Pioneering Collaboration between Intel, OHSU to Advance Personalized Cancer Medicine

An exciting new collaboration between OHSU and Intel Corp. will pair these leaders in cancer research and computing in an unprecedented effort to accelerate and reduce the price of personalized cancer medicine – the use of a patient’s genetic data to find and treat the root causes of his or her cancer.

“This collaboration will significantly advance our goal to bring personalized medicine into everyday clinical use,” said Brian Druker, M.D., director of the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. “The power of personalized medicine is in the genomic data now at our fingertips. But that data is also the cause of the biggest bottleneck in genomic analysis. The data crunch has already overwhelmed today’s fastest high-performance computers.”

OHSU and Intel experts will work side-by-side in the years ahead to design, build and refine faster computer architectures, algorithms, software and workflows that are optimized for the unique information needs of personalized medicine. These innovations will address each step in the chain from discovery to clinical testing to routine use in diagnosis and prevention. This will help optimize how laboratories collect data, scientists and bioinformaticists process and archive it, and oncologists put it to work for their patients.

One answer is “exascale” computing – hardware and software geared specifically to ask and answer key biological questions at head-spinning speeds of one million trillion floating point operations per second – or, about 1,000 times faster than today’s best supercomputers. Only that rate, combined with the ultrafast gene sequencers expected in the coming months, will let scientists and physicians blaze through the huge haystack of genetic data for the right needle at the root of each patient’s cancer.

(continued on page 11)
At the Knight Cancer Institute, we believe collaboration is key to achieving our goal of ending cancer as we know it. Our more than 500 OHSU research scientists, healthcare professionals and staff are working together to heal patients and discover better ways to treat cancer. We have also formed important partnerships with other individuals and organizations whose commitment to our shared goals and unique capabilities make them essential members of our team.

This issue highlights a few of the many collaborative efforts happening today that are advancing our mission. These range from our innovative partnerships with Intel, Organovo, and Cepheid to the support we receive from volunteers in our newly formed patient advocate program and from other cancer patients, such as Katie Wilkes, who share their stories in order to lobby for change.

Philanthropic partners are critical to our success. They make key investments that enable our research and care teams to conduct the work that brings new hope to our patients more quickly. We greatly appreciate the generosity that funds our research awards (p. 10), such as the Knight Clinical Scholar Awards (see above), which provide outstanding clinical researchers with resources that allow for protected research time to focus on finding new therapies and treatments.

We are grateful for our partners, volunteers and advocates who stand with us. On behalf of the Knight Cancer Institute and the people we serve, we thank you for your support and are glad that you are on our team.

Sincerely,

Brian Druker, M.D.
Director, OHSU Knight Cancer Institute
JELD-WEN Chair for Leukemia Research
Associate Dean for Oncology

For More Information

The OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, a designated center of the National Cancer Institute, is dedicated to bringing new hope to cancer patients through compassionate care, groundbreaking research, and partnerships to catalyze better prevention, screening and treatment efforts.

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Director’s Message

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Brian Druker, M.D.
Director, OHSU Knight Cancer Institute
JELD-WEN Chair for Leukemia Research
Associate Dean for Oncology

The Knight Cancer Institute has received the prestigious Outstanding Achievement Award from the American College of Surgeons’ Commission on Cancer (CoC) for its continued dedication to quality patient care. The award names the institute as a top performer among cancer centers, and is a reflection of the institute’s dedicated physicians, faculty and staff who work hard to maintain and develop its multi-disciplinary approach to cancer care. Less than 20 percent of CoC accredited cancer programs received the award this year. The institute was commended in CoC’s 2012 accreditation evaluation for expanding its cancer care clinics and their ability to provide patients with same-day consults with multidisciplinary teams of specialists, as well as its outreach activities to extend services and expertise to communities throughout the region.
Since the earliest days of medical school, Renee Prins, M.D., knew that she wanted to be an oncologist. Cancer care was on the cusp of exciting change with the advent of new targeted therapies, and she found herself drawn to the particular challenges and rewards of working with cancer patients. Hematology/Oncology, she felt certain, would always be pushing the bounds of what was possible and promised a deeply fulfilling career.

Prins is exactly the kind of physician the Knight Cancer Institute aims to bring to its highly competitive Hematology/Oncology Fellowship Program. And, as she concludes three years of intense training in both the scientific and clinical aspects of cancer and blood disorders, Prins is full of enthusiasm for all that the fellowship has given her.

“I’m eternally grateful for the opportunity to fulfill my dream of becoming a hematologist and oncologist,” she said. “I interviewed for seven other fellowships, but I quickly realized that OHSU would give me the best training not only as a scientist but also as a clinician, both of which are essential components of practicing as an oncologist today.”

The Knight fellowship attracts top physicians from around the country and is the only Hematology/Oncology training program in Oregon. Out of the nearly 250 applicants annually, only three are selected each year for the three-year fellowship—about 1 percent. Of those selected, many continue in academic positions and more than two thirds choose to remain in Oregon.

“The fellowship draws superb clinicians and scientists from the best programs in the country who go on to become outstanding health care providers and future key leaders in cancer care and research,” said Charles Lopez, M.D., Ph.D., who directs the fellowship program.

The Knight Cancer Institute’s program is unique in its integrative approach in training its fellows, blending both research and clinical care into its exceptional training program.

“Oncologists of the future need to have inquisitive minds so that they can interpret rapidly changing data and know how to think critically about treatment choices,” Lopez explained. “They also need to be skilled and empathetic physicians who can relate compassionately to patients and their families.”

For Prins and her co-fellows, the three-year program is packed with learning—from two year-long research projects to extensive clinical training that includes journal clubs, case and research conferences and multi-disciplinary tumor boards, as well as workshops and role-plays that teach compassionate communication skills.

“This fellowship has given me everything I need to become the physician I want to be,” Prins reflected as she prepares to depart for private practice in Salem. “It’s certainly bittersweet to be leaving OHSU. However, I leave with lifelong role models who have shaped me both as a physician and as a person, and a network of mentors and colleagues to guide me long into my career.”
Patient Advocates Add New Energy to Breast Cancer Research

Denise Eichstadt, 37, was diagnosed with breast cancer a year ago. “I feel compelled to do whatever I can do to make the chance of a cure a little greater for others,” she said.

Retired CPA Dottie Waddell is a 19-year breast cancer survivor who considers herself one of the lucky ones. She, too, is determined to give back in any way she can: “I want to help scientists find a cure for breast cancer by speaking for all the people who haven’t been as lucky as I have.”

The inspiration for the patient advocacy program originated with two renowned breast cancer researchers, Joe Gray, Ph.D., and Lisa Coussens, Ph.D., who came to the Knight from the University of California, San Francisco where patient advocates were an integral and valued part of the research team.

Lisa Domenico, M.B.A., and Trevor Levin, Ph.D., who are co-leaders of the program at the Knight Cancer Institute, are now training 16 new volunteers to launch the program.

“Patient advocates play a powerful role in breast cancer research,” said Domenico. “They bring the perspective, needs and interests of the cancer community to investigators, while also keeping the community informed about research issues and findings.”

The fact that grant-making organizations increasingly require that patient advocates are involved in research projects is further testament to the critical role that advocates play. In the future, as funding permits, the Knight Cancer Institute hopes to expand its patient advocacy program to support research of other types of cancer as well.
Acupuncture Added to Growing List of Patient Support Services

Just as the landscape of cancer research and treatments is transforming rapidly, so is the focus on the overall well-being of patients and families. Generous philanthropic support has created a burgeoning Patient and Family Support Services program at the Knight Cancer Institute over the past two years. And the result is a fast-expanding range of services designed to enhance the well-being and quality of life for people with cancer and their loved ones.

Acupuncture is the most recent addition to these services. Welcomed by clinicians and patients alike, this ancient therapy is a gentle and effective way to reduce, or eliminate entirely, difficult cancer treatment symptoms, such as nausea, fatigue, pain and insomnia.

Longtime OHSU oncology nurse Angie Rademacher, N.D., LAc, (who now has her own integrative primary care practice) is the practitioner leading this new program, combining her passions for oncology and the healing benefits of acupuncture.

“I love oncology and working with oncology patients,” she said enthusiastically when reflecting on her new role. “And acupuncture is a highly effective and very safe way to help these patients manage difficult treatment symptoms. It’s wonderful that OHSU has added this more integrative approach to cancer care.”

For Susan Hedlund, M.S.W., L.C.S.W., who has overseen the creation and expansion of the Support Services program, this is a significant milestone. “I’m overjoyed that we have added acupuncture to our services,” she said. “And Angie Rademacher, with her unique background in both acupuncture and oncology, is the perfect person to bring this new treatment option to our patients.”

Hedlund is equally passionate about the other services the program offers—including mindfulness-based stress reduction, yoga, writing workshops, art therapy, massage, support groups, temporary housing, counseling, patient assistance funds and survivorship programs.

“Cancer can be a wake-up call for patients and their families,” she explained. “Both during and after treatment, people have a strong desire not only to survive but also to thrive. They want to take back their lives in a new way. Our goal is to help them do that by supporting and empowering them in as many ways as we can in body, mind and spirit.”

Many generous supporters have helped make these patient support services possible. Both individually and collectively these gifts make a huge impact on the services available to patients: a deeply comforting massage; a life-changing moment in art; writing workshops; an acupuncture treatment that resolves painful symptoms—all attending to the profound human experience that is an integral part of any cancer diagnosis and treatment.
Crowdfunding Site Supports Innovative Cancer Research

Molly Lindquist’s own experiences as a mother, wife and breast cancer survivor inspired her to launch Consano, the first nonprofit crowdfunding platform that focuses solely on supporting medical research campaigns.

Crowdfunding describes the collective effort of individuals who network and pool their money often through the Internet, to support efforts initiated by other people or organizations. In recent years crowdfunding sites have been used to support a variety of activities from disaster relief to startup companies to art projects.

“After enduring surgeries and chemo, I wanted to contribute to specific medical research with the hope that my two young daughters will never have to face breast cancer,” says Lindquist, who was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 32. “When I could not find an easy way to direct my donation to a specific project that might help my girls, the idea for Consano was born.”

Consano, which means “to heal” in Latin, connects individuals with research that they are personally interested in. The site launched with participation from Knight Cancer Institute researchers including projects from Paul Spellman, Ph.D., Charles Keller, M.D., Monika Davare, Ph.D., and Tanja Pejovic, M.D., Ph.D. The web site, www.consano.org, gives donors an opportunity to learn more about the researchers and their individual projects and support the efforts most meaningful to them. One-hundred percent of every project donation (less a minimal credit card processing fee) will go directly to the project of the donor’s choice.

“Our mission is to advance medical progress by enabling individuals to direct donations to specific research projects that matter to them,” says Lindquist. “I felt very powerless during my cancer diagnosis and treatment, and I found it so empowering to feel involved in advancing medical progress by connecting with research that was important to me. It felt like I took my power back, and I hope Consano helps other people feel that way, too.”

Molly Lindquist and her daughters, Clara and Audrey.
Donor’s Legacy Benefits Women with Ovarian Cancer

Jane E. Werner’s 92 years were spent enjoying her family and friends and contributing her time and resources to public health, education, and the environment.

Born in Olean, New York, Jane later graduated from Smith College in 1941. During WW II, Jane began corresponding with Clem Werner whom she married in 1943. Following the war the Werners moved to Davenport, Iowa, where they raised their three children, Susan, Cal, and Ann. Jane worked to improve public schools, including proposing health education in the 1950s for 4th grade, a controversial topic at the time.

In later years, Jane and Clem endowed college scholarships for five high schools in Iowa. In addition, Jane endowed scholarships at Smith College and Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island, where she volunteered for 25 years. She also made major contributions to organizations helping to protect the environment, advance medical research, and assist those less fortunate. Jane often said she’d been given much in her life and there was no greater reward than giving back “in her small way” to help others.

Ann Werner was treated for advanced ovarian cancer at OHSU in 2003. Immensely grateful for the medical care provided to Ann, Jane helped support Tanja Pejovic, M.D., Ph.D., with her research related to ovarian cancer, including the Ovarian Cancer Registry, which Dr Pejovic established in 2008. Jane also helped defray the costs of treatment for women with ovarian cancer. In her will, Jane made a provision to help women receive appropriate testing and treatment for ovarian cancer.

Ann says it was important to her mother as it is to her for women to understand that like with all cancers early detection increases survival.

“Everyone needs to respect clues and complaints from their body and see a doctor,” says Ann. “Ovarian cancer symptoms can include symptoms that some women may ignore, such as bloating, abdominal discomfort, and a need to urinate more frequently. If these symptoms persist and cause discomfort for a few weeks, it’s so important to see a cancer specialist – a gynecological oncologist. ‘Gyn-oncs’ are experienced with diagnosis and surgery which is directly linked to longer survival.”

The recently established Jane Werner Ovarian Cancer Fund (visit www.cancer.ohsufoundation.org) is dedicated to helping women receive the care they need for ovarian cancer.

We Can Do Better

Janet Bowen battled breast cancer for a year and a half before passing away at the age of 54. Janet’s husband, Walter, and their children, Elizabeth and Jonathan, established a foundation in her honor in 2006. This fall the Janet E. Bowen Foundation pledged $1 million to support promising breast cancer research at OHSU.

The gift will support the groundbreaking work of SuEllen Pommier, Ph.D., whose laboratory will be named the Janet E. Bowen Breast Cancer Research Laboratory. Dr. Pommier and her team study the genetic defects that change normal breast stem cells into breast cancer cells. Her recent study suggests that early mutations in breast cancer stem cells may be causing tumors to develop and recur – even after a patient is treated with chemotherapy and radiation. Solving this puzzle will offer new hope for women diagnosed with breast cancer.

“It was six years ago in October that Janet died of breast cancer,” said Walter Bowen. “We can do better in the future, and I am hopeful this gift will assist in OHSU’s efforts to find a cure.”
Taking the Lead on Skin Cancer Prevention

The Knight Cancer Institute is working hard to bridge the gap between Oregon’s alarmingly high rates of skin cancer with the preventable nature of the disease. Raising awareness about the cancer-causing effects of indoor tanning devices is a top priority. There’s no stronger way to convey this message than through the eyes of people directly impacted by the issue. OHSU employee Katie Wilkes is using her personal story of survival to truly impact young people.

Tired of being teased at school about her “ghostly white legs,” Katie Wilkes was just 16 years old when she starting begging her mother to let her visit a tanning salon.

For months her mom resisted, telling her “you’re beautiful the way you are.” But Wilkes’ persistence was eventually enough to sway her mom.

Now, less than a decade later, Wilkes is standing beside the Knight Cancer Institute in its efforts to inform state lawmakers and the community about the harmful effects of tanning devices.

At age 23, she was diagnosed with melanoma, an aggressive form of skin cancer. She never imagined that her regular trips to the tanning salon as a teenager could lead to a potentially deadly disease in her 20s.

Wilkes recently joined the Knight Cancer Institute’s director, Brian Druker, M.D., in Salem to support a statewide measure to ban the use of commercial tanning beds by minors. She’s living proof that ultraviolet rays from these devices are detrimental to young people, she told lawmakers.

People who use tanning beds once a month before the age of 35 increase their risk of skin cancer by 75 percent, studies say. By her senior year of high school, Wilkes was indoor tanning two or three times a week.

“It was a social thing…a way to make friends and have people like me,” she said. “And, like most teenage girls, all I cared about was looking pretty and finding a date to prom.”

Her diagnosis several years later came as a complete shock. Fresh out of college and halfway through her first week on the job at OHSU, she got a call from her dermatologist.

A biopsy from a newly-formed mole revealed melanoma—a skin cancer that kills 1 in 8 people with the disease. She immediately underwent surgery to remove the cancer, which left her with a three-inch scar on the right side of her chest.

Wilkes, now 26 years old and cancer-free, was fortunate to catch her cancer early. She still worries about the disease coming back, but said giving up indoor tanning has changed her life for the better.

“I have found, ironically, that my boyfriend and my friends like me better now looking natural, and people take me more seriously now that I don’t look like a Barbie doll,” she said.

Wilkes’ advice to young women who want to tan now has a familiar ring to it.

“Believe it or not, you might be more beautiful the way you are,” she said.

Katie Wilkes is program manager for Research Planning and Development Services. She encourages young women to embrace their natural skin color on her blog, Pretty in Pale.
Keck Foundation Grant Advances Technology

The W.M. Keck Foundation has awarded $1 million to support an OHSU-led collaboration with Hillsboro-based microscope maker FEI and other institutional partners to develop applications for a revolutionary microscope technology. Based at the OHSU Center for Spatial Systems Biomedicine, the new microscope is unique because it integrates two different modes of microscopy—light and transmission electron methods—into one self-contained instrument optimized to measure biological samples. Together the techniques will help researchers build a deeper, cellular-level understanding of cancer and other diseases.

3D Bioprinting Advances Cancer Research

The Knight Cancer Institute and Organovo Holdings Inc., a creator and manufacturer of functional, three-dimensional human tissues for medical research and therapeutic applications, have formed a collaboration to develop more clinically predictive in vitro three-dimensional cancer models that will ultimately advance the discovery of new cancer therapies.

New biological models that more accurately replicate human cancer are desperately needed to enhance understanding of how cancer develops and migrates and to deliver better cancer therapies for patients. Organovo’s 3D bioprinters are able to artificially construct living tissue by outputting layer-upon-layer of living cells, providing researchers with a new way to examine human biology. Using Organovo’s bioprinting technologies, Knight researchers plan to create new models to understand cancer and metastatic progression, which can be used to discover and test new targeted therapies.

Rosalie Sears, Ph.D., a Knight Cancer Institute researcher and professor of Molecular and Medical Genetics, is currently using the bioprinter to print breast cancer tumors in order to understand the impact of different drugs on tumor cells. Sears and other Knight researchers hope that this new technology will enable them to eventually identify which drug can best target an individual’s cancer. Sears was part of a recent feature on “3-D Printing: The Next Dimension” on CBS Sunday Morning (Sunday, April 28).

“The OHSU Knight Cancer Institute is consistently on the leading edge of cancer research, delivering true therapeutic breakthroughs like Gleevec,” said Keith Murphy, chairman and chief executive officer at Organovo. “The knowledge and experience of the team at OHSU will be critical as we work together to create advanced models of cancer and metastasis that more reliably predict the safety and effectiveness of new therapeutics.”

Improving Molecular Testing for Patients

The Knight Cancer Institute and Cepheid, a molecular diagnostics company, are collaborating to develop advanced molecular diagnostic tests for cancer. Initial projects will focus on building upon research conducted at the Knight Cancer Institute to improve molecular testing to ensure patients receive the right treatment for their tumor’s biology—the primary goal of personalized cancer medicine.

The first projects will focus on breast and prostate cancers, including development of a diagnostic test designed to predict the risk of recurrence in newly diagnosed breast cancer patients and a test designed to predict the likelihood of recurrence in prostate cancer patients following surgery.

“Prostate and breast cancer are the two most commonly occurring cancers in the United States and, together with Cepheid, we are determined to develop reliable, rapid and inexpensive diagnostic assays that are readily available to physicians and their patients,” said Joe Gray, Ph.D., associate director of translational research for the Knight Cancer Institute and the Gordon Moore Endowed Chair for Biomedical Engineering in the OHSU School of Medicine.

Gray says that as more information emerges about the molecular abnormalities that determine tumor behavior, researchers will be able to develop assays for Cepheid’s GeneXpert system that will allow them to identify and more precisely treat the most lethal forms of breast and prostate cancer, while sparing others from unnecessary treatments.

New Pill Provides Hope for Leukemia Patients

A promising cancer pill could provide a treatment option for leukemia patients whose disease no longer responds to currently available drugs. Ponatinib, which was developed by ARIAD Pharmaceuticals Inc., in a research collaboration with the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, circumvents a common gene mutation that causes resistance to currently available treatments. Results of a Phase I clinical trial to determine if the drug was safe were published in the New England Journal of Medicine. The results indicate that Ponatinib successfully bypassed this so-called gatekeeper mutation in patients with chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) and acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL).
Awards and Honors

This spring Knight Cancer Institute Director Brian Druker, M.D., was one of four recipients, including Melinda Gates, Anthony Fauci, M.D., and Mary Anne Koda-Kimble, Pharm.D., to receive the University of California, San Francisco's highest honor for outstanding contributions to advancing healthcare worldwide. He also was one of three physician-scientists to receive the 2013 Albany Medical Center Prize in Medicine and Biomedical Research. This year's prize recognizes groundbreaking research into the nature of cancer, which has led to the development of a new generation of cancer drugs, most notably Gleevec for chronic myeloid leukemia that, unlike chemotherapy, target specific genetic defects causing cancer. Sharing the prize are Peter C. Nowell, M.D., University of Pennsylvania, whose discovery of the "Philadelphia chromosome" in CML established that genetics could be responsible for cancer; and Janet D. Rowley, M.D., University of Chicago, a geneticist whom The New York Times called “the matriarch of modern cancer genetics.”

Tom Beer, M.D., deputy director of the Knight Cancer Institute, was selected as one of six top scientists in a research Dream Team that joins together world-class institutions to study treatments for advanced prostate cancer. The research collaborative is one of only two prostate cancer Dream Teams that have been recruited and organized by Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) and the Prostate Cancer Foundation (PCF) along with the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), which is SU2C’s scientific partner. Joshi Alumkal, M.D., and George Thomas, M.D., will join Beer in leading the Knight Cancer Institute’s work with the Dream Team partners.

“It is an honor to be part of a team of this caliber that is devoted to men who currently have no reliable treatment options,” Beer said. “There have been many important advances in prostate cancer treatment in the past few years, but we can do better. We need to know more about why some men don’t respond to these therapies and why others respond and then see their cancer become resistant. This knowledge will serve as the road map for the next generation of treatments.”

Charles Thomas, M.D., chair of Radiation Oncology, was honored for significant contributions to the community at the 25th Emerald Awards Dinner held by the PINK Ivy Foundation & the Zeta Sigma Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

Grover Bagby, M.D., Knight Cancer Institute founding director, received the OHSU School of Medicine Alumni Association’s Preuss Award, which honors an alumnus/a who in professional achievement and service to their communities reflects the school’s highest ideals.

Gifts Fund Awards

Each year donations to the Knight Cancer Institute make possible research awards to advance promising new ideas and discoveries. Below are recent recipients.

2012-2013 Clinical Research Scholar Award Recipients
- Christopher W. Ryan, M.D.
- Eneida R. Nemecek, M.D., M.S.
- Stephen E.F. Spurgeon, M.D.
- Eric and Janet Parsons Clinical Research Scholar Award
- Stephen Y. Chui, M.D.

Dive for a Cure and Eugene Skin Divers Supply Clinical Research Scholar Award

2012-2013 Cancer Research Development Award Recipients
- Sophia Bornstein, M.D., Ph.D.
- Cathy and Jim Rudd Career Development Award for Cancer Research
- Brian Ruffell, Ph.D.
- U.S. Bank Cancer Research Development Award
- Jamie Keck, Ph.D.
- Oregon Cancer Ski Out Cancer Research Development Award
- Nameeta Richard, M.D.
- Umpqua Bank Innovation Award for Pediatric Cancer Research

2012-2013 Pilot Project Award
- James Korkola, Ph.D.
- MMGL Corp. Pilot Project Award
Jessica Wapner, a freelance science journalist, first heard about the Philadelphia chromosome at a medical conference in the press room. It was 2001 and Brian Druker, M.D., was speaking about a clinical trial he was leading for a new cancer drug and the amazing response rates among patients with chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) whose cancer was caused by a mutation in a gene dubbed the Philadelphia chromosome. This initial encounter led Wapner to write a book about this pivotal moment in cancer research: The Philadelphia Chromosome: A Mutant Gene and the Quest to Cure Cancer at the Genetic Level.

Wapner’s book traces the story of the Philadelphia chromosome from its discovery in 1959 to the development of the drug that stops it. This epic tale unfolds over 50 years, encompassing the first glimpse of the genetic mutation, its role in causing CML, and the development of Gleevec—a groundbreaking drug that made this once-fatal cancer treatable with a single daily pill. Wapner reconstructs the crucial breakthroughs, explains the science behind them, and pays tribute to the dozens of researchers, doctors, and patients whose curiosity and determination restored the promise of a future to the more than 50,000 people worldwide who are diagnosed with CML each year. Chief among them is Druker, whose dedication to his patients fueled his quest to do everything within his power to save them.

Wapner’s work has appeared in numerous publications, including The New York Times and Scientific American.

Jessica Wapner, in conversation with Brian Druker, M.D., will discuss her book The Philadelphia Chromosome: A Mutant Gene and the Quest to Cure Cancer at the Genetic Level, Tuesday, June 11, 2013, 7:30 p.m. at Powell’s City of Books (1005 W. Burnside St., Portland).

For Eugene resident James Blevins, the burdens of cancer are many. “My whole family has been affected in one way or another by cancer,” he says.

And Blevins himself is a cancer survivor. Yet despite the devastating toll that cancer has taken on his family, Blevins remains hopeful—and focused on new avenues toward a cure. Now 87 years old, James has placed that hope in the hands of Dr. Brian Druker, and is fueling his aspirations with a generous bequest to the Knight Cancer Institute.

“I think we’ve done everything we can with the existing drugs and radiation therapy,” says Blevins. “They’ve lengthened many lives and had some cures—but we’ve still got a ways to go. What intrigued me is that Dr. Druker is taking off in a new direction. And I’d like to do something, in some small way, to help.”

That contribution comes in the form of an estate gift—a legacy that honors the beloved family members he has lost to cancer. Always modest, Blevins says: “I’m lucky enough to have a little spare change—and it might do a little bit of good eventually.”

For Blevins, helping Oregonians with cancer is the most important gift that he can give. Join him in supporting the Knight Cancer Institute by a bequest in your will or trust; or as a beneficiary designation on a retirement account, insurance policy or investment account. For more information, please contact Sarah Schwarz, Director of Gift Planning at 503.552.0702.
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