The Knight Cancer Challenge

OHSU and the Knight Cancer Institute are launching an unprecedented initiative to raise $1 billion to cure cancer. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to end cancer as we know it began on Sept. 20. Phil and Penny Knight announced they would donate $500 million if OHSU and the Knight Cancer Institute raised an additional $500 million in two years. As Nike co-founder Phil Knight said, “Is there a higher calling than curing cancer?”

Phil and Penny Knight pledged this gift because they believe in the work of Knight Director Brian Druker, M.D., and his vision for the future of cancer treatments. Druker developed the drug Gleevec that took a disease with a life expectancy of less than five years and turned it into a manageable disease where patients are expected to live a normal life span. Druker’s research is founded on the principle that if we understand cancer at the molecular level we can stop it.

The Knight Cancer Challenge will tackle the next front in the war on cancer: detecting cancer at its earliest, most curable stages. OHSU will dedicate unprecedented resources and expertise to collaborative science. The Knight will build a team of the best minds in cancer science, focus them on the greatest opportunities for discovery, and empower them to pursue bold ideas. Researchers at the Knight Cancer Institute, along with a newly recruited team of about 20 to 30 world renowned scientists, will work to identify genetic abnormalities that fuel cancer. This investment will lead to the creation of better imaging technologies that will search for subtle changes in tissue that are cancerous. And Knight scientists will work to develop simple non-invasive tests that uncover early signs of the disease.

(continued on page 8)
In September we held our event, “Targeting Hope,” to celebrate the people and accomplishments of the Knight Cancer Institute. It is always a great evening but this year’s event was particularly memorable. Honorary co-chairs Phil and Penny Knight surprised the nearly 400 guests, including me, when they announced their challenge gift of $500 million. If the Knight and OHSU raise $500 million in the next two years, Phil and Penny Knight will match that gift, and we will have $1 billion to transform the way we treat cancer and save millions of lives.

In the past 20 years great progress has been made with treatments and therapies but little advancement has been made with the early diagnosis of cancer. We will change that. With the recruitment of top experts, partnerships with industry and the development of new technology, we will forever change the face of cancer. Meeting this challenge will not be easy but nothing worthwhile ever is. I am confident with your help and our dedicated team, we will reach this goal. I am grateful to Phil and Penny Knight for this incredible opportunity and for all of you who champion our work and support our progress. On behalf of everyone at the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, thank you.

Sincerely,

Brian Druker, M.D.
Director, OHSU Knight Cancer Institute
JELD-WEN Chair for Leukemia Research
Associate Dean for Oncology
$25 Million Investment Targets Pancreatic Disease

OHSU has launched an unprecedented initiative to turn the tables on pancreatic disease. With support from a landmark philanthropic pledge, a team of OHSU’s top pancreatic surgeons and Knight Cancer Institute scientists will co-develop new detection and treatment methods for pancreatic cancer while solving longstanding mysteries of pancreatic disease at the molecular level. Pancreatic cancer is currently the fourth leading cause of death from cancer and is expected to climb to the second leading cause of death by 2020.

A philanthropic partnership between Norman and Linda Brenden and the Colson Family Foundation will fund the initiative through gifts totaling $25 million over five years. The two families’ shared passion for cancer research has brought them together for several previous joint and individual gifts to support OHSU pancreatic and breast programs. This, their largest investment to date at OHSU, ranks among the institution’s all-time top five monetary gifts.

“The donors’ investment lets us bring together and focus the efforts of the right people on the right problems,” said OHSU President Joe Robertson, M.D., M.B.A. “The Brendens and the Colson Family Foundation are exemplars of high-impact philanthropy, and OHSU is very grateful for their investment and partnership.”

According to OHSU and Knight Cancer Institute leaders, the gift will go a long way toward breaking the scientific stalemate that has prevented any significant advances against pancreatic disease for decades.

Umbrella for Life Unites Food Industry Leaders to Support Cancer Research

Remarkable things happen when generous people come together with shared vision and commitment. And, this has been demonstrated in powerful ways by a new nonprofit organization created to support cancer research at the Knight Cancer Institute and Seattle’s Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Umbrella for Life is a unique collaboration that marshals the considerable resources, civic commitment and creative capacity of the retail food industry and its vendors, suppliers and manufacturers. Participants include all of the region’s industry leaders: Albertsons, Fred Meyer, Haggen, QFC, Safeway, Unified Grocers, Washington Food Industry, and WinCo.

“This kind of partnership – with competitors working side by side – is almost unheard of, and gives us tremendous power to bring together the great people in our industry to make a difference in finding a cure for cancer,” says Steve Frisby, Umbrella for Life co-chair and president of Safeway’s Northwest Division. “So far this project has exceeded our wildest expectations.”

After hugely successful breakfasts in both Portland and Seattle to launch this new collaboration, board members are now busy planning what they hope will be a dazzling gala event, “Dancing in the Rain,” set for March 8, 2014 in Portland’s Pearl District, and a golf tournament in Seattle this summer.

A 5k run, concerts and other unique parties and events are also in the planning stage, according to Umbrella for Life event chair Lori Lansing, vice president of Co-Sales NW. “We have so much energy, creativity and commitment on this board and we hope to raise significant funds for a cause we all care about deeply,” she says.

To learn more about this dynamic new organization and its upcoming events please visit www.umbrellaforlife.org.
Leading Melanoma Expert Joins OHSU

Melanoma specialist, Sancy Leachman, M.D., Ph.D., brings a dynamic new energy to her dual roles as chair of the Department of Dermatology and director of the Melanoma Research Program at the Knight Cancer Institute. Her particular interest in melanoma, and her outstanding record of experience as clinician, scientist and educator, make her ideally suited to lead both clinical and research initiatives at OHSU.

Drawn by OHSU’s national reputation and the “palpable feeling of building momentum” she sensed when visiting the campus, Leachman exudes excitement and optimism about the possibilities ahead.

“Brian Druker is assembling an amazing group of smart, creative and passionate people, and that’s a magical combination,” Leachman says. “I really wanted to be here, so that I could contribute and make a difference in skin cancer and melanoma.”

Leachman comes to OHSU from the University of Utah, where she served as professor in the Department of Dermatology and director of the multidisciplinary Melanoma and Cutaneous Oncology Program at Huntsman Cancer Institute. Widely published, she received both her medical and doctorate degrees from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, and she completed her residency and fellowship training at Yale.

OHSU is one of only a few elite National Cancer Institute-designated centers nationwide that has recruited dermatologic leadership for a melanoma program. This strategy will enable full-service care for melanoma patients, including development of a strong prevention program.

“Melanoma has grown up in the era of medical and surgical oncology, with dermatology on the fringes – even though 70-80% of melanomas are localized and treated by dermatology,” Leachman explains. “So if you really want to take care of the full spectrum of patients with melanoma, you must integrate dermatology.”

Philanthropic support from John Gray and the Marcia and Bob Walsh family plays an essential role in Leachman’s pioneering work. After her daughter Afton’s successful treatment for melanoma, Marcia Walsh has been a tireless and generous advocate for melanoma research and early detection.

“We are so fortunate to have someone of Sancy Leachman’s national stature leading the way to new cures, and new ways to prevent melanoma,” Walsh says. “This is an exciting time!”

New Drug Shows Promise for Advanced Prostate Cancer

A new prostate cancer drug clinical trial led by OHSU Knight Cancer Institute researchers is generating great excitement because of promising results in extending life for prostate cancer patients. The drug tested, enzalutamide, which is marketed under the name Xtandi®, is currently authorized only for patients with advanced disease.

In the latest study, the drug was tested on men whose cancer was progressing despite hormone therapy, but who still hadn’t gone through chemotherapy, and had an estimated three years to live. The drug extended life and also lowered the likelihood of death by 30 percent at any one time, according to the interim results reported. The study was conducted on more than 1,700 patients in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, Russia, and Japan, among other countries.

The results show the drug slows the disease, said Knight Cancer Institute Deputy Director Dr. Tomasz Beer, the Grover C. Bagby Endowed Chair for Prostate Cancer Research, who led the study, adding that for some people its disease-hampering effect is visible right away. Beer says the drug, which is taken as a pill at home, has few side effects.

Last month an independent scientific group overseeing the study said the results were so promising they recommended researchers shift people who’d been on a placebo to go over to the drug.

Beer called the announcement of the study’s success “what you dream of when you enter clinical trials research.” He said the study confirms that prostate research is moving in the right direction, showing that there’s more to be done. “I extend my sincere thanks to the patients, physicians, study teams and other collaborators around the world, who have been instrumental in helping us achieve this important milestone,” Beer said.
Hugh Helikson Award Supports Promising New Brain Cancer Treatments

Hugh Helikson dedicated much of his too-short life to improving the quality of natural medicines. But when he was diagnosed in 2007 with glioblastoma multiforme, a type of glioma and one of the deadliest forms of brain cancer, he knew he would need every medical therapy available. Tragically, despite extensive surgery, radiation and chemotherapy, he succumbed to this virulent disease two years later.

In memory of her husband, Martha Helikson, a former OHSU employee, donated all of the proceeds from the sale of one of their two businesses to the OHSU Foundation. This gift resulted in nearly $1 million to fund brain cancer research at the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. Her gift will provide critical resources to advance brain cancer research and care. A portion of her gift will help recruit an outstanding neurooncologist to join OHSU, and it also established the 2013 Hugh Helikson Memorial Award for Brain Cancer Research.

Martin Pike, Ph.D., the recipient of the Helikson Award, is dedicated to finding new effective ways to combat brain cancer, with a focus on malignant glioma. Approximately 10,000 Americans receive this dire diagnosis each year, with only a 25 percent chance of two-year survival.

Pike received this award for his ground-breaking work on a novel drug treatment called OP449 from Oncotide Pharmaceuticals. Already shown by Knight scientist Rosalie Sears, Ph.D., to have promise in shutting down cancer cell signaling pathways in breast and pancreatic cancers, OP449 will be tested for the first time in malignant glioma brain tumors.

Pike hopes to demonstrate its efficacy in re-activating a vital tumor suppressor mechanism that is usually inactivated in cancer cells. He also intends to combine OP449 with a second drug to block cancer cell drug resistance mechanisms.

“This is an exciting and novel strategy that could lead to new effective treatments for malignant glioma,” says Pike.

“There is so much to be done to improve the treatment of brain cancer,” adds Martha Helikson. “My deepest hope is that these funds will result in new therapies that can make a real difference for people who receive the same devastating diagnosis as Hugh.”

Philanthropic support plays a vital role in research projects like this, bringing to reality the most promising and rigorous research for new cancer treatments and prevention.

The spirit of philanthropy has caught on early in life for some of the Knight Cancer Institute's most important donors.

Eleven-year-old Olivia Gieselman is one of these young philanthropists. After watching a close family member's experience as a patient at the Knight Cancer Institute, she decided to donate to cancer research the proceeds (so far more than $5,000) from her role in a TV commercial.

“I felt that I wanted to make a difference in other people's lives, big or small, and when I thought about someone from my own family flying out to see Dr. Druker for check-ups, I thought this would be a great place to donate the money,” Olivia says.

Even at her young age, Olivia understands how important her donation is, “Nothing makes a person happier than when someone is trying to help them. Every cent that is donated makes a difference.”

Nine fifth graders at Bonny Slope Elementary share Olivia's generous heart. Inspired by Phil and Penny Knight's challenge to “end cancer as we know it,” this enterprising young group decided to make and sell bracelets to raise funds. “Looms for the Cure” presented a check to Bill H. Chang, M.D., Ph.D., contributing $400 to cancer research, simply because “we care about people who are affected by cancer and want to help them.”

These young philanthropists are role models for anyone who has every considered making a gift of their own. Olivia captures this spirit of generosity perfectly, “It makes me feel good to make change, and I bet it would also feel good to others.”
A Powerful New Collaboration To Combat Acute Myeloid Leukemia

A dramatic new chapter has begun in the fight against acute myeloid leukemia (AML) with the launch of Beat AML, a pioneering collaboration by the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) and the Knight Cancer Institute.

This historic initiative, led by Knight Cancer Institute Director Brian Druker, M.D., brings together scientists from multiple disciplines to develop a transformative approach to understanding and treating this complex disease.

AML is a particularly devastating blood cancer. Less than 25 percent of newly diagnosed patients survive beyond five years and, if untreated, AML proves fatal in a matter of weeks or months. More than 10,000 deaths are attributed to this disease each year, and treatment options largely have not changed in the past 30 years.

Beat AML intends to change all that with the advent of this powerful new three-year initiative to harness the collective energy and expertise of leading scientists across the country.

“This innovative collaboration – involving the world’s largest nongovernment funder of blood cancer research, a group of leading academic research institutions, two advanced technology companies and potentially multiple pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies – is among the first of its kind in cancer space and unprecedented in terms of the range of expertise involved,” says Druker. “We are setting ambitious milestones so that we can bring these treatments to patients as quickly as possible.”

Joining Druker on the Beat AML team are researchers at Stanford University, UT Southwestern Medical Center and Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah. Intel Corporation and Illumina are providing computational analysis and genetic sequencing expertise. And pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies, starting with Array BioPharma, will be participating to test new drug therapies. LLS is investing more than $8.2 million in this pioneering collaboration.

Because AML is, in reality, a diverse collection of poorly understood rare diseases that share common traits, the new research will focus on the biological diversity of the disease. Using deep genomic sequencing to analyze samples of cancerous cells from 900 AML patients, scientists will have unparalleled ability to identify individual genetic drivers of AML, while also developing new drugs and drug combinations that more precisely target each patient’s individual leukemia.

Druker has already used a targeted approach to revolutionize the treatment of chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) – a disease that previously had a life expectancy of only about five years and now, with the development of the drug Gleevec, can give patients a normal lifespan and quality of life.

“Now we hope to do for patients with AML what has been achieved with CML: Take a blood cancer that was, with few exceptions a death sentence, and enable patients not only to survive, but to enjoy a longer, richer quality of life,” said LLS President and Chief Executive Officer John Walter.

Personalized medicine approach to treating AML

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) and the Knight Cancer Institute at Oregon Health & Science University are leading a pioneering collaboration to develop a personalized medicine approach to improve outcomes for patients with acute myeloid leukemia (AML), a particularly devastating cancer of the blood and bone marrow. LLS provided $8.2 million to fund Beat AML and here is how the collaboration will work:
Generous Gifts Accelerate AML Progress

Generous individuals and foundations have also stepped forward to accelerate progress against acute myeloid leukemia (AML), including Paxson Offield who recently announced a $5 million gift to the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. Over the past two years the Offield Family Foundation has given $550,000 to support Knight Cancer Institute Director Brian Druker, M.D., JELD-WEN Chair of Leukemia Research, and his leukemia research team.

Offield, a well-known and dedicated conservationist with strong ties to Catalina Island, says Phil and Penny Knight’s challenge inspired him to make his most recent gift.

“There is no better institution for the care of a person with leukemia than the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, and I can speak to that first hand,” said Offield, who now lives in Michigan. “I have no doubt in my mind that the best chance to cure AML and all blood cancer will come from Dr. Druker and the team he has established at the Knight Cancer Institute.”

Also, the Charles Engelhard Foundation has committed $2 million to the Charles Engelhard Fund for Gene-Targeted Cancer Therapies at the institute. The fund, which was established in 2011, provides critical resources that have advanced AML research including the work of promising researchers such as Jeffrey Tyner, Ph.D. The foundation is associated with Wyoming philanthropist Sophie Engelhard Craighead, a cancer survivor and patient of Dr. Druker, who was the driving force behind this gift.

Craighead’s commitment also stems from confidence in Dr. Druker and his research team to find better treatments of AML as well as her gratitude for his care.

“I think it’s important to know that the doctors Brian Druker has assembled here are the best in the country – the world. I can’t tell you how many phone calls I get from people who have been diagnosed with leukemia. I tell them I would go no other place,” says Craighead.

In addition to this generous outright support, the George Ettelson Endowed Fund for Acute Myeloid Leukemia Research established by Helene Ettelson and bequest commitments from donors such as Meri and Bob Haworth in gratitude for the care given to Meri’s late brother Bill Leep, will provide important resources for researchers in the years to come.

Ettelson, who lives in San Francisco, established the endowed fund in honor of her husband, George, a Portland native who was diagnosed with AML in 2006 and lost his battle six months later.

“I was struck by the innovative research that Dr. Brian Druker was doing and decided to establish the George Ettelson Acute Myeloid Leukemia Research Fund. It was important to me to invest in the best. Hence, OHSU and Dr. Druker,” Ettelson said.
John Barry Endowed Chair to Advance Research, Care

Christopher Amling, M.D. ’85, FACS, chair and professor of urology and a leader at the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, has been appointed the first John Barry Endowed Chair of Urology.

The endowed chair is named in honor of John Barry, M.D. ’73, professor of surgery and a pioneer in renal transplant, for his significant contributions to the field of urology. Barry is the immediate past chair of the Division (now Department) of Urology at OHSU.

Several gifts from OHSU faculty, staff, alumni and friends helped the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute reach its fundraising goal of $2.5 million to establish the endowed chair. Endowed faculty positions are a top priority for OHSU because they provide resources in perpetuity to recruit, support and retain outstanding faculty to drive excellence and innovation across OHSU.

“Our entire family is inspired by the Department of Urology at OHSU and Dr. Amling’s commitment to excellent care, innovative research and education,” said Mark Goodman of the Doug and Lila Goodman family, one of the fund’s top donors. “We chose to support the John Barry Chair for Urology because we want to see the great strides being made in urologic oncology continue and are thrilled to be a part of helping to build a program that is well on its way becoming one of the top ten in the country.”

The appointment recognizes Amling as a faculty member who has achieved exceptional distinction.

“Dr. Amling is an international authority on the use of innovative, minimally invasive treatments for urologic cancer, having published more than 150 articles worldwide in leading journals in his field,” said Jeanette Mladenovic, M.D., MBA, MACP, OHSU provost.

Amling specializes in treating urologic malignancies: prostate, kidney and bladder cancers. He is an expert in minimally invasive cancer treatments, including robotic surgery. Previously, he led the Division of Urology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and was chairman of the Department of Urology at the U.S. Naval Medical Center in San Diego. He is a national and international authority on the latest prostate cancer treatments, including surgery with the da Vinci robotic system. He also has developed new ways to educate surgical residents and published many articles in medical journals on diagnosing and treating prostate cancer. An Oregon native, Amling grew up in Coquille and graduated from the University of Oregon and OHSU School of Medicine.

“The John Barry Endowed Chair for Urology will support critical resources to advance research, education and clinical activities, while establishing OHSU as a program of excellence across the nation,” said Amling.

The Knight Cancer Institute also plans to recruit about 20 to 30 skilled clinical investigators, including several senior clinical investigators to lead research in breast, lung, brain, colon, pancreatic and other cancers. These top specialists will ensure patients are matched with the best and most advanced treatments quickly.

The future of all cancer research and treatment begins with creating a detailed blueprint of cancer’s molecular architecture. The Knight Cancer Challenge will allow our stellar team of scientists, led by Joe Gray, Ph.D., to advance the use of computational tools to intercept and manage the large volumes of complex patient data generated through modern genomics.

OHSU and the Knight Cancer Institute revolutionized cancer treatments. And now, the next major breakthrough of early detection is within reach, according to Druker.

“There is no reason that a concerted effort by today’s greatest minds can’t develop early, accurate detection if they have the time, resources and collaborative environment that will make it possible,” Druker said. “We will be the ones to make that possible.”

To meet the Knight family’s challenge, OHSU will need help from everyone who cares about ending cancer as we know it. Individuals, families, corporations, government agencies and private foundations will ensure we reach the goal and be a part of this groundbreaking work.

“This is an opportunity to take an all-out stand against cancer that will change the world,” said OHSU President Joe Robertson, M.D., M.B.A.
Grant Tackles Prostate Cancer Treatment

The National Cancer Institute has awarded $11.3 million to a consortium of researchers, including the Knight Cancer Institute, to improve prostate cancer treatments. This five-year award supports the work of more than 50 researchers in four leading institutions participating in the Pacific Northwest Prostate Cancer SPORE, or Specialized Programs of Research Excellence.

Combining the considerable depth and breadth of multi-disciplinary scientists at the participating institutions, SPORE aims to take on the most challenging problems in the treatment of prostate cancer. The goal is to unravel the mechanisms of prostate cancer progression while also developing new precision-medicine approaches to improve treatment of this disease.

As part of this coordinated effort, the Knight Cancer Institute is leading a study of a gene called LSD1 based on work in the laboratory of Joshi Alumkal, M.D., associate professor of medicine and co-leader of the Prostate Cancer Research Program. Alumkal has found that LSD1 is critical for promoting survival of prostate cancer cells and resistance to current prostate cancer treatments. Importantly, this research includes laboratory studies to determine how LSD1 promotes prostate cancer cell survival and a phase I clinical trial to test a new drug that shuts down LSD1 in men with advanced prostate cancer.

Alumkal will be joined on this project by Tomasz Beer, M.D., the Grover C. Bagby Endowed Chair for Prostate Cancer Research, Professor of Medicine, and co-leader of the Prostate Cancer Research Program.

Grant Advances Childhood Cancer Research

Peter Kurre, M.D., has been awarded a $100,000 grant from the St. Baldrick's Foundation to support his research on acute myeloid leukemia (AML) in children.

Kurre's work is focused on relapsed childhood AML and the study of the bone marrow's role in protecting AML cells so that they become drug resistant.

“This funding is critical for us to help improve outcomes for children with leukemia and to develop the next generation of treatments to conquer childhood cancer,” said Kurre, who is associate professor of pediatric hematology/oncology in the Papé Family Pediatric Research Institute at OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital, and a member of the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute.

St. Baldrick's is a volunteer-driven and donor-centered charity dedicated to raising money for childhood cancer research.

Research Shows Promise for Treatment of Unique Forms of Leukemia

Researchers at the Knight Cancer Institute have found that patients with two forms of leukemia, who currently have minimal treatment options, may benefit from existing drugs developed for different types of cancer.

By studying patients with chronic neutrophilic leukemia (CNL) and atypical chronic myeloid leukemia (aCML), researchers were able to isolate the genetic molecular mutation that causes these diseases. By doing so, research is pointing to better ways to diagnose CNL and aCML. Research is also showing that already approved FDA drugs could help effectively treat patients with these forms of leukemia.

“Our ability to rapidly pinpoint a new cancer-driving mutation demonstrates the power of integrating improved genome sequencing technology. It will accelerate our ability to tailor treatments to individuals and each research victory gives us more insight into the nature of this complex disease,” said Jeffrey W. Tyner, Ph.D., an assistant professor with the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute and Cell & Developmental Biology Department, whose lab led the research.

While clinical trials are still needed, these findings have promising implications for future research and patient care.

A few patients have already received treatment and “have had really dramatic and durable responses,” said Tyner. Julia Maxson, Ph.D., who is also on the research team said “Our findings are not only promising for the treatment of patients with CNL and aCML but also validate our approach to identify new drug targets in cancer.”
Awards and Honors

Bean Named Research Hero

In May during OHSU’s annual research week, Yukie Tarumi Bean received one of two Research Hero Awards, which are given to research employees who go above and beyond the call of duty. Bean, a senior research assistant in Dr. Tanja Pejovic’s lab and study coordinator for the Oregon Ovarian Cancer Registry (OOCR), was recognized for her hard work and advocacy on behalf of women with and at risk for ovarian cancer.

Sojourns Awards

In October, the Cambia Health Foundation awarded Susan Hedlund, MSW, LCSW, OSW-C, manager, Patient and Family Support Services, OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, and Erik K. Fromme, M.D., M.C.R., FAAHPM medical director, OHSU Palliative Care Services, with Sojourns Awards for their leadership and commitment to innovation in the field of palliative care. Hedlund and Fromme each received a $50,000 grant.

Domenico Named a Quilted Northern Champion

Lisa J. Domenico, M.B.A., associate director, Regional Cancer Control Strategies for the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, was honored earlier this year as the Quilted Northern Champion—Portland for her volunteer work with Susan G. Komen Oregon and SW Washington Affiliate.

“As a member of the breast cancer and Komen community and as a volunteer I get much more back than I give,” said Domenico, a breast cancer survivor.

“There is every reason to be hopeful with any diagnosis, we are stronger than we think,” Domenico said. “I am a person, like a lot of those around me, who wants to make difference. I’ve lost a lot of friends to this disease and that is why I do this, in an effort to find the cure.”

Welcome to New Faculty Leaders

Mira M. Milas, M.D., F.A.C.S., joined OHSU as the director of endocrine surgery in the OHSU Department of Surgery and is a member of both the multidisciplinary Thyroid and Parathyroid Center and the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. Her background includes specialized training in general surgery, surgical oncology and endocrine surgery from Emory University School of Medicine and The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. She was the founding director of the Thyroid Center at Cleveland Clinic, and is involved in numerous national and international activities in the field of thyroid and parathyroid disease.

Milas will join the multidisciplinary oncology team, providing a full range of diagnosis and treatment services to patients with endocrine tumors, especially thyroid cancer. A novel addition to this work already at OHSU has been the creation of ORION (ORegon Index of ENdocrine Neoplasias). This first of its kind registry of patients affected by thyroid cancer and other endocrine tumors will serve as a platform for innovations in this field.

Koen De Geest, M.D., recently joined OHSU as chairman of the Department of Gynecologic Oncology, where he specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of ovarian, endometrial, cervical and vulvar cancers, and gestational trophoblastic disease.

De Geest’s research interests include novel therapeutics and personalized treatment of ovarian and endometrial cancer. He has actively participated and led multiple clinical trials in ovarian, endometrial, cervical and vulvar cancers. He has authored and co-authored many of the publications resulting from these national trials. He has published on clinical and laboratory research in ovarian and endometrial cancer, and on the effects of mood and social support on the biology of ovarian cancer.

Prior to joining OHSU in 2013, De Geest led the Division of Gynecologic Oncology and the fellowship program at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.
Wine, Dine and Be Merry

Mark your calendar for the third annual "Wine, Dine and Be Merry" fundraising event benefiting the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute’s Patient Support Services on Thursday, Dec. 12, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

This festive evening is being hosted by AVA Roasteria in Beaverton, Oregon. Funds raised will support the institute’s Patient Support Services Program to help enhance the well-being and quality of life for people with cancer. Philanthropic gifts make possible a range of patient- and family-centered services from the moment of diagnosis through all phases of treatment, including wellness and art programs, massage therapy, and counseling services. In addition, this program provides funds for patients with demonstrated financial need to help them with costs associated with their care such as temporary lodging, transportation and emergency medication assistance. All gifts made at the event will bring us closer to reaching Phil and Penny Knights’ ambitious challenge.

Grateful patient and Beaverton community leader, Amy Saberiyan and her husband Homayoon Haddad, started this annual event in 2011 at their business, AVA Roasteria, because they wanted to acknowledge the care Amy had received and support other patients during their cancer journeys. “We are proud to host this event and of the impact it has made for patients,” Saberiyan said. “After the success of the first year, we wanted to continue to help this program grow.”

Since the Patient Support Services Program launched in 2011, many other generous donors have also contributed to enable the institute to offer and expand these important programs and services, including care providers, the Edward and Rommell Ackley Foundation, the Portland Winterhawks, the Oregon Cancer Ski Out and the Dominic Fouts Memorial Fund (see below).

“Wine, Dine and Be Merry” will be held at AVA Roasteria Conference & Catering Center, 4770 SW Hall Blvd., Beaverton, Oregon. To attend, please RSVP by Monday, Dec. 2, 2013, to 503 494-3607 or supporttheknight@ohsu.edu.

DOMINIC FOOTS MEMORIAL FUND

The Dominic Fouts Memorial Fund honors the memory of Dominic Fouts, who at age 34 succumbed to colon cancer after a three-year battle. Fouts’ legacy of challenging himself and others to stretch their potential, seek answers and spread laughter lives on with those who love and miss him every day, says Suzanne Krueger, executive director and Fouts’ sister.

“We believe hope fuels the fighting spirit and seek to give to programs that do just that,” said Krueger. Recently, the fund raised more than $8,500 for the institute’s Patient Support Services Program.

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER IS BACK!

GOOD FOR OTHERS, GOOD FOR YOU

A special opportunity to give to the Knight Cancer Institute at OHSU through your IRA has been extended through December 31, 2013.

If you are 70 ½ or older, you can donate up to $100,000 this year from your IRA to the OHSU Foundation without paying income tax on the withdrawl. Charitable IRA rollover gifts must be made directly from your IRA to the OHSU Foundation to qualify.

CONTACT US TODAY ABOUT YOUR GIFT!

Sarah Schwarz, JD, gift planning director
503 552-0702 • schwarzs@ohsu.edu
Join the Knight Cancer Challenge

Help meet Phil and Penny Knight’s $500 million challenge to end cancer as we know it.

Please make a gift today.

Visit ohsu.edu/knightcancerchallenge