

LATE FALL 2017 Volume 20 | Issue 5

Impact

dana-farber.org and jimmyfund.org

THANKING THOSE WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Endowed Chair honors the enduring legacy of Susan F. Smith

Susan F. Smith was a tireless advocate for women's cancer research and care and believed strongly that Dana-Farber Cancer Institute should stand for excellence in everything it does. Among her many contributions, she spearheaded a pioneering effort that became the Susan F. Smith Center for Women's Cancers. With her husband, Richard, she was a longtime Trustee and benefactor of Dana-Farber, including support for the Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Research Laboratories. She was also a founding member of the Friends of Dana-Farber.

Mrs. Smith's leadership and generosity of spirit earned her many admirers; among them were Dana-Farber Cancer Institute Board of Trustees Chairman Josh Bekenstein and his wife, Anita. After Mrs. Smith's passing in July 2016, the Bekensteins were moved to create an endowed chair at Dana-Farber in her honor.

"Susan Smith was the epitome of hope and action here at Dana-Farber and within the wider community," said Anita. "She led by example, encouraged others, and by extension, touched the lives of millions of patients and their families. For Josh and me, her passion for and contributions to Dana-Farber have always been an inspiration."

The Bekensteins' gift established the Susan F. Smith Chair to support the work of an exceptional senior faculty member at Dana-Farber who embodies the unwavering commitment to excellence and passion for conquering cancer that Mrs. Smith brought



The late Susan F. Smith's legacy was honored by a major gift from Josh and Anita Bekenstein.

"Susan Smith was the epitome of hope and action here at Dana-Farber and within the wider community. She led by example, encouraged others, and by extension, touched the lives of millions of patients and their families."

— ANITA BEKENSTEIN

to every aspect of her work at the Institute. The chair will exist in perpetuity.

The first incumbent of the Smith Chair is Judy Garber, MD, MPH, director of the Center for Cancer Genetics and Prevention at Dana-Farber and founder of the Dana-Farber Cancer Risk and Prevention Clinic, one of the first devoted to the identification and management of individuals at highest cancer risk. Garber's research activities include the study of breast cancer risk assessment and communication, breast cancer genetics, and pharmacogenetics.

"Judy Garber is an outstanding choice as the first incumbent of the Susan F. Smith Chair," said Eric Winer, MD, chief of the Division of Women's Cancers, director of Breast Oncology, and Thompson Chair in Breast Cancer Research. "For more than 20 years, Mrs. Smith was the driving force

behind Dana-Farber's women's cancers program. Dr. Garber has played a critical role in advancing Mrs. Smith's vision of creating better approaches to care through her dedication to incorporating cancer genetics into effective early detection and treatment options for patients."

Today it seems unsurprising that researchers and clinicians would be studying and treating all women's cancers under one umbrella. More than 25 years ago, however, when Mrs. Smith began focusing on women's cancers, these diseases received little attention. Her determination to improve research and care for women's cancers through better collaboration helped revolutionize the field and set the stage for decades of advancements. The Bekensteins' gift ensures that Mrs. Smith's legacy will endure. ■