The Pan-Mass Challenge (PMC), which began in 1980 with Billy Starr and three dozen riders who wanted to raise money for cancer care and research, this year crossed the $750 million mark in cumulative fundraising for Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. This notable milestone occurred during the 2020 PMC, a ride that was “reimagined” to account for the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

More than 9,600 participated in the summer-long 2020 PMC Reimagined campaign, raising an impressive $50 million by charting their own courses and riding alone or in small groups in cities and towns across New England and beyond.

“Nothing could be more satisfying than to look back over the past 41 years and see the impact that the efforts of our incredibly dedicated riders, volunteers, sponsors, donors, and supporters have had on lifesaving cancer research and treatment at Dana-Farber,” commented Starr, PMC founder and executive director, and a Dana-Farber Trustee.

At the cornerstone of the PMC community are the more than 940 Living Proof riders and volunteers who have faced their own cancer journeys. Each year, the Living Proof community comes together during PMC Ride Weekend for a moving toast to celebrate life and the progress made in the fight against cancer. This summer, that celebration looked a bit different, taking place via a video call that joined more than 200 PMC Living Proof participants. Nine-year Living Proof rider and Dana-Farber patient Theresa Welsh led the virtual toast along with Starr, sharing her personal cancer experience and the impact the PMC has made in her fight, noting, “I credit, hands down, all of the efforts of everyone on this call and across the Pan-Mass community and our supporters for me being here today because of the advancements in cancer research that have been made possible by the Pan-Mass Challenge.”

“The PMC community’s steadfast commitment to our institution is humbling and inspiring. More than ever, PMC dollars are critical to support the world-class cancer care and additional resources we provide our patients and their families,” said Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, Dana-Farber president and CEO and the Richard and Susan Smith Professor of Medicine. “We are so very grateful for the continued support from the PMC and the creative ways its riders reimagined their experience this year to raise money for Dana-Farber.”

PMC 2020 Reimagined, which digitally brought to life many of the most beloved activities from a usual PMC Ride Weekend, was conceptualized after it became clear that the event planned for early August would not be able to go on as it had in the past, with fundraisers pedaling across Eastern Massachusetts to Provincetown in one group.

“As much as we would have loved to be out on the roads together that weekend, I’m very proud of how our community reimagined this year’s PMC experience,” added Starr. “Our motto of ‘there’s a lot riding on us’ rings truer than ever this year as the need for cancer research and treatment funding becomes more and more critical in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The PMC donates 100% of every rider-raised dollar to Dana-Farber as its largest single contributor, accounting for 64% of the Jimmy Fund’s annual fundraising total.
Ibram X. Kendi keynotes Dana-Farber Presidential Symposium

From left: Ibram X. Kendi, Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, and Christopher Lathan, MD, MS, MPH, during a keynote presentation at the 2020 Presidential Symposium.

Professor Ibram X. Kendi, one of America’s foremost historians and leading antiracist voices, was a keynote speaker at Dana-Farber’s annual Presidential Symposium, held online in October 2020. Kendi, who is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities and the founding director of the Center for Antiracist Research at Boston University and author of The New York Times bestseller “How to Be an Antiracist,” joined Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, Dana-Farber president and CEO and the Richard and Susan Smith Professor of Medicine; and Christopher Lathan, MD, MS, MPH, director of Dana-Farber’s Cancer Care Equity Program, to discuss the undeniable parallels between cancer and racial inequity and injustice that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing. Kendi also shared insights that the Institute is committed to addressing.
Since 1991, Stop & Shop has been partnering with Dana-Farber Cancer Institute to raise money for pediatric cancer research. The 2020 Help Cure Childhood Cancer campaign invited customers in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and northern Connecticut stores to round their purchases to the nearest dollar at checkout, with 100% of their change going to pediatric cancer research. Customers could also purchase reusable shopping bags featuring patient artwork, with 25% of the proceeds also going to the campaign.

Customers shopping at StopandShop.com for pickup or home delivery—services that have been extremely popular over the past year—were able to give $1, $5, and $5 at checkout. A gift from the Stop & Shop Family Foundation supplemented customer contributions, for a total of $2.5 million raised in 2020 and a 30-year total of $73 million.

“Help Cure Childhood Cancer provides Stop & Shop’s caring customers and dedicated associates an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children and young adults who have been affected by cancer,” said Stop & Shop President Gordon Reid. “Their generosity is matched only by their impact.”

Store signage for the campaign featured photos of ambassadors like 2-year-old Daylight King, a patient in Dana-Farber’s Jimmy Fund Clinic. “Daylight knows exactly what she wants,” laughs her mother, Kesora King. “That will serve her well when she grows up, but she can be a handful now!” Kesora says that Daylight loves the activities specialists in the Jimmy Fund Clinic, and is delighted to do crafts and play games with them when she comes in for treatment.

Activities specialists have been coming into the clinic throughout the pandemic to provide much needed support to families who are coping with the dual stresses of their child’s cancer diagnosis and COVID-19.

“Cancer doesn’t stop because of COVID-19 and neither does Dana-Farber,” said Scott Armstrong, MD, PhD, chair of the Department of Pediatric Oncology and the David G. Nathan, MD, Professor of Pediatrics, who has continued leading research and treatment during the pandemic. “Support from Stop & Shop is always critical but even more so this year as the pandemic has influenced everything we do. This vital support allows us to continue to provide children with the most effective and least toxic treatments so that one day we can cure all children with cancer.”

The Mark Foundation grants drive research on pediatric cancers

Since 2015, The Mark Foundation for Cancer Research has awarded more than $90 million in grants to accelerate research that will change the way cancer is treated. With two of these grants, totaling more than $3.7 million, Dana-Farber investigators are exploring new, more effective treatments for pediatric cancers.

Kimberly Stegmaier, MD, vice chair of pediatric oncology research and the Ted Williams Chair at Dana-Farber, previously identified the USP7 enzyme as a target in Ewing sarcoma, a rare tumor that forms in the bones or soft tissues of children and adolescents. Three Dana-Farber researchers—Sara Buhrlage, PhD, Jarrod Marto, PhD, and Stegmaier—are now working together to develop a best-in-class USP7 inhibitor into a drug candidate and demonstrate its efficacy in preclinical models of Ewing sarcoma.

USP7 interferes with the disposal of abnormal proteins in a cell, thus fueling malignancy. There are currently no USP7 inhibitors in the clinic or in latter stages of development.

“The Mark Foundation’s generosity is allowing my colleagues and me to advance the development of our USP7 inhibitor so it can benefit patients in the clinic,” said Buhrlage, an inaugural recipient of one of The Mark Foundation’s Drug Discovery Awards. “We are grateful for their support of this exciting work.”

To accomplish this, the researchers are combining Buhrlage’s expertise in medicinal chemistry and chemical biology, Marto’s in chemical proteomics and mass spectrometry, and Stegmaier’s in preclinical models and the biology and treatment of Ewing sarcoma.

“The success of a USP7 drug in the treatment of patients with Ewing sarcoma would represent a major breakthrough, offering a precision medicine for this difficult-to-treat cancer,” said Stegmaier.

The Mark Foundation is also supporting the work of Hannah Uckelmann, PhD, who is studying ways to treat premalignant cells that can progress into acute myeloid leukemia (AML). She and her colleagues recently showed that NPM1-mutant clones progress to give rise to AML and that these cells also develop dependencies on the MLL gene and a related protein called menin. NPM1 mutations are commonly found in both pediatric and adult AML.

Uckelmann is investigating the changes that occur as cells shift from normal blood stem cells to preleukemia and leukemia cells and how they respond to menin-MLL inhibitors at different stages of disease progression. Her findings have led to a phase 1/2 clinical trial of menin-MLL inhibition in patients with NPM1-mutant leukemia.

“These are exciting projects that will lead to advances for pediatric cancer patients,” said Ryan Schoenfeld, vice president for scientific research at The Mark Foundation. “We are proud to partner with Dana-Farber, an institution that shares our mission of supporting research that will transform the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer.”

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

Thank you for supporting Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund!
F or decades, the Blum Family has been an integral part of Dana-Farber’s success. Through service on the Board of Trustees and various committees, as well as strategic philanthropic support for key Institute initiatives and programs named in their honor, Maxwell Blum and his wife, Eleanor, truly left their mark on Dana-Farber.

For the past few decades, their daughters, Betty Ann and Marjorie, have honored the memory and legacy of their parents through continued involvement and generous giving. The sisters recently pledged $1 million in support of capital projects and strategic initiatives at Dana-Farber—a gift which provides powerful, early momentum to the Institute’s comprehensive campaign, currently in the quiet phase.

“My family has built a legacy of continuous support—we step up and do what we can, when we can,” said Betty Ann, a Dana-Farber Trustee since 1999, and member of the Trustee Campaign Planning Committee and the Joint Committee on Quality Improvement and Risk Management. “Whenever I hear of a need at the Institute, it’s my instinct to give right away at the level I can afford to give. That’s the Blum Family legacy.”

This most recent gift will provide funding for the new outpatient facility in Chestnut Hill, Mass., the opening of which was pushed to January 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Dana-Farber – Chestnut Hill will provide much-needed space to accommodate our growing patient population, expand access to Dana-Farber’s cutting-edge patient care, and ensure that the Institute has additional clinical space for social distancing measures that protect the health and safety of our patients and staff. Betty Ann also contributed to Dana-Farber’s Emergency Response Fund and the Feed the Frontline initiative in 2020.

Funding patient-centric programs like the COVID-19 response efforts is emblematic of the Blum Family’s involvement over the years. Through the Eleanor and Maxwell Blum Patient and Family Resource Center, established in 1996, and the Betty Ann and Marjorie Blum Pediatric Resource Center, created in 1999, the Blums have fostered programs that help patients and their families understand more about the disease they are facing and provide resources that can help them cope. The Blum Family Resource Center Van has been providing cancer education and cancer screenings to underserved neighborhoods in Boston since 2004.

“The Blums have been valued friends to the Institute for many years,” said Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, president and CEO of Dana-Farber and the Richard and Susan Smith Professor of Medicine. “Betty Ann and Marjorie’s thoughtful, strategic support for the comprehensive campaign enables us to continue providing the best care possible for our patients.”

“Support for the comprehensive campaign at this early stage is invaluable to ensuring we reach our goal,” said Trustee Monica Chandra, who serves as co-chair of the Trustee Campaign Planning Committee with Trustee Bob Stansky. “We are very appreciative to the Blum Family for recognizing a need, and coming forward immediately to fill it.”

Blum Family commits $1 million to provide early support to comprehensive campaign

S elf-described “mid-level annual giving donors” Neil Leonard and Henry Goodrow have supported Dana-Farber through their donor-advised fund for years.

“We got to a point where cancer started affecting us more through family and friends. Some did well, some didn’t, and we wanted to help,” says Leonard.

Though they initially perceived donor-advised funds as “a little grand,” Goodrow says that the philanthropic investment account offering an immediate tax benefit, “is a much simpler and easier way for us to do our annual giving on a joint basis.” The couple notes that the fund helps them take advantage of matching gift opportunities at any time during the year, which makes their dollars go further in sustaining Institute priorities. They also recently became members of the Dana-Farber Society by including a provision for Dana-Farber in their estate plans.

As for why they give: “I think that in Boston, Dana-Farber is synonymous with cancer—they’re at the forefront of research, and I think research is key,” says Leonard.

For Goodrow, the compassionate care his sister received at Dana-Farber more than 20 years ago and the care he himself received just five years ago was particularly striking. “I was impressed with the ease and equality of access. I just called in on the phone and they treated me like the most important person in the world.”

Now cancer-free, Goodrow recalls, “The people working there really have big hearts, not just big brains—it’s the happiest group of people I’ve ever seen.”

Coupie provides steady support through donor-advised fund

Grant drives vital investigations into the formation of SI-NETs

Dana-Farber’s Netta Mäkinen, PhD, recently received a $120,000 grant from the Neuroendocrine Tumor Research Foundation to support her research into small intestinal neuroendocrine tumors (SI-NETs), which represent 25% of all neuroendocrine tumors. The Neuroendocrine Tumor Research Foundation’s mission is to fund research to discover cures and more effective treatments for neuroendocrine cancers—a mission driven forward by their powerful support of Mäkinen’s groundbreaking studies.

“I couldn’t be more honored to receive such a remarkable grant,” said Mäkinen. “Philanthropy is so important to my work, and the foundation’s partnership ensures that we can make critical progress in advancing our knowledge of SI-NETs.”

Up to a third of patients with SI-NETs harbor multiple primary tumors in a concentrated location at the time of diagnosis, but investigators do not yet know how or why these multiple tumors arise. Mäkinen hypothesizes that these tumors develop when large patches of normal cells in the small intestine are transformed into abnormal cells in a process known as field cancerization. Leveraging her grant, she aims to use state-of-the-art technology to reveal if and how this field cancerization process affects the development of multiple primary tumors. By better understanding the mechanisms underlying the formation of these tumors, physicians-scientists may be able to make more effective decisions regarding treatment and surgery—ultimately improving outcomes.

“Supporting early career investigators to focus on an uncommon cancer is key to our mission and we are proud to recognize Dr. Mäkinen’s work through this grant,” said Elyse Gellerman, CEO of the Neuroendocrine Tumor Research Foundation.
Donor support strengthens Institute during COVID-19 pandemic

Over the past year, Dana-Farber has seen an extraordinary outpouring of community support, with many donors contributing money and resources to help us best serve our patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among these were Wycliffe “Wyc” Grousbeck and Emilia Fazzalari, with their recent gift to support Dana-Farber’s Emergency Response Fund as well as COVID-19 testing and antibody testing research.

The couple points to Dana-Farber’s reputation as a leader in cancer research and care as their inspiration to give, especially now during a challenging time for the Institute and many of the patients served by the Institute.

“Our approach to philanthropy is to make commitments to the best people and places we can find and stick with it over the long term,” said Grousbeck, a sentiment he and Fazzalari have taken to heart throughout their personal and professional lives, their gift to Dana-Farber being one of the many ways they are involved in the Boston community.

In addition to their personal support, the Boston Celtics, of which Grousbeck is managing partner, governor, and CEO, has also supported the WEEI/NESN Jimmy Fund Radio-Telethon along with the Boston Red Sox, Boston Bruins, and New England Patriots in support of the Jimmy Fund.

The Emergency Response Fund was established in March 2020 to ensure that Dana-Farber could successfully navigate the challenges brought on by the pandemic. The Institute introduced enhanced safety procedures including reconfiguration of clinical spaces to better maintain social distancing; a telemedicine program to allow patients to visit with their care teams virtually; and a novel decontamination program enabling personal protective equipment (PPE) to be safely used more than once. All of these measures, and many others, generated significant costs that were offset in part by donors like Grousbeck and Fazzalari.

“We wanted to help the Institute get through the financial strains of this pandemic,” said Fazzalari. “We love to support people who are doing world-class work, and Dana-Farber is at the top of the list.”

A portion of the gift also provides crucial resources for COVID-19 testing and antibody testing research led by Eric Fischer, PhD, and William C. Hahn, MD, PhD, Dana-Farber’s executive vice president and chief operating officer, and the William Rosenberg Professor of Medicine. Philanthropic dollars were, and remain, crucial to accelerating these efforts, all for the health and safety of our staff and patients.

“During this difficult time, the value our healthcare providers and researchers bring to society has never been clearer,” said Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, president and CEO of Dana-Farber and the Richard and Susan Smith Professor of Medicine.

“Support from our generous community of donors helps Dana-Farber continue delivering the highest standard of care and global scientific leadership,”

“This is a gift out of respect and love for what Dana-Farber does and for the people it treats,” said Grousbeck. “We know that we are supporting the very best.”

Gilead Sciences strengthens Life Science Alliance

For more than 30 years, Gilead Sciences has been instrumental in driving discovery, development, and commercialization of innovative medicines to treat life-threatening diseases. As a research-based biopharmaceutical company, Gilead Sciences regularly partners with organizations to break new ground and spur innovation in drug development, all for the benefit of patients and families across the country.

In 2020, Gilead Sciences joined Dana-Farber’s Life Science Alliance with a generous contribution of $250,000. The Life Science Alliance is comprised of our partners in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries that came together to provide the financial and tangible resources needed to achieve our mission during the pandemic. Dana-Farber is proud to have remained open and able to serve patients safely and efficiently throughout this crisis—an effort that would not have been possible without the generosity of organizations in the Life Science Alliance.

For Gilead Sciences, the decision to join this initiative was a simple one.

“For many years, we have stood with organizations that provide critical support to people living with HIV, viral hepatitis, cancer, and other illnesses,” said Korab Zuka, vice president, Public Affairs at Gilead Sciences. “It is crucial, now more than ever, to partner with these important organizations as we deal with the COVID-19 crisis. We are proud to support Dana-Farber Cancer Institute’s Life Science Alliance.”

Whittaker gift gives the Lynch Syndrome Center a lift

Stephani Whittaker is known for her practical, positive, and proactive response to life’s challenges. When she was diagnosed with Lynch syndrome (LS), a hereditary condition that increases one’s risk for developing a variety of cancers, she met it head on. This brought her to Dana-Farber, where she saw a similarly hope-filled approach in everyone she met, and where she knew her philanthropy would make a meaningful difference.

In this spirit, Whittaker and her husband, Andrew, made a gift of $200,000 to support Dana-Farber’s Lynch Syndrome Center (LSC)—the first multidisciplinary center dedicated to the detection, prevention, treatment, and study of Lynch syndrome. Under the direction of Sopha Syngal, MD, MPH, director of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Risk and Prevention Program and founder of the LSC, these funds will bolster the Lynch Syndrome Patient Registry and Biobank, which provides the essential foundation for the center’s laboratory, translational, and clinical research.

Whittaker has a deeply personal stake in the center’s work because, in addition to herself, several family members have been diagnosed with LS, including two of her children. She has shown them how to live with the condition without being defined by it, and they are following her strong example. One daughter is expecting a baby soon, while another is working at Dana-Farber to improve genetic testing for conditions like LS. Whittaker hopes that her gift will ultimately allow others with LS to live longer and better, too.

“I believe in the Lynch Syndrome Center team,” she said. “And I am fortunate to support their best efforts on behalf of patients and families everywhere.”
Virtual Jimmy Fund Walk: Your Way raises more than $6 million

The Jimmy Fund Walk presented by Hyundai changed routes and stayed the course in the fight against cancer by introducing its first-ever virtual Walk in 2020. Although unable to hold an in-person event due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Walk made incredible strides in the fight against cancer by raising more than $6 million, which brought the event’s lifetime fundraising total to more than $150 million.

The Jimmy Fund Walk: Your Way on Oct. 4 invited participants to support Dana-Farber’s cancer research and patient care just as it has throughout its 32-year history. In an effort to keep all participants and the community safe, participants walked in locations of their choosing rather than on the historic Boston Marathon® course. Jimmy Fund supporters from across the country and around the world, walked in their neighborhoods, on local hiking trails, or wherever else they liked. The flexibility of this year’s event meant many people outside the Boston area were able to join the Walk’s efforts without leaving home. With walkers in all 50 states and 15 countries as far as Afghanistan, Chile, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates, the event was truly global. The diversity of their locations highlighted that, regardless of where they live, walkers could take steps to help fight cancer.

Some popular hallmarks of the Walk were made virtual, including the Ribbon Wall, where walkers could electronically sign a ribbon in honor of the people for whom they walk. Among the new features of the Walk was the Charity Miles app, which tracked walkers’ training and offered information about Walk Heroes, Dana-Farber patients who share their personal stories to inspire walkers’ efforts.

The 2020 Walk marked 10 years of participation for team Seshu Strong. Walking in honor of Seshu Kandukuri, who passed away in 2012 at the age of 19 after a two-year battle with cancer, team members joined from all over Massachusetts and New Hampshire, including 50 walkers at Grafton High School in Grafton, Mass., and 40 walkers at Nashua High School in Nashua, N.H. The team also set out to take hope as high as they could by summiting local mountains—including Mt. Washington, Mt. Monroe, Mt. Eisenhower, and many others—with a Jimmy Fund Walk flag.

Five-Star Pacesetter Bob Greene walked with his wife, Dorothy, near the Cape Cod Canal.

Members of Team Brain Aid walked in Massachusetts, Colorado, Japan, and Sweden.

Kai Lam said that the mission and need remained the same, so Team Brain Aid wanted to continue their support of the event.

“Whatever future years bring, we’re confident and will be ready to walk our way, wherever and however we’re needed.”

Five-Star Pacesetter Bob Greene walked with his wife, Dorothy, near the Cape Cod Canal.

Team Addie walked their 5K on conservation land in Acton, Mass., in honor of Addie who is five years cancer free!

Members of Team Brain Aid walked in Massachusetts, Colorado, Japan, and Sweden.

Team Sethi Lab, a first-time employee team, made their inaugural Walk near Dana-Farber’s Boston campus.

“I am so thankful to our team and valuable donors, and for the great encouragement of our friends, families, colleagues, and the community,” said Rao Kandukuri, Seshu’s father and team captain of Seshu Strong. “The world is built on a great supportive system!” Rao was joined by three local students who served as co-captains: Ajay Vempati, Sreeja Chaparala, and Sneha Prasad. Team Brain Aid also knew they wanted to continue their team’s participation in the annual Walk and, like many, had concerns about what a normally large-scale event would be like in a virtual setting. Team captain Rao Kandukuri, Seshu’s father and team captain of Seshu Strong. “The world is built on a great supportive system!” Rao was joined by three local students who served as co-captains: Ajay Vempati, Sreeja Chaparala, and Sneha Prasad. Team Brain Aid also knew they wanted to continue their team’s participation in the annual Walk and, like many, had concerns about what a normally large-scale event would be like in a virtual setting. Team captain Rao Kandukuri, Seshu’s father and team captain of Seshu Strong. “The world is built on a great supportive system!” Rao was joined by three local students who served as co-captains: Ajay Vempati, Sreeja Chaparala, and Sneha Prasad. Team Brain Aid also knew they wanted to continue their team’s participation in the annual Walk and, like many, had concerns about what a normally large-scale event would be like in a virtual setting. Team captain Rao Kandukuri, Seshu’s father and team captain of Seshu Strong. “The world is built on a great supportive system!” Rao was joined by three local students who served as co-captains: Ajay Vempati, Sreeja Chaparala, and Sneha Prasad. Team Brain Aid also knew they wanted to continue their team’s participation in the annual Walk and, like many, had concerns about what a normally large-scale event would be like in a virtual setting. Team captain Rao Kandukuri, Seshu’s father and team captain of Seshu Strong. “The world is built on a great supportive system!” Rao was joined by three local students who served as co-captains: Ajay Vempati, Sreeja Chaparala, and Sneha Prasad. Team Brain Aid also knew they wanted to continue their team’s participation in the annual Walk and, like many, had concerns about what a normally large-scale event would be like in a virtual setting. Team captain Rao Kandukuri, Seshu’s father and team captain of Seshu Strong. “The world is built on a great supportive system!” Rao was joined by three local students who served as co-captains: Ajay Vempati, Sreeja Chaparala, and Sneha Prasad. Team Brain Aid also knew they wanted to continue their team’s participation in the annual Walk and, like many, had concerns about what a normally large-scale event would be like in a virtual setting. Team captain Rao Kandukuri, Seshu’s father and team captain of Seshu Strong. “The world is built on a great supportive system!” Rao was joined by three local students who served as co-captains: Ajay Vempati, Sreeja Chaparala, and Sneha Prasad. Team Brain Aid also knew they wanted to continue their team’s participation in the annual Walk and, like many, had concerns about what a normally large-scale event would be like in a virtual setting.
HomeGoods and Homesense fundraising campaign brings in $2.9 million during COVID-19 pandemic

For 20 years, HomeGoods has been a valued partner of Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund through their “HomeGoods Helps Families Fight Cancer” campaign. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 HomeGoods campaign brought in more than $2.9 million in support of Dana-Farber’s cutting edge research and patient care—an astounding total and the highest in the program’s history.

From Aug. 20 through Sept. 16, HomeGoods and Homesense invited customers nationwide to make a contribution during check-out. Shoppers also had the opportunity to purchase a limited edition reusable shopping bag, featuring original artwork by Jimmy Fund Clinic patients Cassilly, age 11, and Tyler, age 17. With 50% of the purchase price of each reusable bag and 100% of customer donations directly benefiting the Jimmy Fund, HomeGoods has once again made a tremendous difference in the lives of our patients. Cassilly is most often described as an energetic and athletic 11-year-old with a big personality. After being diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), she maintained her positive attitude and looked for ways to give back to the Jimmy Fund. Her HomeGoods bag features a colorful, sunny floral design that reflects her love of summer and the outdoors, and her passion for making people happy whenever possible. “Cassilly is great—her positive attitude has taken her far through this treatment. This is not an easy road to be on for any child and she’s done a remarkable job,” said Lewis Silverman, MD, Cassilly’s doctor. Tyler is also passionate about giving back, and loves volunteering with his church and working on a graphic novel in his spare time. Tyler was diagnosed in May 2019 with a rare desmoplastic small round cell tumor (DSRCT), and he found that channeling his energy into the comic book has been a motivation and a distraction throughout his treatment. “When I was diagnosed, I was a bit shocked, but I kind of just kept going and started my journey while working on my comic book,” said Tyler. “I kept afloat with encouraging words from my family and just looked to the future.” The opportunity to design a HomeGoods reusable bag provided another creative outlet for Tyler. His design features a relaxing aquatic theme with fish swimming through a deep blue ocean.

Since 2001, HomeGoods has raised more than $19 million in support of Dana-Farber’s lifesaving mission. In addition, their partnership with Jimmy Fund Clinic patients provides an ongoing opportunity for these young patients to express themselves creatively during treatment.

Run Any Race raises more than $275,000

Run Any Race resulted in an incredible total of more than $275,000. Out of the 77 runners, 48 participated in virtual runs or their own runs. With four virtual events coordinated through Run Any Race, fundraising was able to continue while social distancing during the pandemic. Seniors for Children, #RunWithTheGM, The Dean Team, and CIV Tiummormators were all held virtually at different distances and locations to continue raising funds for Dana-Farber while maintaining COVID-19 guidelines.

One Run Any Race participant who turned the lack of in-person running events into a success story was Tracey McGee. McGee was originally supposed to run the Tokyo Marathon, and upon cancellation, registered for the virtual Boston Marathon in its place. McGee raised more than $69,000 for breast cancer research in memory of Lori Ricciuti, the wife of a close colleague at TJX Companies. Lori’s stories like McGee’s that made Run Any Race so successful amidst the uncertainty of 2020, as runners found creative ways to fundraise while still being able to find ways to race towards the ultimate finish line: a world without cancer.

Dana-Farber fundraisers ‘hit the ground running’ in virtual Falmouth Road Race

Between Aug. 15 and 29, more than 200 members of Dana-Farber’s team took part in the first-ever New Balance Falmouth Road Race. At-Home Edition, raising more than $300,000 in support of the Institute’s lifesaving mission.

For more than 45 years, the Falmouth Road Race has been one of the premier running events of the summer season, drawing thousands of runners to complete its scenic seven-mile course from Woods Hole to Falmouth Heights on Cape Cod. In order to maintain social distancing and keep everyone safe and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic, the event pivoted to a virtual experience this year, encouraging runners to complete the seven-mile race from the safety of their own neighborhoods.

The change provided a chance for Dana-Farber runners like Kara Banosian to continue fundraising for a cause near and dear to their hearts even in the midst of the pandemic. Banosian is the captain of Team Meghan Martin, a fundraising group on the Dana-Farber team that runs in honor of her friend who passed away from metastatic breast cancer in August 2019. “When someone you know is sick, it is hard to find things to do or say that will make a difference,” said Banosian. “Running the virtual Falmouth Road Race was a way for us to come together and remember Meghan, and to raise funds for an important cause. Dana-Farber provides the best treatment in the world.”

To include Dana-Farber in your estate plans, contact us at 800-535-5577

10% of all designated gifts supports our Faculty Research Fund to advance Dana-Farber’s research mission
Dana-Farber and Jimmy Fund community finds innovative ways to fundraise

As the COVID-19 outbreak surged across the nation, our dedicated community of supporters refused to let our patients and caregivers down, finding new and creative ways to fundraise in support of Dana-Farber’s lifesaving mission. Here are just a few of the fundraising initiatives that were developed or modified in 2020, with physical distancing and participant safety in mind.

Jimmy Fund/ Variety Children’s Charity Theatre Collections

Since 1949, participating movie theaters have shown a Jimmy Fund “trailer” before the start of a feature film, asking patrons for contributions to the Jimmy Fund. When the pandemic forced movie theaters to close, the drive-in theater experienced a revival. The Jimmy Fund teamed up with seven drive-in locations over the summer, as well as pop-up locations at restaurants. Before each movie screening, theaters played Dana-Farber’s new “I am Jimmy” trailer, encouraging attendees to donate via text. This socially distanced approach to summertime entertainment allowed the Jimmy Fund’s longest-running fundraiser to continue.

Summer Wellness Series

With gyms closed, sports on pause, and the community “hunkering down” at home, Dana-Farber’s first-ever Summer Wellness Series aimed to provide both physical fitness and mental health options for the Jimmy Fund community. The at-home series offered virtual fitness classes, education sessions, nutrition and wellness webinars, and family-friendly activities. Sessions were hosted by some of New England’s best-known fitness instructors, health experts, and Jimmy Fund partners. Classes had a suggested donation of $20 per class and all proceeds went to cancer care and research.

Squares of Love

Corri Taylor of Wellesley, Mass., was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in 2015. Every week upon returning home from chemotherapy at Dana-Farber, Corri was greeted with a “Square of Love,” a message of hope sent by her best friend, Catherine Rosenberg in Virginia. The 3” x 3” designs were made with watercolors, acrylics, collage, colored pencil, and ink. After receiving her 260th square, Corri was so inspired that she and Catherine decided to expand on the concept. They began crafting handmade greeting cards and more, based on Catherine’s original artwork. Proceeds from the pieces go to the Carol Chaoui Metastatic Breast Cancer Research Fund, supporting Dana-Farber. In an era of physical distancing, Squares of Love combines friendship and art to provide community and hope to cancer patients.

Jimmy Fund Little League

For 34 years, Jimmy Fund Little League players across New England have stepped up to the plate to strike out cancer. Traditionally, Little League teams extend their regular baseball season with the Jimmy Fund league and take to their communities to fundraise for Dana-Farber. When public gatherings were put on hold to slow the spread of the virus, supporters wondered if there would be a baseball season this year. As spring approached and reopening plans took shape, the league was able to reopen as well, adhering to the guidelines provided by state and local health officials. With support from presenting sponsor, Franklin Sports, more than 100 Jimmy Fund Little League participants knocked it out of the park this year, raising vital funds for cancer patients at Dana-Farber.
In memoriam: The Legacy of Sumner M. Redstone 1923–2020

The Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Jimmy Fund community mourns the loss of Trustee Sumner M. Redstone, who passed away in August 2020 at the age of 97.

Redstone joined the Dana-Farber Board of Trustees in 1962, establishing his family’s legacy as one of our “first families.” Beginning with Sumner’s father, Michael “Mickey” Redstone, one of the founding fathers of the Jimmy Fund, the Redstone Family has committed its support to Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund for more than 70 years. Sumner’s daughter, Shari Redstone, has been an active Dana-Farber Trustee since 1995, and the family’s tradition of giving continues with a fourth generation—Shari’s children, Tyler Korff, Brandon Korff, and Kira Ostheimer, who through their KBT Charitable Foundation have provided support for key Institute priorities over many years.

A Boston native, Sumner Redstone spent his early career as a lawyer and professor of law in San Francisco before joining his father in the drive-in movie theater business in Massachusetts. Redstone’s tenacity, knowledge of law, and negotiation skills helped him grow their 12 drive-in movie theaters into novel cinema multiplexes and, subsequently, the National Amusements empire. He went on to grow media and film companies, as well. A true businessman at heart, Redstone held the roles of chairman, CEO, and controlling shareholder, managing the company’s affairs well into his 90s. He was revered among his peers for his ability to close business deals even when others were heavily favored to win.

History of Giving:

The Redstone Family has committed their support to Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund since 1949. In September, the Susan F. Smith Center for Women’s Cancers Executive Council hosted its first-ever virtual fundraising event, taking an annual tradition online. The Executive Council is made up of women business and community leaders dedicated to supporting the center’s efforts to develop innovative therapies for breast and gynecologic cancers. Since its formation in 2002, the Executive Council has raised more than $18 million for Dana-Farber, including more than $240,000 from the 2020 event. Hosted by WBZ-TV News Anchor Lisa Hughes, with music provided by local Boston country band Whiskey-6, the presentation featured remarks by Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, president and CEO of Dana-Farber and the Richard and Susan Smith Professor of Medicine, and Smith Center Director Alan D’Andrea, MD. A panel of Dana-Farber experts led by Judy Garber, MD, MPH, chief of the Division of Cancer Genetics and Prevention and the Susan F. Smith Chair, and Sasa Tolayev, MD, MPH, director of Clinical Trials, Breast Oncology, reported on recent developments including the first personalized ovarian cancer vaccine trial, significant progress for patients with HER2+ breast cancer, and a novel targeted therapy trial in endometrial cancer. Attendees also participated in a Q&A with Ursula Matulonis, MD, chief of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology and the Brock-Wilson Family Chair, and Eric F. Winer, MD, chief of the Division of Breast Oncology and the Thompson Chair in Breast Cancer Research. Throughout the event, patients and families shared stories of how their lives have been touched by their treatment at the Smith Center.

Red Sox fans hit it out of the park to ‘Fill Fenway’

In September, the Susan F. Smith Center for Women’s Cancers Executive Council hosted its first-ever virtual fundraising event, taking an annual tradition online. The Executive Council is made up of women business and community leaders dedicated to supporting the center’s efforts to develop innovative therapies for breast and gynecologic cancers. Since its formation in 2002, the Executive Council has raised more than $18 million for Dana-Farber, including more than $240,000 from the 2020 event. Hosted by WBZ-TV News Anchor Lisa Hughes, with music provided by local Boston country band Whiskey-6, the presentation featured remarks by Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, president and CEO of Dana-Farber and the Richard and Susan Smith Professor of Medicine, and Smith Center Director Alan D’Andrea, MD. A panel of Dana-Farber experts led by Judy Garber, MD, MPH, chief of the Division of Cancer Genetics and Prevention and the Susan F. Smith Chair, and Sasa Tolayev, MD, MPH, director of Clinical Trials, Breast Oncology, reported on recent developments including the first personalized ovarian cancer vaccine trial, significant progress for patients with HER2+ breast cancer, and a novel targeted therapy trial in endometrial cancer. Attendees also participated in a Q&A with Ursula Matulonis, MD, chief of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology and the Brock-Wilson Family Chair, and Eric F. Winer, MD, chief of the Division of Breast Oncology and the Thompson Chair in Breast Cancer Research. Throughout the event, patients and families shared stories of how their lives have been touched by their treatment at the Smith Center.

Red Sox fans hit it out of the park to ‘Fill Fenway’

The COVID-19 pandemic could not stop dedicated Red Sox fans across the nation from supporting the Jimmy Fund during baseball season. From Aug. 10 to Sept. 18, the Jimmy Fund invited supporters to experience the magic of Fenway while remaining at home by giving to Fill Fenway for the Jimmy Fund presented by John Hancock. By purchasing virtual seat packages, donors sought to cheer on the Red Sox by filling every seat in Fenway Park. And these fans certainly hit it out of the park with $213,755 raised and 59,348 seats sold—far exceeding the park’s 37,731-seat capacity.

All virtual seats included access to the Centerfield Scoreboard tribute wall and an online Strike a Pose photo booth powered by Coca-Cola, which gave participants the chance to create their own baseball card or custom photo to commemorate their virtual visit to Fenway. Ticket holders were also entered into a raffle for a grand prize: the chance to watch an inning inside the historic Green Monster, plus two tickets to a 2021 Red Sox home game.

Fill Fenway also featured the Jimmy Fund Starting Nine powered by Franklin Sports. These nine current and former patients were each featured on their own custom baseball card full of fun facts and trivia—including favorite Red Sox memories—and ensured that every participant was reminded of the mission they’d all come out to support.

The Susan F. Smith Center for Women’s Cancers fulfills the vision of the late Susan F. Smith, a Dana-Farber Trustee and lifelong advocate for research into women’s cancers.

Annual Susan F. Smith Center fundraiser goes virtual

The Susan F. Smith Center for Women’s Cancers fulfills the vision of the late Susan F. Smith, a Dana-Farber Trustee and lifelong advocate for research into women’s cancers.

10% of all designated gifts supports our Faculty Research Fund to advance Dana-Farber’s research mission
While 2020 was different for many reasons, one thing that never wavered was the support of the Jimmy Fund Golf community, which helped raise over $4 million for Dana-Farber Cancer Institute last year through Jimmy Fund Golf presented by Mohegan Sun. Across the board, the program’s volunteer tournament organizers showed incredible perseverance and resilience to fundraise for cancer research and care during a year like no other.

Creativity was the theme of the summer to overcome challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. While many events successfully adapted their tournament days to bring supporters safely together on the course and adhere to local guidelines, others decided to expand their events beyond one day and offered participants the flexibility to play a round of golf on their own time.

In cases where it was not possible to gather in person, many tournament committees chose to continue their fundraising virtually, making appeals to their dedicated golfers, donors, and sponsors to raise funds for Dana-Farber’s patients and families during a time when their support was needed most. Some tournaments creatively added to their fundraising efforts by selling tournament-branded T-shirts and face masks, along with raffle and auction items online.

Despite the unique challenges, the Jimmy Fund Golf community persevered, raising over $4 million for Dana-Farber’s patients and families during a year like no other. Many tournaments, groups, and individuals also joined the new Jimmy Fund Golf Challenge to continue their fundraising in a fun and competitive way.

During such extraordinary times, Jimmy Fund Golf is grateful to the thousands of volunteer tournament directors, committee members, donors, and sponsors for their steadfast commitment to the Jimmy Fund and Dana-Farber. In a year with many challenges, this community of dedicated golf supporters showed it will never let up in the fight against cancer.
With many traditional golf tournaments canceled or postponed due to challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jimmy Fund Golf Challenge was launched for the 2020 golf season as a way for golfers to get creative and safely fundraise without attending a “traditional” golf tournament. This new virtual initiative gave golfers of all levels the opportunity to play and raise funds their way—anytime, anywhere—in support of patients and families at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Some participants took this opportunity to play golf on a special day or place, while others decided to play more than one round in a day, all while utilizing their online fundraising page to share their story and easily fundraise. With its flexibility of play and no fundraising minimum, the Jimmy Fund Golf Challenge was the perfect way to give new and seasoned golfers alike a way to get involved and give back. Leaning on support from the program’s generous sponsors, participants were also treated to prizes from companies like Mohegan Sun and Callaway as they hit their fundraising goals.

As Jimmy Fund Golf’s flagship event, the Sunrise to Sunset Jimmy Fund Golf Tournament, was canceled due to the pandemic, many past participants took part in this new initiative. Golfers included top individual fundraiser Kathy Moore and her husband, Kevin, who played two rounds at their favorite New Hampshire courses; Sean Tolan and his group of friends, who played 44 holes in one day in memory of Sean’s father; Jon Iorio, golfing in honor of his son, Luke, a patient at Dana-Farber’s Jimmy Fund Clinic; Richie Cifras, a Dana-Farber pharmacist who hosted a virtual “closest to the pin” event in honor of his mother; Greg Fedynskyh, who played 36 holes to raise money for the treatment that saved both him and his brother; and John Cronin, who played a round of golf on his birthday at the last course he played before he started treatment at Dana-Farber.

A few existing Jimmy Fund Golf tournaments rallied their participants and joined the Jimmy Fund Golf Challenge as well. Leading the way was the DefinitiveCares Charity Golf Challenge, which encouraged their employees to fundraise for Dana-Farber’s patients and families virtually. Other top tournaments included the Jim McNally Memorial Golf Tournament and the Steve Ronan/Tom McKay Budweiser Jimmy Fund Golf Classic, whose dedicated supporters continued to fundraise despite not being able to gather in person.

In total, the Jimmy Fund Golf Challenge raised over $200,000 for Dana-Farber, funds that will make a lifesaving difference for adults and children with cancer during these difficult times.

New initiative ‘challenges’ golfers to think outside the (tee) box

Thank you to our tournaments and fundraisers!*

Basko Family Memorial Golf Tournament
Bell & Hudson Virtual Putt-a-Thon for the Jimmy Fund
Bob Parsons Memorial hosted by Shrewsbury Capital
C&S Charity Golf Outing/Tee Up for Kids®
CWB Services/Jimmy Fund Golf Classic
Cooke Memorial Golf Tournament
Dana-Farber Leadership Council Golf Tournament
Darby Williams/Memorial Golf Tournament
Dave Windsor Classic
DefinitiveCares Charity Golf Challenge
Dunkin’ Joy in Childhood Foundation
Expect Miracles Foundation
Friends of Jay Cline Memorial Golf Classic
Golf For the Kids
Golfing For Gabi
H.T. Berry Open
Harry C. Robbins Memorial Golf Tournament
Horseshoe Grille Golf Tournament
Hyannisport Jimmy Fund Classic
Jen Forget Memorial Jimmy Fund Tournament
Jim McNally Memorial Golf Tournament
Jimmy Memorial Golf Tournament
Jimmy Fund Golf Challenge
JoAnna Sullivan/Memorial Golf Tournament
John R. Swenson Classic
Kearnsy Country Club’s Swing to Support Dana-Farber
Making Gray Matter Golf Classic
Meadow Brook Jimmy Fund Golf Tournament
Mike Berry Golf Scramble
NPPA Golf Tournament
Paul O’Dwyer Jimmy Fund Golf Classic
Putt-a-Thon for Patients
Rybakich Memorial Invitational
Shawn Ronan/Tom McKay Budweiser Jimmy Fund Golf Classic
Shore Development Jimmy Fund Classic
Staten Cark Open
Tom Cossentino “Driving for the Cure” Charity Golf Tournament
Tom Guinta Charity Golf Tournament
US Wealth Jimmy Fund Golf Classic
WBI Frank V. Collangro Memorial Tournament
WEEI Jimmy Fund Golf Challenge Hosted by Jayme Parker
Women’s Cancer Classic
Woosterest Little League Jim Carr Memorial Jimmy Fund Golf Tournament

Tourneys that raised $5,000 or more in 2020

C&S Charity Golf Outing/Tee Up for Kids®
Horseshoe Grille Golf Tournament
Steve Ronan/Tom McKay Budweiser Jimmy Fund Golf Classic
CWB Services/Jimmy Fund Golf Classic
Teode Williams Family Golf Tournament
Hyannisport Jimmy Fund Classic
Making Gray Matter Golf Classic
JoAnna Sullivan/Memorial Golf Tournament
US Wealth Jimmy Fund Golf Classic

Milestones

C&S Charity Golf Outing/Tee Up for Kids® ........................................... 35 years
Horseshoe Grille Golf Tournament ..................................................... 35 years
Steve Ronan/Tom McKay Budweiser Jimmy Fund Golf Classic ........... 35 years
CWB Services/Jimmy Fund Golf Classic ............................................. 20 years
Teode Williams Family Golf Tournament ........................................ 20 years
Hyannisport Jimmy Fund Classic ....................................................... 10 years
Making Gray Matter Golf Classic ....................................................... 10 years
JoAnna Sullivan/Memorial Golf Tournament ..................................... 10 years
US Wealth Jimmy Fund Golf Classic ............................................... 5 years

Tournaments Celebrating Milestones

C&S Charity Golf Outing/Tee Up for Kids® ........................................... 35 years
Horseshoe Grille Golf Tournament ..................................................... 35 years
Steve Ronan/Tom McKay Budweiser Jimmy Fund Golf Classic ........... 35 years
CWB Services/Jimmy Fund Golf Classic ............................................. 20 years
Teode Williams Family Golf Tournament ........................................ 20 years
Hyannisport Jimmy Fund Classic ....................................................... 10 years
Making Gray Matter Golf Classic ....................................................... 10 years
JoAnna Sullivan/Memorial Golf Tournament ..................................... 10 years
US Wealth Jimmy Fund Golf Classic ............................................... 5 years

The creativity of the Bell & Hudson put-a-thon for the Jimmy Fund committee this year resulted in several activities for supporters to participate in during their virtual putt-a-thon week. Pictured here is Tournament Director Scott Goldberg, safely manning a booth on the Balch Streettown Common to raise awareness for their efforts.

Employee of Definitive Healthcare wouldn’t be able to host this typical tournament this year, but many want out on the courses in small groups and fundraised virtually, raising over $100,000 for Dana-Farber during this challenging year.

While the participants of the Steve Ronan/Tom McKay Budweiser Jimmy Fund Golf Classic weren’t able to gather in person this year, they celebrated their 35th anniversary by fundraising through the Jimmy Fund Golf Challenge.

Tournament Director Scott Goldberg (third from left), pictured here at the 2019 Bob Parsons Memorial, postponed the physical golf tournament this year but still collected gifts from past participants and sponsors to raise money for early detection in pancreatic cancer research and the patient assistance crisis fund.

Tournament Director Jimmy Suppesola (second from right) safely organized the Hyannisport Jimmy Fund Classic, raising funds for the Pediatric Experimental Therapeutics Program under the direction of Steven Dubois, MD, MB. The tournament committee celebrated the 10th anniversary of the event.

Nick and Fabiana Pellicani, pictured here, safely hosted the second annual Golfing for Gabi event in Rockville Centre, N.Y., in September. Friends and family gathered for the 18-hole tournament and outdoor reception, to raise funds for pediatric brain cancer research at Dana-Farber, in loving memory of Nick and Fabiana’s daughter, Gabi Pellicani.

Unable to host their annual golf tournament, the Kernwood Country Club chose to Support Dana-Farber, Robin Dale and Beth Klar called the support of the membership at Kernwood, raising critical funds for patient’s cancer research at Dana-Farber.

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

Get involved, have fun, and beat cancer – visit JimmyFund.org
ew and Connee Counts’ philanthropic legacy centers on creating equity in education and careers in the arts and sciences. So, when they met David Frank, MD, PhD, at Dana-Farber, they were thrilled to find a kindred spirit working to level the playing field one hire at a time.

Frank treats patients with lymphoma and leukemia, researches new targeted therapies for cancer, and, for the last 25 years, has mentored lab members from diverse scholarly, ethnic, and personal backgrounds.

“For complex issues, like discovering new treatments for cancer,” says Frank, “you need input from as many different brains as you can. People with different backgrounds, different expertise, different ways of viewing problems.”

Which is why Frank hired postdoctoral fellow Juan Carlos Hernandez-Vega, PhD, originally from Puerto Rico, whose background in plant biology brought new and important perspectives to his work studying MD5—a pre-leukemia condition from which Lew suffered. Unfortunately, funding for Hernandez-Vega’s position became uncertain when federal grants shifted focus to COVID-19 research. Recognizing the immediate need for support, and inspired by Frank’s mentoring ethos, Connee and Lew established the Counts Family Fund with a gift of $200,000 to sustain fellowship positions like Hernandez-Vega’s.

In the summer of 2020, Lew’s MDS advanced to acute leukemia and he passed away in September. However, Lew and Connee’s legacy of creating equity will live on through their support of role model scientists in Frank’s lab. As Frank asserts, “You can’t be it if you don’t see it.”

Colacray gives to advance compassionate, personalized treatments

hen Ellie and Ray Colacray’s daughter was diagnosed with breast cancer, they took her to Dana-Farber. Twelve years later, while living in Florida, Ray was diagnosed with lung cancer, and the family again went to Dana-Farber. “I’ve never been to a hospital where I get the same personalized, compassionate, personalized care that Ellie and her family received at Dana-Farber.”

With the goal that others will receive the same personalized and compassionate care that Ellie and her family received at Dana-Farber, Ellie has made a second generous gift of $100,000 to continue Rabin’s work.

Do Good. Feel Good.

Official Auto Insurance Partner of the Jimmy Fund and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

*As a benefit to our donors, when eligible Massachusetts residents donate $50 or more to Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund, they may receive 6% off their Arbella auto policy.

Countes Family supports research fellows with an eye on equity

Voices from the Lab

Members of the Frank Lab reflect on the value of mentorship and offer advice to the next generation of scientists.

Isidora Tošić, MPHarm, PhD Candidate
Research Assistant, Frank Lab

“Never lose sight of the greater picture, as a part of the research community, we are able to reshape the treatment strategies and improve the future of oncology patients.”

Juan C. Hernandez-Vega, PhD
Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Frank Lab

“This experience in David’s lab will allow me to demonstrate my abilities as an independent scientist and to develop my own ideas to study cancer-relevant genes. My goal is to become a faculty member of a research-intensive institution where I can both teach and conduct competitive research.”

Advice to future scientists:

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In 2020, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) named Kenneth Kehl, MD, MPH, David Liu, MD, MPH, MS, and Srinivas Viswanathan, MD, PhD, as recipients of the Doris Duke Clinical Scientist Development Award. The award provides funds to early career physician-scientists to facilitate their transition to independent clinical research careers. Since the beginning of the program in 1998, the foundation has awarded 339 Clinical Scientist Development Awards totaling over $152 million to junior investigators around the country working in a broad range of disease areas. Kehl, Liu, and Viswanathan received grants totaling more than $1.4 million to pursue their independent research studies into lung cancer, melanoma, and kidney cancer, respectively.

Kehl’s research focuses on training machine learning models to measure cancer outcomes based on data in patients’ electronic health records. Using “deep natural language processing” to replicate human curation, Kehl’s model generated outcomes that aligned with the actual overall patient outcomes in patients with lung cancer. With the funding from DDCF, Kehl will be able to improve upon and expand these techniques to other types of cancer and other types of treatment.

Liu is investigating the biological markers of tumor progression and treatment resistance in metastatic melanoma. By using computational techniques from machine learning and statistical analyses on patient samples collected over time and treatment, he is tracing and analyzing the evolution of these tumors to create predictive models that can be used to advance precision medicine in melanoma.

Viswanathan is working to identify potential therapeutic targets for a rare, highly aggressive form of renal cell carcinoma called translocation renal cell carcinoma (tRCC). Previous studies into this disease have been limited in scale, though enough data exists to suggest that tRCC has a molecular profile that is distinct from more common types of kidney cancer. Fueled by the funding from DDCF, Viswanathan will analyze existing patient data to define tRCC’s distinct molecular profile, which will then be used to uncover novel therapeutic targets for the disease.

“We’re thrilled to support Kenneth Kehl, MD, MPH, David Liu, MD, MPH, MS, and Srinivas Viswanathan, MD, PhD, and their important medical research through the 2020 Clinical Scientist Development Awards,” said Betsy Myers, program director for medical research at DDCF. “It is vital to support physician-scientists at this crucial stage of their careers. We look forward to seeing the results of this clinical research and how they will continue to bring insights from their direct interactions with patients as their careers develop over the long term.”

The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation has been a valued partner to Dana-Farber for two decades, having awarded close to $15 million in grants.

Paschkes’ gift ensures a lasting legacy for Riley McMahon

A s one of 10 children, Roger Paschke has always had siblings to turn to in times of crisis. When he needed a stem cell transplant in 2005 as part of his treatment for acute myeloid leukemia, his sister Riley was ready and willing to be his donor.

“Riley was a very outgoing, gregarious individual who connected with everybody,” said Paschke. “Years after the transplant, my health care team still remembers her.”

Stem cell transplants offer some patients a longer period of disease-free survival, and for some, the possibility of a cure. In Paschke’s case, a stem cell transplant was crucial to ensuring he remained in remission—Riley saved his life.

Tragically, a little over a year after the procedure, Riley passed away in a car accident. Paschke and his wife, Kathryn, soon after established the Riley McMahon Research Fund for Stem Cell Transplantation in her honor to support the work of Paschke’s doctor Joseph Antin, MD, chief emeritus of Stem Cell Transplantation. The couple recently renewed their commitment with a pledge of $120,000, and has included the fund in their estate plans.

“It was like Riley had a mission in life and with her lifesigning stem cell donation she accomplished it,” said Paschke. “We give in her honor every year to make sure that there’s some meaningful way to move the needle for those battling leukemia, and to make sure that people continue to remember Riley and what she did.”
**Alan Biren Fund for Pancreatic Cancer Early Detection**

The five-year survival rate for patients with stage IV pancreatic cancer is just 3%, according to the American Cancer Society. Over half of the newly diagnosed patients will face these odds. Alan Biren did not care about the statistics. He physically defied the odds when he danced at his daughter Dana’s wedding earlier this year. Alan lived nearly 14 months after his diagnosis. In his memory, the Biren Family made a gift supporting the early detection research of Brian Wolpin, MD, MPH, director of Dana-Farber’s Gastrointestinal Cancer Center and the Hale Center for Pancreatic Cancer Research. “We are extremely grateful for the Biren Family’s support, which allows us to explore new approaches for detecting pancreatic cancer at an earlier, more treatable stage,” said Wolpin, who is also the Robert T. and Judith B. Hale Chair in Pancreatic Cancer at Dana-Farber. The Biren Family echoed Wolpin’s sentiment. “We are eager to support research at the forefront of early detection. Our family believes that Dr. Wolpin’s efforts, and those of the broader scientific/medical community are essential to developing life-saving detection tools. We hope that our experience and this gift can have a positive impact on future families fighting this disease.”

**Linde fund accelerates bile duct cancer research**

Haya Linde has always been a source of inspiration and motivation for her husband, Yoseph. When she was diagnosed with a rare bile duct cancer called cholangiocarcinoma, Yoseph was by her side as she sought treatment at Dana-Farber. Though Haya passed away in 2014, Yoseph and his daughter Dana continue to advocate for her disease. He has generously given more than $200,000 in support of research at Dana-Farber, most recently through the creation of the Haya Linde Fund for Bile Duct Cancer Research, under the direction of one of Haya’s doctors, James Cleary, MD, PhD. Biliary cancer is a rare, aggressive form of cancer that develops in the bile duct system. There is currently no screening test for it, and the symptoms are relatively non-specific. Cleary’s team has made progress in characterizing the genetic subtypes of cholangiocarcinoma that inform more personalized treatment strategies such as immunotherapies. Linde’s generous gift will enable them to further study the biology of biliary cancers on a cellular level. “A deeper understanding of the biology of bile duct cancer will allow us to create therapies that are effective for each subtype of this disease,” said Cleary. “Generous funding like this helps accelerate our progress for the benefit of patients facing cholangiocarcinoma.”

“Haya had a unique ability to inspire others and push them to their limits. She greatly admired Dr. Cleary and his team and would be honored in knowing that she was supporting them in their journey to find innovative ways to treat and ultimately cure this aggressive cancer,” said Linde. “We truly hope that her legacy can benefit others who are faced with this disease.”

**Grateful patient gives back, inspires family and friends to join her**

When Lucía Brower learned of her gastric cancer diagnosis, she immediately knew where she needed to be: Dana-Farber. “I felt welcomed from day one,” said Lucía. “Even though we know that we are dealing with a great challenge, Dana-Farber’s approach to care reassures me that I am in great hands. There is a balance of amazing minds and amazing care that is rare to find—at Dana-Farber, we found both.”

Moved by a desire to help others with this disease, Lucía and her husband, José Vicente Aguerrevere, established the Lucía Brower Fund for Gastric Cancer Research at Dana-Farber under the direction of Peter Enzinger, MD, director of the Center for Esophageal and Gastric Cancer. The gift will support research into new treatments for the disease, such as immunotherapy, and will also fund a new patient navigator to help patients manage everything that comes with a cancer diagnosis. “We know how hard it is to digest the news and navigate the system,” said José. “Supporting a new patient navigator meant a lot to us, and the consistent, humane culture at Dana-Farber is something we are glad to support. The attitude and demeanor here is just as important as chemotherapy.”

The couple’s fund now totals $220,000, thanks to their personal gift of $100,000, money raised by family and friends in the Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk, and a generous commitment from dear friends Juan Simón and Cristina Mendoza (see story at right).

Lucía and José are our friends and business partners. We have celebrated together and we’ve also suffered together,” said Simón. “Our commitment to be part of this difficult journey and create awareness of gastric cancer is one that solidifies our friendship. If this economic support can help pave the road ahead as well as help others in the future, then we’ve done some good.”

“Lucía and José’s commitment to support my research, and how they’ve inspired their friends and family to take part, is incredibly meaningful,” said Enzinger. “This funding will be crucial to our ability to uncover new treatment options, helping improve countless patients’ quality of life.”

The Biren Family is funding early detection for pancreatic cancer in memory of Alan Biren (left). The Biren Family is funding early detection for pancreatic cancer in memory of Alan Biren (left).
American Cancer Society fuels innovative cancer research led by Dana-Farber investigators

Matthew Meyerson, MD, PhD, co-director of the Center for Cancer Genomics, received a renewal of his 2014 Research Professor Award, which provides flexible funding for leading investigators who have made seminal contributions to cancer research in their fields. The award will continue to support work focused on using genome-inspired approaches to advance cancer discovery and therapeutics in numerous diseases, including lung, colon, and prostate cancers.

“In the past five years, we have made critical breakthroughs in cancer genomics thanks to ACS funding,” said Meyerson. “We have found new types of changes in cancer genomes that play roles in disease progression, identified novel drug candidates, and are now examining treatment resistance pathways in prostate and other cancers. The ACS has been a key partner in supporting these successes, and we look forward to more discoveries fueled by their generosity.”

An additional grant supports postdoctoral work focused on testing novel therapeutic approaches to treat gastroesophageal cancer. This competitive award—which provides dedicated research funding for junior faculty as they transition to independent scientists—enables investigation of new ways to target a common driver of gastroesophageal cancer using cutting-edge laboratory techniques with the goal of increasing our understanding of the pathways that gastroesophageal cancers rely on for survival. This could one day translate into new treatment options for patients.

“In the current challenging fundraising environment, it is gratifying to partner with these highly esteemed investigators, who continue to break new ground, explore cancer’s causes and how it develops, and lead the way in cancer research,” said Kerri Medeiros, senior manager of Cancer Control Strategic Partnerships for the American Cancer Society. “We are very proud to be able to support the research of these highly innovative scientists working on behalf of cancer patients.”

Impact
Baseball looked different in 2020, but the Boston Red Sox stepped up to the plate for Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund just as they have since 1953. Red Sox wives held their fourth annual online auction to benefit the Jimmy Fund, inviting fans to bid on baskets filled with each player’s favorite things—from grilling spices and video games to autographed apparel, like the jersey pitcher Nathan Eovaldi signed for his basket, above.

**JANUARY 30**

**PMC Winter Cycle**
The PMC Winter Cycle at Fenway Park is a vital “spoke in the wheel” of PMC fundraising. Join this stationary cycling event that sends 100% of all rider-raised dollars directly to Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Visit WinterCycle.pmc.org.

**FEBRUARY 18**

**Cocktails and Conversation With Our Doctors**
Celebrating 30 years in Palm Beach!

**APRIL 1**

**Rally Against Cancer™**
Presented by Chowdaheadz
Rally Against Cancer™ with your coworkers, friends, and family to celebrate the return of our beloved Red Sox and Fundraise for the ultimate home run, a world without cancer. Visit RallyAgainstCancer.org or contact Teresa Kane at RallyAgainstCancer@dfci.harvard.edu.

**YEAR ROUND**

**Behind the Breakthroughs**
This webinar series offers an inside look at the latest innovations in cancer research and care at Dana-Farber. From the comfort of your own home, join the discussion with leading physician-scientists to learn how Dana-Farber’s advancements in cancer research and care are possible because of your support. Visit Dana-Farber.org/How-You-Can-Help/Get-Involved/Behind-the-Breakthroughs or contact Anna Poirier at DFCIandJimmyFundEvents@dfci.harvard.edu.

** YEAR ROUND **

**Jimmy Fund Bingo Night**
Jimmy Fund Bingo Night returns in 2021 for more virtual family fun! Visit JimmyFundBingo.org to register and see a lineup of events, starting with our first Bingo event of the new year on January 15. Contact Katherine Bukovsky at JimmyFundBingo@dfci.harvard.edu for more details.

** YEAR ROUND **

**Jimmy Fund Golf**
Presented by Mohegan Sun
Get on the right course to fight cancer® with Jimmy Fund Golf presented by Mohegan Sun. Plan a tournament or mini golf event for your community or colleagues next spring or summer, or learn how you can fundraise through golf on your own. Visit JimmyFundGolf.org or contact Victoria Fee at JimmyFund_Golf@dfci.harvard.edu.

** YEAR ROUND **

**Jimmy Fund Let’s Game™**
Looking for content creators and gamers? No matter your location, no matter your game, you can make a difference in the lives of cancer patients. Host your own livestream on your favorite platform using Jimmy Fund fundraising and donation tools. Visit JimmyFundLetsGame.org or contact Kenneth Chamberlain at JimmyFundLetsGame@dfci.harvard.edu.

** YEAR ROUND **

**Run Any Race**
Run any race and set your own fundraising goals! Every dollar raised supports Dana-Farber and the Jimmy Fund. For more information, contact Bridget Dougherty at DFRunners@dfci.harvard.edu or visit RunDanaFarber.org.