Center for Pancreatic Cancer Research, the study demonstrates the important role of private philanthropy in bolstering federal grants.

The findings have prompted Dana-Farber physicians to recommend offering genetic testing to all pancreatic cancer patients at the time of diagnosis, regardless of their age or family history of cancer.

The researchers noted that the potential advantages are several-fold. If, as it appears, particular inherited mutations increase the cancer’s susceptibility to DNA-damaging agents such as platinum chemotherapy and PARP inhibitors, test results could help guide therapy. In addition, the presence of an inherited pancreatic cancer susceptibility mutation increases the chance that close relatives may carry a mutant gene for a familial cancer syndrome such as Lynch syndrome or Li-Fraumeni syndrome. Relatives may choose to have genetic testing for such syndromes and in some cases, can take advantage of risk-reducing surveillance and proactive treatment.

“Based on data from this other study, we are now offering genetic testing to all pancreatic cancer patients regardless of age and family history,” said Matthew Yurgelun, MD, one of three first authors of the paper. Until recently, he said, many estimates of inherited, or “germline,” mutations in pancreatic cancer were lower. It has also been thought that being diagnosed at an early age or with a family history of pancreatic cancer pointed to the likelihood of a germline mutation, but it is now recognized that those factors are not reliable indicators of an inherited mutation at work.

Brian Wolpin, MD, MPH, director of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Center and the Hale Center for Pancreatic Cancer Research at Dana-Farber, is a co-senior author of the study.

This research was supported in part by the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center SPOR in Gastrointestinal Cancer (P50 CA270033), the National Cancer Institute (U01 CA210171), the Lustgarten Foundation, and the Hale Center for Pancreatic Cancer Research.
Leadership gift of $10 million focuses on faculty recruitment and retention

Dana-Farber’s strengths rest on its collaborative research and patient care model, bolstered by its “human capital”—the distinguished faculty who are dedicated to solving the most complex problems in cancer. With a transformational $10 million gift, Trustee Richard Lubin and his wife, Nancy, and their family have established the Richard and Nancy Lubin Family Chair and the Richard and Nancy Lubin Research Fund to help the Institute attract and retain the highest caliber faculty.

The gift advances a core tenet of the Institute’s Strategic Plan announced earlier this year by President and CEO Laurie H. Glimcher, MD. The Strategic Plan aims to transform the science of cancer, expand the breadth of exceptional care, and expedite our progress by investing in talent—all of which set the stage for unprecedented change. The plan also identifies key priorities, including a focus on cancer genomics and immunotherapy, fields in which Dana-Farber is a pioneer.

“In the new era of cancer research and care, it is imperative that we attract, retain, and nurture top and diverse talent,” said Glimcher. “This visionary investment by Richard and Nancy Lubin will enable us to accelerate scientific discovery through the talent brought to bear in the laboratory and at the patient’s bedside.”

The Lubins’ gift, which also provides early momentum to Dana-Farber’s planned comprehensive capital campaign, enables Dana-Farber to optimize a competitive package for recruiting and retaining top talent and contributes to the quality of leadership, scientific study, and clinical care at the Institute and in the Boston medical community.

A permanently endowed position, the Richard and Nancy Lubin Family Chair is reserved for a superlative scientist or physician who has shown remarkable talent as an educator, researcher, or administrator. Through this generous gift, the incumbent of the Lubin Family Chair will have the freedom to undertake promising initiatives in cancer research and care, driven not by fiscal constraints, but by scientific discovery and patient need. The incumbent will also hold a senior faculty position at Harvard Medical School.

“Dana-Farber has arguably the finest faculty in the world of cancer research and clinical care,” said Richard Lubin. “That faculty is what makes Dana-Farber great and enables the Institute to fulfill its mission. I view this gift as providing Dr. Glimcher and her colleagues with the opportunity to recruit and retain the highest quality faculty in a competitive marketplace.”

Richard Lubin cofounded Berkshire Partners, a private equity firm headquartered in Boston, in 1986, where he is now managing director. He was elected to Dana-Farber’s Board of Trustees in 1983, and currently serves as the board’s vice chairman and on its Compensation, Executive, and Finance committees. The Lubins have been longtime, extraordinary supporters of Dana-Farber, with gifts totaling more than $16 million, including naming the second-floor lobby of the Yawkey Center for Cancer Care.

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— RICHARD LUBIN, Dana-Farber Trustee

Thank you for supporting Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund!
In its inaugural year, the Jimmy Fund 5K & Fun Run presented by Bayer drew more than 1,000 runners to West Roxbury’s Millennium Park and raised over $110,000.

Participants chose between two routes: the 5K or the 1-mile Fun Run. Kids and adults alike enjoyed the course’s scenic paths, including rolling hills, forest trees, and city views. The Sunday, July 22 race kicked off with opening remarks by Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, and included a lively post-race celebration, featuring beverages provided by Harpoon Brewery.

For the Jarvis family, the event was more than a road race. Frank, an avid runner, had lost half his lung after being diagnosed with hairy cell leukemia last year, and needed to learn to run again. His wife, Lynn, had wanted for many years to run a road race. The duo decided to tackle the race together, pursuing their personal goals while raising funds for Dana-Farber.

“The Jimmy Fund became part of our lives,” said Lynn. “We thought it so wonderful that we could raise money for a place that means so much to us, and help us both reach personal goals!”

Making the race even more special for the Jarvisses, this year marked 25 years that their daughter, Caitlyn, has been cancer free. Caitlyn is now a PhD student at Purdue University.

More than 20 years after the death of Daryl Layzer from multiple myeloma, her sister, Emily Sherwood, vividly recalls the outstanding treatment she received at Dana-Farber. “We feel forever grateful for the care and compassion afforded to Daryl during her treatment,” said Emily. “There is truly no other institution we know that combines the research and clinical approach in such a profoundly humane and patient-centered way.”

When Daryl was diagnosed in 1993, Kenneth Anderson, MD, director of the Jerome Lipper Multiple Myeloma Center and fellow Institute for Myeloma Therapeutics and the Kraft Family Professor of Medicine, recommended bone marrow and stem cell transplants, which were cutting-edge treatments at the time. Emily is grateful that her sister lived years longer than expected. “Daryl died at age 47, far too early to leave this world, but grateful for the years she lived thanks to the excellent care provided by Dr. Anderson and his team,” she said.

Emily and Ned Sherwood recently made a new $150,000 gift to fund the Daryl Elizabeth Layzer Term Fellowship established in 2016 under Anderson’s direction, building on generous support they began in 1998. “Emily and Ned’s investment in the next generation is invaluable,” said Anderson. “The Daryl Elizabeth Layzer Term Fellowship will support a future myeloma leader who will continue our progress and benefit patients and their families worldwide.”

“We are thrilled to enable a talented fellow to help move the needle on finding a cure for multiple myeloma,” said Emily.

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Senior faculty and Institute leaders give generously in support of upcoming capital campaign

With the launch of a new Strategic Plan for Dana-Farber earlier this year, the Institute has set out to transform the field of cancer care through discovery and innovation. The Strategic Plan lays the foundation for a planned comprehensive capital campaign to help realize this ambitious vision and bring us closer to a world without cancer.

One hundred percent of Dana-Farber’s Executive Leadership Team, Faculty Campaign Committees, Chiefs and Chairs, and Senior Vice Presidents have already stepped forward to make philanthropic gifts totaling nearly $1 million in support of the upcoming campaign. At the forefront of this effort are President and CEO Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, President and CEO Emeritus Edward J. Benz Jr., MD, and President Emeritus David G. Nathan, MD.

"Every day, our faculty and staff devote their time and talents to the care of our patients and the search for cures," said Glimcher. "To also see so many of our senior physician-scientists and executive leaders speak volumes for how deeply they believe in Dana-Farber and the future of our institution. That level of commitment this early in the planned campaign timeline is truly extraordinary."

These gifts provide critical momentum in the campaign's early phase and will help fuel the goals of the Strategic Plan: transform the science of cancer, expand the breadth of exceptional care, and expedite our progress.

"So many of Dana-Farber’s faculty and staff have given generously through the years, helping to bring us where we are today," added Benz. "These new gifts earmarked for the next campaign show that our colleagues continue to have high confidence in Dana-Farber’s ability to make transformative progress against cancer. We hope these contributions will inspire many other donors to make their own campaign gifts so that, together, we can discover tomorrow’s cures, provide the finest care to patients today, and, ultimately, save more lives."

Nathan added, "All of us at Dana-Farber understand how important philanthropic dollars are to our work. Dr. Sidney Farber himself was an exceptional fundraiser. Charitable giving is in the Institute's DNA. I am proud to be a Dana-Farber donor, and I know my colleagues feel the same." Helping inspire meaningful contributions to the campaign from fellow senior faculty and leaders are co-chairs of the Faculty Campaign Committee, Stephen Sallan, MD, chief of staff emeritus and the Quick Family Chair in Pediatric Oncology at Dana-Farber, and Deborah Schrag, MD, MPH, chief of the Division of Population Sciences.

"To see such outstanding participation and personal generosity from so many of our senior physician-scientists and executive leaders speaks volumes for how deeply they believe in Dana-Farber and the future of our institution."

— LAURIE H. GILMCHER, MD, president and CEO, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

Partnership funds pediatric brain cancer research

A Kids’ Brain Tumor Cure
PLGA Program
FUNDING RESEARCH ▶ FINDING CURES

Three nonprofits, established by families and friends of children battling brain cancer, are collaborating to make a difference.

With a transformative grant of $300,000, A Kids’ Brain Tumor Cure, Why Not Me?, and Thea’s Star of Hope will support research pursuing innovative investigations led by Dana-Farber, and Karen Wright, MD, MS, will test the efficacy of this promising new compound. If successful, this study will transform care for children with low-grade gliomas and dramatically improve their prognoses.

"Limited resources to fund pediatric brain cancer clinical trials are a national health issue," says Amy Weinstein, executive director of A Kids’ Brain Tumor Cure. "Collaborating with Why Not Me? from Pennsylvania and Thea’s Star of Hope from New Jersey supports Dana-Farber’s groundbreaking work, which will affect all children battling brain cancer, regardless of where they reside. We are grateful to our nonprofit partners for their trust in Dana-Farber."

"We are grateful to our nonprofit partners for their trust in Dana-Farber."

— AMY WEINSTEIN, A Kids’ Brain Tumor Cure

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Derby Day Party raises fun and funds for melanoma research

Haron Crowley Martin was a remarkable woman who possessed a lovely sense of humor and fun-loving personality. Sadly, she passed following a courageous battle with stage IV melanoma. Still, her festive spirit endures in her family’s annual Derby Day Party fundraiser, which honors her memory and supports the Sharon Crowley Martin Memorial Fund for Melanoma Research at Dana-Farber.

Held at the Prowse Farm in Canton, Mass., this year’s celebration raised $170,000 and brought the five-year cumulative total raised to more than $550,000 in funding for innovative investigations led by Sharon’s doctor, F. Stephen Hodi, MD, director of the Melanoma Center and the Center for Immunology and the Sharon Crowley Martin Chair in Melanoma at Dana-Farber. Spearheaded by Sharon’s three children and a loyal committee of family and friends, the party put the “fun” in “fundraising” through lawn games, cocktails, a drawing, music and dancing, and a viewing of the Kentucky Derby. The day also featured remarks from Sharon’s daughter, Susie Mitchell, and Hodi, who thanked everyone and emphasized the impact of their generosity on his team’s pursuit of novel melanoma treatments.

Mitchell underscored her family’s gratitude for Hodi’s outstanding care of Sharon, along with an aunt whose life Mitchell credits him with saving. "Dr. Hodi has truly been a hero to our family," she said, "and we are committed to equipping him with the funding he needs to advance his critical work.

"We are grateful to our nonprofit partners for their trust in Dana-Farber."
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative makes bold investment in Human Cell Atlas at Dana-Farber

Transformative discoveries come through the pursuit of bold ideas—and through teams of brilliant, ambitious investigators joining together to solve some of the world’s most intractable problems. In December 2015, Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan founded the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI), an innovative philanthropic organization aimed at connecting the best scientists and thinkers to tackle the biggest challenges that exist today in the fields of education, social justice, and science.

As part of this effort, CZI launched a program in 2016 to support the science and technology that will make it possible to cure, prevent, or manage all diseases by the end of this century. Through this endeavor, the organization is investing in transformative projects such as the Human Cell Atlas (HCA), an international collaboration to map, measure, and understand every component of healthy human cells. Once complete, scientists could use data generated from the HCA to pinpoint what goes awry within a cell to trigger disease—information that could help physicians treat and care for a wide variety of diseases, including cancer.

Four researchers in Dana-Farber’s Department of Biostatistics and Computational Biology recently received grants totaling more than $790,000 from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative DAF, an advised fund of Silicon Valley Community Foundation, to support their involvement in the HCA: Sahand Hormoz, PhD; department Chair Rafael Itzazary, PhD; CiBio Center Director Chris Sander, PhD; and Guo-Cheng Yuan, PhD.

The HCA’s goal—to help researchers better understand how healthy cells function—is straightforward, but gathering this information requires a global team working together to study and process the vast amount of data generated through thousands of studies. At Dana-Farber, the team is leveraging advanced technologies to study and statistically analyze some of this information, as well as leading an effort to create a portal to help visualize the complex data.

“These grants to Dana-Farber investigators capture CZI’s goal to build diverse communities working at the interface of technology and science,” said Jonah Cool, CZI program manager for the Human Cell Atlas. “These amazing investigators are tackling diverse foundational problems that will help construct and interpret the HCA.”

Hyundai Hope on Wheels grants to accelerate pediatric leukemia research push 20-year total past $10 million

Founded in 1998, Hyundai Hope on Wheels (HHOW) has grown into one of the largest private funders of pediatric cancer research. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the foundation and, over the past two decades, HHOW has been an invaluable partner of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, giving more than $10 million to propel the Institute’s mission and serving as the presenting sponsor of the Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk.

In 2018, HHOW awarded two grants totaling $500,000, including a Scholar Award to Birgit Knoechel, MD, PhD, to advance her exploration of the epigenetic mechanisms driving acute T-cell lymphoblastic leukemia (T-ALL), an aggressive blood cancer in children and young adults that frequently becomes resistant to treatment and susceptible to relapse. With HHOW’s support, Knoechel aims to understand how an epigenetically distinct subpopulation of T-ALL cells underlies drug resistance in NOTCH1-mutated T-ALL.

“I am so grateful for this award, which serves as a powerful springboard for our efforts to overcome treatment resistance in this difficult disease,” said Knoechel.

HHOW also presented a 2018 Young Investigator Award to Maxim Pimkin, MD, PhD, whose work focuses on how super-enhancers, or large clusters of regulatory DNA, drive acute myeloid leukemia (AML), a hard-to-treat cancer of the bone marrow and white blood cells. Pimkin will leverage HHOW’s support to dissect key oncogenic super-enhancers in AML with the aim of understanding the epigenetic mechanisms underlying this malignancy and facilitating the development of novel therapies.

“I cannot thank HHOW enough for their generous contribution to my work,” said Pimkin. “This award will help uncover new insights into the epigenetic drivers of AML and, ultimately, could influence future drug discovery.”

“We at Hyundai Hope on Wheels believe that research can find a cure for pediatric cancers,” said Director of Corporate Responsibility and Diversity & Inclusion, Zafar Brooks. “We want to invest in institutions that have demonstrated their own commitment to addressing these important issues and Dana-Farber is among the best organizations in the world doing this transformational research.”

American Cancer Society support reinforces legacy of investigator-led discovery, community education

The American Cancer Society (ACS) is advancing research and efforts at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute through grants this year totaling $844,000.

Through mentored research grants, Katherine Choe, PhD, is studying an essential component of the DNA damage response and how cells acquire mutations that drive cancer development. Chao Dai, PhD, is investigating key drivers of pancreatic cancer metastasis and novel mechanisms which may protect against this disease. Catherine Marinac, PhD, aims to examine the relationship of obesity with treatment response in multiple myeloma patients. Kyle Korishv, PhD, is working to identify the most powerful way to neutralize a cancer-causing protein with implications for melanoma, leukemia, and lymphoma. Nathan Mathewson, PhD, is utilizing a new technique to enhance the ability of CAR-T cells to kill glioblastoma tumors. And, in examining Barrett’s esophagus and a mutated gene, Nilay Sethi, MD, PhD, is uncovering molecular mechanisms and genomic alterations which lead to esophageal cancer.

ACS’s focus on investigator-initiated research allows Dana-Farber scientists intellectual freedom for discovery in areas they believe are most likely to solve the problems of cancer.

“The American Cancer Society is proud to support the careers of these promising young scientists,” said William Phelps, PhD, scientific vice president, extramural research for the American Cancer Society. “We look forward to the benefits their innovative research will have to help reduce the cancer burden for all affected by the disease.”

In its more than 100-year history, ACS holds an important place in the progress of cancer awareness, research, and care. Today, the ACS mission of public education and prevention endures through its support of Dana-Farber’s Mammography Van. Its investment this past year has helped to bring educational materials and lifesaving screenings directly to thousands of women in at-risk populations across Greater Boston and throughout Massachusetts.

“The American Cancer Society is proud to support the careers of these promising young scientists.”

— WILLIAM PHELPS, PHD, American Cancer Society
Legacy gift propels endometrial cancer research

As she bravely battled advanced endometrial cancer, Bina Sareen thought of women who would face the disease in the future. Wanting to have the most impact on fighting endometrial cancer, even as her own cancer advanced, Bina left a generous $384,000 gift in her estate plans to create the Bina Sareen Fund for Endometrial Cancer Research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

“Bina resolved to help, in any way she could, others who would be diagnosed with this debilitating disease,” said Sarvajit Sareen, Bina’s brother. “Because very little is known about curing endometrial cancer, Bina wanted to promote research that would ultimately lead to finding a cure.”

Due to her interest in furthering research, Bina, a longtime teacher, met with physician-scientists from Dana-Farber. It became clear to Bina after her discussion with Ursula Matulonis, MD, chief of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology in the Susan F. Smith Center for Women’s Cancers and the Brock-Wilson Family Chair at Dana-Farber, and Panos Konstantinopoulos, MD, PhD, director of translational research in Gynecologic Oncology, that more studies were vital for a treatment breakthrough.

Bina’s generous legacy supported a groundbreaking study at Dana-Farber developing a possible immunotherapy treatment for endometrial cancer.

“Bina’s gift helped enable a clinical trial examining the efficacy of PD-L1 inhibitor avelumab on endometrial cancers with a genetic mutation,” said Konstantinopoulos.

“This is one of the first studies to bring immunotherapy to this subtype of the disease.”

Arbella and its employees fuel Institute’s mission

Arbella Insurance Group and its employees and agents continued their generous support of Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund in 2018, giving $250,000 to bolster cancer research and patient care. As the Official Auto Insurance Partner of the Jimmy Fund, Arbella sponsors events including the Jimmy Fund Scooper Bowl® presented by Valvoline Instant Oil Change, John Hancock Fenway Fantasy Day, Jimmy Fund Golf presented by Mehogyn Sun, and the Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk presented by Hyundai.

Its philanthropic arm, the Arbella Insurance Foundation, is presenting sponsor of the annual WEEI/NESN Jimmy Fund Radio-Telethon, and encourages Arbella employees and independent agents to support Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund through matching gift programs. Since 2008, the foundation, Arbella employees, and agents have contributed over $490,000 to the Jimmy Fund. Arbella employees are involved with the Institute in a variety of ways throughout the year, most notably through the employee-driven Pink Day on October 16, an annual celebration to raise funds for Dana-Farber. Now in its 10th year, Pink Day began when a former Arbella employee was treated for breast cancer at Dana-Farber and rallied her colleagues to support the Institute’s mobile Mammography Van. Pink Day now helps fuel the Blum Family Resource Center Van, which provides mobile skin cancer screenings and resources to underserved communities throughout Massachusetts. This summer, Arbella staff volunteered as the van visited three local beaches, providing an average of 50 screenings per location.

“Arbella employees’ gifts during Pink Day are matched by the foundation, and over the years, the foundation and Arbella have given more than $270,000 to support these important community outreach vans.”

Schussels provide pivotal funds for vital data analysis

Since Sandi Schussel’s successful treatment at Dana-Farber for a rare T-cell lymphoma in 2015, she and her husband, George, have become active supporters of cancer research. They have made generous gifts supporting Dana-Farber research into breakthrough cures for lymphomas, and in August they appeared with Sandi’s oncologist, Matthew Davids, MD, MMSc, on the WEEI/NESN Jimmy Fund Radio-Telethon presented by Arbella Insurance Foundation to tell her story of success and encourage listeners to give.

Motivated by George’s professional expertise in database technology, the couple wondered whether gene sequencing, the resulting big data, and artificial intelligence could further progress in the conquering of cancer. “Because it’s now much more common for patients to get their tumors sequenced,” explained Dana-Farber’s David Weinstock, MD, “it’s important to look at a large set of samples and understand the frequency with which we find something that actually changes the treatment.”

Sandi and George’s most recent gift of $100,000 is helping Weinstock and his colleagues analyze a large set of gene sequencing samples, collaborating with investigators from multiple institutions to gain new insights into which gene abnormalities are important and targetable. “The Schussels provided seed money at a pivotal time,” said Weinstock.

“Sandi and I were both trained in the scientific method and have faith that understanding the human genome and its relationship to cancer will provide an important new boost to cancer therapies, thereby benefiting all of mankind,” said George.

Dana-Farber Holiday Cards & Gifts

Send Cards, Give Gifts, and Help Conquer Cancer Dana-FarberHoliday.org
Lustgarten Foundation fuels novel approach in pancreatic cancer

Since 1998, the Lustgarten Foundation has been dedicated to advancing research into pancreatic cancer. While technology has revealed important insights into the role that genomic alterations play in the growth and development of cancer, for many diseases—including pancreatic cancer—there remains an urgent need to increase understanding of the impact that such abnormalities have on cancer development.

To address this need in pancreatic cancer, the foundation awarded a $1 million grant to Dana-Farber's David Pellman, MD, Margaret M. Dyson Professor of Pediatric Oncology. Pellman is investigating the impact on cell function of catastrophic genomic events which shatter and reassemble chromosomes, causing thousands of alterations. These events are found with remarkably high frequency among pancreatic cancers.

“We are impressed by Dr. Pellman's approach to cancer research, which uses one-of-a-kind technology, and the most advanced models, to learn more about the fundamental biology of cancer and apply this directly to pancreatic disease,” said Kerri Kaplan, president and chief executive officer of the Lustgarten Foundation. “We are extremely grateful to have the support of the Lustgarten Foundation for our effort to better understand these genomic catastrophes,” said Pellman, who is also a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator. “Pancreatic cancer is one of the most prominent examples of these catastrophes across cancer types, and will undoubtedly help us to learn more about these phenomena, potentially identifying weaknesses in cancer cells that can be exploited with novel therapies.”

Pellman's research into the mechanisms underlying catastrophic genomic events has implications across many different forms of cancer. He is particularly appreciative of the Lustgarten Foundation’s support, because by funding investigators like himself who do not have a specialty background in pancreatic cancer, the foundation provides an opportunity to bring fresh and innovative ideas to the table to help tackle this disease."

Masiello Family names Zakim Center space in support of integrative therapies

In July, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate Matt and Martha Masiello’s generous gift to Dana-Farber, which named a workroom at the Leonard P. Zakim Center for Integrative Therapies and Healthy Living. During her treatment for breast cancer, Martha benefited greatly from acupuncture, so she is excited that Dana-Farber patients have easy access to this important integrative therapy at the Zakim Center. Newly located in an expanded, state-of-the-art space within the Institute since the summer of 2017, the Zakim Center offers a broad array of services which also include massage, meditation, expressive arts, nutrition, Reiki, and movement to Dana-Farber patients.

Matt and Martha Masiello were joined at the ribbon-cutting by their children, (from left) Dylan, Cole, and Jack. The family enjoyed a tour of the Zakim Center’s new facilities conducted by Jennifer Ligibel, MD, who is Martha Masiello’s oncologist as well as the center’s director.

AACR supports innovative young investigators

American Association for Cancer Research
FINDING CURES TOGETHER*

For nearly two decades, the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) has put its trust in Dana-Farber physician-scientists, aiming to speed the pace of discovery in cancer treatment and prevention. AACR's financial support of research at Dana-Farber includes two recent grants to early career investigators totaling $240,000.

Yizhou He, PhD, was awarded an AACR-IstaZeneca Ovarian Cancer Research Fellowship for his work examining the mechanisms of resistance in ovarian cancers that have BRCA1 mutations. His research employs CRISPR—a genome editing tool—to explore the molecular mechanism of resistance to PARP inhibitors, with the ultimate goal of identifying new alterations that can serve as targets for novel therapeutic approaches to treat ovarian cancer.

Brian Miller, MD, PhD, who received the AACR-Bristol-Myers Squibb Fellowship in Translational Immuno-oncology, is studying the molecular and cellular mechanisms by which PD-1 inhibitors bolster the immune system’s ability to fight metastatic melanoma. Using an innovative RNA-sequencing platform, he hopes to identify novel pathways that regulate the immune response. This work will help predict which patients will benefit from anti-PD-1 therapies and how to augment current immunotherapies with additional agents.

“The AACR is proud to support these bright young researchers, both of whom are making important strides toward advancing cancer treatment,” said Senior Director of Scientific Review and Grants Administration Yixian (John) Zhang, PhD. “Enhancing our knowledge of drug resistance mechanisms and new approaches to precision immunotherapy, they are poised to have a far-reaching impact on the field.”
Marking milestones with giving, the Millers take aim at pediatric cancer

When Michael Miller turned 80, his wife, Annette, wanted to throw him a party. While appreciative of the gesture, Michael wanted to mark this milestone birthday with something more meaningful. The Millers are grateful to have children and grandchildren free of cancer, and they know that not every family has been as fortunate. To help ease the burden of others, the Millers established the Annette and Michael A. Miller Pediatric Oncology Research Fund at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, most recently doubling their original gift of $250,000.

Their fund supports the work of Andrew Place, MD, PhD, clinical director of the Pediatric Hematologic Malignancies Center, who is designing and leading clinical trials for children with leukemia. This pledge does not mark the end of their giving, however. Michael plans to give each year, recruiting his peers and friends to join him in this effort.

“I am impressed by the amazing successes that have occurred in the past few years in pediatric cancer research,” Michael said. “Learning from Dr. Place about how discoveries made in pediatric cancers can be applied to adult cancers is inspiring. Investing in Dana-Farber provides big bang for your buck.”

“The Millers’ continued partnership will be incredibly important to helping us advance clinical trials that improve the care we are able to provide to our youngest patients,” Place said. “We are so grateful for their support.”

The Paper Store provides more than specialty gifts to New Englanders

Since 2006, New England’s largest family-owned and operated specialty gift retailer, The Paper Store, has partnered with Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund to raise critical funds to conquer cancer. In summer months, The Paper Store invites guests to Strike Out Cancer by giving to the Jimmy Fund, and in exchange, guests receive a baseball pin-up to personalize and display. During the holiday season, The Paper Store carries boxed cards and a bracelet from Dana-Farber Holiday Cards & Gifts presented by Amica Insurance. Thanks to The Paper Store and generous customers in its 80 stores, nearly $132,000 has been raised for Dana-Farber in the past fiscal year, for a terrific total of more than $1.1 million cumulatively. This fall, The Paper Store is also offering an exclusive Alex and Ani North Star Bangle, with a portion of the proceeds supporting Dana-Farber.

In addition to the Strike Out Cancer and Holiday programs, The Paper Store employees have participated in Dana-Farber’s popular Red Sox-themed fundraiser, Rally for the Jimmy Fund, every year since 2011. “The message of giving back and helping others is at the heart of what we do,” says Tom Anderson, president and CEO of The Paper Store. “Our longstanding relationship with Dana-Farber is near and dear to both our family and our team. With each campaign, we are consistently overwhelmed by the generosity of our customers and grateful for their contributions to our collaborations with Dana-Farber.”

Edith C. Blum Foundation supports research of @DrSarcoma

As a director of the Edith C. Blum Foundation, a private foundation that exclusively supports medical research, Roy Friedman follows the Twitter feeds of select medical and biotechnology experts. In 2017, he observed a dialogue about the treatment of soft-tissue sarcoma—a disease with which his close friend had recently been diagnosed. One of the participants in the conversation was @DrSarcoma, who, Friedman learned, was George Demetri, MD, Dana-Farber’s senior vice president for experimental therapeutics, director of the Center for Sarcoma and Bone Oncology, and Quick Family Chair in Medical Oncology. Friedman sent Demetri a private message and, to his delight, Demetri replied.

“When standard chemotherapy failed against his friend’s liposarcoma, Friedman had looked for other answers. “It was then that I became aware of the lack of treatment options in sarcoma, as compared to more prevalent kinds of cancer,” said Friedman. He encouraged his friend to seek genetic sequencing for his tumors to help direct him to a new or experimental treatment and turned to Demetri for advice.

“The information he gave me was extremely helpful,” said Friedman. “I was able to get my friend into a clinical trial testing an experimental immunotherapy drug.” Unfortunately, Friedman’s friend passed away before he could receive the treatment. “Still,” said Friedman, “I was grateful to Dr. Demetri for replying to my Twitter inquiry.”

Recognizing the unmet medical need in treating sarcoma, the Edith C. Blum Foundation subsequently granted Dana-Farber $250,000 for research conducted in the Center for Sarcoma and Bone Oncology, under the direction of Demetri, and an additional $250,000 to support other research projects and patient care initiatives at the Institute.

“I was happy to answer Roy’s question and was glad he reached out to me,” said Demetri. “The foundation’s generous support will help us continue our research in sarcoma and develop newer and better treatments for the many forms of this disease.”

10% of all designated gifts supports our Faculty Research Fund to advance Dana-Farber’s research mission

Dana-Farber.org/YearEnd

FIGHT CANCER WITH DANA-FARBER

Make a Gift Today

Ava, a patient in Dana-Farber’s Jimmy Fund Clinic

Thanks to the generous support of the Edith C. Blum Foundation, George Demetri, MD, is leading important work to find new therapies for patients with sarcomas.
As part of a growing partnership since 2009, Papa Gino’s and D’Angelo Grilled Sandwiches teamed up once again with the Jimmy Fund to offer Grand Slam Savings for a Great Cause. Customers across New England made $1 gifts at 245 Papa Gino’s and D’Angelo company-owned and franchised locations in June and July. Papa Gino’s also gave $2 to the Jimmy Fund with each purchase of their $29.99 Jimmy Fund Meal Deal. Thanks to the generosity and support of the restaurants’ customers and employees, the program raised more than $150,000 to support Dana-Farber’s lifesaving mission. In exchange for their gifts, customers received a coupon sheet full of savings that included discount offers from Papa Gino’s and D’Angelo, as well as Valvoline Instant Oil Change, The Paper Store, Chowdahheadz, and the “How the Grinch Stole Christmas” show.

Every year, a patient in Dana-Farber’s Jimmy Fund Clinic is featured on the Grand Slam Savings coupon sheet and helps to promote the mission behind the program’s efforts. This year’s partner was Kyle, age 10, who is currently being treated at the Jimmy Fund Clinic for acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Having such a long-standing relationship with the Institute and respect for its mission, Papa Gino’s and D’Angelo team members were happy to help.

“The Jimmy Fund’s mission is one that inspires our passion,” says Papa Gino’s and D’Angelo Chairman/CEO Mark DeBlos. “Community involvement can only fuel the Jimmy Fund’s relentless efforts and we are proud to support this amazing cause.” By raising more than $1.3 million since the program’s start, Papa Gino’s and D’Angelo are doing their part to benefit cancer research and patient care at Dana-Farber.

Kira Bona, MD, MPH, recently launched the first study to target poverty as a contributor to less favorable outcomes in pediatric cancer with a grant of $100,000 from the Family Reach Foundation. Since the 1960s, investigators have made tremendous advances against pediatric cancers by systematically targeting biologic risk factors,” said Bona. “However, poverty as a contributor outcomes has not previously been considered targetable.”

Bona’s preliminary research identified food and transportation as the most challenging household costs during cancer therapy. Her new study pilots an intervention with eligible newly diagnosed families at Dana-Farber and the University of Alabama-Birmingham Hospital. Families will receive grocery delivery from Instacart, and transportation between home and hospital or clinic through RideHealth, which leverages Uber and Lyft.

“All families whose children have cancer should have an equal chance to make it to the other side of cancer,” said Carla Tardif, the foundation’s CEO. “We’re excited to support Dana-Farber’s pragmatic approach to easing parents’ worry about food and transportation so they can focus on what’s most important—their child.” Researchers will examine the feasibility of delivering the intervention, improvement in material hardship, admissions to the intensive care unit, and emergency room visits. Findings from the study will inform a randomized trial to test the intervention’s impact on patient outcomes. “We are incredibly grateful to the Family Reach Foundation for their support,” said Bona.

Investing in progress for hematologic diseases

Mary Murphy was a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and friend. When she passed away in 2014 after a battle with acute myeloid leukemia (AML), Mary’s husband, Edmund, and son, Devon, wanted to find a way to improve treatment outcomes for others facing blood cancers. They saw firsthand the quality of care received at Dana-Farber and believe that the Institute’s commitment to patient-centered services is crucial in inspiring hope as a patient goes through treatment.

Determined to create further progress, the Murphys established the Mary P. Murphy Fund for Hematologic Malignancies in 2016, and recently made an additional $120,000 commitment to this Fund. Their generosity is vital in sustaining Dana-Farber’s Older Adult Hematologic Malignancy Program, directed by Gregory Abel, MD, MPH. This unique program pairs each patient with an oncologist and a geriatrician to provide clinical care tailored to the specific needs of patients who are age 75 and older.

“To honor my mother’s legacy, we wanted to support Dr. Abel’s research which aims to improve overall care for elderly patients with hematologic malignancies where traditional treatments are limited and not well-tolerated,” Devon said. The family’s investment empowers Abel and his team as they offer personalized and comprehensive strategies to meet this population’s specialized needs related to nutrition, mobility, transportation, financial security, and more, as they undergo treatment for blood cancers.

Diane and George Fellows’ gift targets leiomyosarcoma

Diane and George Fellows, who own several Taco Bell franchises, have supported Dana-Farber for many years through the Strike Out Cancer program, a point-of-purchase fundraiser for the Jimmy Fund. Recently, however, their relationship with cancer—and with Dana-Farber—became more personal.

Diane was diagnosed with a rare sarcoma in 2017, and treated by George Demetri, MD, director of Dana-Farber’s Center for Sarcoma and Bone Oncology, senior vice president for experimental therapeutics, and the Quick Family Chair in Medical Oncology. Grateful for the care that Diane received, and eager to advance the research into her disease, they made a generous $100,000 gift to establish the Diane and George Fellows Leiomyosarcoma Research Fund at Dana-Farber.

In addition to their personal gift, Diane and George have chosen to direct contributions from their customers through the Strike Out Cancer Program to their named fund. “With Diane and George’s help, we are leading the charge to advance our understanding and treatment of sarcomas,” said Demetri, who will direct the fund. “Our team works to quickly translate laboratory discoveries into clinical trials of new targeted therapies, seeking more effective treatments.”

“We are so pleased to support Dr. Demetri’s work,” said Diane. “Our hope is that this research will help identify any immunotherapies or other treatments to conquer this type of cancer.”
Medtronic Foundation supports lifesaving mobile health programs

To improve access to early detection and prevention in Boston’s underserved communities, Medtronic Foundation has made a grant of $100,000 to support Dana-Farber’s mobile health programs. Medtronic Foundation is affiliated with Medtronic, a biomedical engineering company that is dedicated to improving healthcare worldwide.

The grant equally supports the Mammography Van, the only mobile mammography program in Massachusetts, and sun safety programs on the Blum Family Resource Center Van.

“We are proud to sponsor the Dana-Farber mobile health program where lifesaving cancer education and screenings are brought directly to at-risk and vulnerable neighborhoods,” said Dr. Sylvia Bartley, senior director, Medtronic Philanthropy. “Providing opportunities for communities to be empowered to make healthy choices is one of the ways the Medtronic Foundation strives to improve the health of communities around the world.”

On the road almost daily, the Mammography Van visits 17 community health centers and connects minority and low-income women with resources that reduce barriers to breast cancer prevention and care. The Blum Van brings sun safety screenings and education to Boston area public beaches and to organizations that serve workers who spend long hours working in the sun.

“We are grateful for Medtronic Foundation’s investment in our mobile health program,” said Magnolia Contreras, director of Community Benefits at Dana-Farber. “Their support is helping us reach more members of Boston’s underserved community and increase access to cancer prevention and early detection services.”

Annual Update on the Faculty Research Fund

Since its inception, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute has placed an emphasis on cancer research and its applications to improve cancer outcomes. This commitment means that research is prominent in all of the Institute’s strategic decisions. The creation of a Faculty Research Fund in 2013 was an institutional initiative designed to help Dana-Farber achieve its ambitious research agenda. Since the launch of the Faculty Research Fund, $24 million has been raised, which is especially important as federal funding for cancer research remains challenging.

Support totaling $5 million to the Faculty Research Fund received in fiscal year 2017 was applied this year to the Longwood Center, key Institute initiatives, and Dana-Farber faculty. These monies bolstered the Institute’s basic and applied cancer science programs through enhanced laboratory space and cutting-edge technologies, advanced promising new areas of research, and enabled Dana-Farber to support and attract exceptionally talented investigators.

In fiscal year 2018, contributions to the Faculty Research Fund totaled $4.8 million. In the coming year, these funds will support priority elements of Dana-Farber’s Strategic Plan as well as Dana-Farber faculty. This allocation is essential to ensuring that we continue to identify the mechanisms driving cancer, pioneer new treatments, and attract and support the best and brightest physician-scientists.

Impact

Focus is a newsletter of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute published by the Division of Development & the Jimmy Fund.

For questions, or to be removed from our mailing list, please contact:
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute Division of Development & the Jimmy Fund 10 Brookline Place West, 6th Floor Brookline, MA 02445-7226 617.632.3019 or 800-52-JIMMY or visit JimmyFund.org/subscribe

Dana-Farber Cancer Institute provides expert, compassionate care to children and adults and is home to groundbreaking cancer discoveries. Since its founding in 1948, the Jimmy Fund has raised millions of dollars through thousands of community efforts to advance Dana-Farber’s lifesaving mission.

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Make a tax-efficient gift to conquer cancer at Dana-Farber

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Follow us at Facebook.com/TheJimmyFund and on Twitter @TheJimmyFund
Jimmy Fund Captain Brock Holt teamed up this summer with New Balance and patients from Dana-Farber’s Jimmy Fund Clinic to design a custom baseball cleat, which he wore on field in honor of Childhood Cancer Awareness month. Jimmy Fund Clinic patients including (from left) James, Victoria, and Will, helped the Red Sox utilityman choose a bright and happy color scheme for his cleats (inset). For every pair of cleats customized with a gold N or gold plate sold on NewBalance.com in September, New Balance contributed 10 percent of the MSRP to Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

For more information on all Jimmy Fund and Dana-Farber events and programs, go to JimmyFund.org or Dana-Farber.org

**NOW–DECEMBER 15**

**Kick for Dana-Farber**

Score big with your soccer team by raising funds to support Dana-Farber’s lifesaving mission. Participating teams are entered to win an on-field Rally Tunnel experience with the New England Revolution at a 2019 home game as well as other great prizes. Visit KickForDanaFarber.org or contact Maryann Zschau at 617-632-5461 or Maryann_Zschau@dfci.harvard.edu.

**NOW–DECEMBER 31**

**Holiday Patient Assistance Program**

Brighten the holidays for patients in financial need. Your contribution helps to put a holiday meal on the table, buy gas to visit family, or purchase gifts for loved ones. Visit JimmyFund.org/HolidayGiving or contact Hannah McCoy at 617-632-6247 or Holiday_Assistance@dfci.harvard.edu.

**FEBRUARY 7**

**Palm Beach Pre-Celebration Dinner**

Join us for an intimate dinner with the Institute’s pioneering physician-scientists and guest speaker Katie Couric at the home of Event Chairs Institute Trustee Michele Kessler and her husband, Howard, to kick off the Palm Beach Discovery Celebration weekend. Contact Karen Martins at 561-833-2080 or Karen_Martins@dfci.harvard.edu.

**FEBRUARY 9**

**Palm Beach Discovery Celebration**

Join us for the premier event of our Palm Beach season: the 28th annual Discovery Celebration at The Breakers, featuring award-winning singer-songwriter Josh Groban. The event is hosted by Event Chairs Institute Trustee Eric Schlager and his wife, Beth, and Institute Trustee Judy Schlager and her husband, Larry. Contact Karen Martins at 561-833-2080 or Karen_Martins@dfci.harvard.edu.

**FEBRUARY 8**

**Palm Beach Breakfast with the Doctors**

Discuss the latest breakthroughs with Dana-Farber physician-scientists at the Palm Beach Country Club, hosted by Event Chairs Institute Trustee Eric Schlager and his wife, Beth, and Institute Trustee Judie Schlager and her husband, Larry. Contact Karen Martins at 561-833-2080 or Karen_Martins@dfci.harvard.edu.

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**ALL WINTER**

**Jimmy Fund Golf**

Presented by Mohegan Sun

Organize a golf or mini-golf tournament and enjoy a sport you love while supporting groundbreaking research and compassionate patient care at Dana-Farber. Start planning your 2019 tournaments now! Contact Josh Belkwich at 617-632-6607 or Joshua_Belkwich@dfci.harvard.edu.