Transforming Cancer Research and Care

In June thanks to the generosity of numerous donors from Oregon and around the world, OHSU announced that it met Nike co-founder Phil Knight and his wife Penny’s $1 billion challenge by raising $500 million in less than two years to earn the Knights’ matching gift. This investment will support the first large-scale program dedicated to early detection of lethal cancers — one of the biggest unmet needs in cancer care today.

“While cancer treatment has evolved to become more precise and less toxic, the tests and tools used for cancer detection have not changed in decades. Without better, earlier detection, and a full understanding of cancer’s origins in the body, the promise of precision cancer medicine cannot be realized,” said Brian Druker, M.D., director of the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute and JELD-WEN Chair of Leukemia Research.

“Penny and I have total confidence in Brian Druker and the entire OHSU Knight Cancer Institute team to put a stop to a disease that touches each of our lives,” Phil Knight said. “These last 22 months have shown what is possible when people of vision focus on a single goal. We are more convinced than ever that cancer will meet its match at OHSU, and we are proud to play a role in this history in the making.”

This philanthropic investment will enable the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute to begin fast-track recruitment of about 25 of the world’s top researchers to focus on this initiative. These recruits will hire an additional 225 to 275 scientists and physicians, forming a team focused on the detection of cancer, including the early biological changes in the body that signal a life-threatening cancer is beginning to develop. Catching the disease in these early stages is key to effective treatment.

(continued on page 11)
Director’s Message

When Phil and Penny Knight boldly challenged the Knight Cancer Institute to raise $1 billion for cancer research in two years, many believed it couldn’t be done. It truly was a daunting task — but failure wasn’t an option.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of more than 10,000 donors across the U.S. and the world, we achieved the Knights’ unprecedented challenge in only 22 months, a feat that has never been accomplished by anyone in our nation’s history.

We were only able to succeed in meeting this challenge because of people like you — individuals and leaders committed to ending cancer once and for all. On behalf of the institute, my most sincere thanks goes out to every single person and entity that contributed: from the state of Oregon to the children who sold lemonade to be a part of changing their future; from our largest individual donor — “one tough mother” — to the person who gave $5 because that’s all that they had to give; from Oregon business leaders and their employees, who believe that Oregon can be the place where cancer is cured, to cancer patients desperately needing cures. To OHSU employees, thank you. The list goes on and on.

The Knight Cancer Institute is indebted to you. We are committed to investing your money wisely and to doing everything in our power to once again change the way that the world approaches cancer and to making it a thing of the past.

To do this, we are focusing these tremendous resources on one of the biggest unmet needs in cancer care today — detecting lethal cancers at their earliest stages before they have a chance to spread.

Our mission to end cancer as we know it is about every patient, every family and every organization with a stake in the fight. We are in this together, and together, I truly believe that we can do great things.

Brian Druker, M.D.
Director, OHSU Knight Cancer Institute
JELD-WEN Chair for Leukemia Research
Associate Dean for Oncology, OHSU School of Medicine
Renowned Specialist Joins OHSU

Raymond Bergan, M.D., is an internationally regarded cancer specialist known for leading breakthrough studies on how cancer cells spread, and developing preventive treatments for high risk patients. He has joined OHSU as head of Hematology & Medical Oncology and associate director of medical oncology for the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. He also holds the DeArmond Chair of Clinical Cancer Research.

Bergan, who was recruited from Northwestern University, led a research team that expanded the understanding of how early stage cancer cells transform to travel throughout the body. His laboratory was the first to use drugs to target this form of disease progression in humans. Understanding the changes that enable the spread of the disease is essential to saving lives; metastasis is a leading cause of death in cancer patients.

At the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, Bergan is establishing a research laboratory continuing this work as part of his role in overseeing the Division of Hematology & Medical Oncology, which includes about 40 physician specialists. His other patient care and research priorities include expanding the institute’s offering of early phase drug trials and applying the latest drug developments. His goal is to work with the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute’s team of researchers to provide highly tailored treatments to patients, including those with early or advanced cancer, and change the course of their disease.

“Dr. Bergan shares our urgency to better understand how best to treat cancer using an understanding of what drives the growth of each patient’s cancer. He will make a significant contribution to the world-class team we are bringing together to ensure that treatment plans are personalized to each patient’s unique situation as we strive to improve outcomes for all patients with cancer,” said OHSU Knight Cancer Institute Director Brian Druker, M.D.

Collaborative Cancer Cloud

OHSU and Intel Corp. recently announced the Collaborative Cancer Cloud, a precision medicine analytics platform that will allow institutions to securely share patient genomic, imaging and clinical data for potentially life-saving discoveries. This development is an exciting step forward for Intel and OHSU who joined forces a little more than two years ago to combine next-generation computing platforms with OHSU’s unique capabilities in biomedical research to advance precision medicine.

In a blog post about the collaboration, Intel’s Eric Dishman, director of proactive health research, wrote: “Each year millions of people all over the world, including more than one million patients in the United States, learn that they have a cancer diagnosis. Instead of going through painful chemotherapy that can kill healthy cells along with cancerous cells, what would happen if those patients were able to be treated as individuals based on their specific genome sequencing, and a precision treatment plan could be tailored specifically for their disease? And what if it could happen within 24 hours?”

The Collaborative Cancer Cloud aims to make this vision a reality with the goal that by 2020, patients across a spectrum of cancers could have their cells analyzed through genome sequencing and imaging, and a precision treatment plan could be tailored specifically for their disease — all delivered within 24 hours.

“The focus is to help cancer centers worldwide securely share their private clinical and research data with one another to generate larger datasets to benefit research and inform the specific treatment of their individual patients,” said Dishman.

Dishman says Intel and OHSU expect to add two institutions by 2016, addressing the critical need for larger patient pools and practitioner awareness. Over time they would open up this federated, secure Collaborative Cancer Cloud network to dozens of others institutions — or let them create their own — to accelerate the science and the precision treatment options for clinicians to share with their patients.

“This would be a tremendous improvement in quality of care and patient experience and, if successful, will have significant implications for advancing precision medicine in all disease areas,” said OHSU President Joe Robertson, M.D., M.B.A.
Collaborating to Reduce Cancer’s Impact

Cancer treatment is challenging enough on its own, and for residents of rural areas the long travel and extended stays can add even more stress and expense. In addition, communities statewide often have need for cancer prevention, early detection, treatment, and survivorship programs but may lack the resources to implement them. Two recent grants from the Ford Family Foundation and the Meyer Memorial Trust, and a new community partnership program at the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute are helping to address these challenges.

Late last fall, the Ford Family Foundation awarded a $5 million grant to OHSU to establish a statewide cancer prevention and outreach network, expand Oregonians’ access to cancer clinical trials, and provide temporary housing options for out-of-town OHSU patients and families. Half of the grant will provide start-up funds to create a rural network to give community health care organizations access to OHSU Knight Cancer Institute experts in cancer prevention, education, diagnostics, treatment and survivorship, as well as help direct patients to clinical trials. The other half of the grant will help finance construction of an OHSU Guest House to serve out-of-town patients and their families. (See page 5).

The Meyer Memorial Trust’s two-year grant of $500,000 will help enhance the Knight Cancer Institute’s Community Partnership Program — a recently launched program that provides grants and resources to address community identified cancer-related needs in prevention, early detection, treatment or survivorship. In its first round of funding, the program awarded $462,656 to 17 projects benefitting 23 counties statewide, including projects focused on preventing tobacco use among youth; providing transportation to patients in cancer treatment; increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables through a community supported agriculture prescription plan; developing a rural clinic for cancer survivors; and developing skin cancer prevention programs for adolescents.

“The funding program is unique in that its multiple tiers of funding, ranging from $10,000 to $50,000, offer a method for organizations to take an initial idea and move through the funding tiers to develop a robust, sustainable program,” said Katie Hennis, program director of community relations and outreach at the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. “Additionally, OHSU supports each project with technical assistance provided by academic consultants who share best practices, provide content expertise, and aid in evaluation planning.”

“To impact the burden of cancer statewide we know it is essential to work with organizations most in tune with the cancer needs of their communities,” said Jackilen Shannon, Ph.D., R.D., M.P.H., who with Kerri Winters-Stone, Ph.D., is co-director of the Community Partnership Program. “Working directly with these organizations will allow the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute to aid in the development of sustainable projects that will benefit the health of all Oregonians.”

Community Partnership Program awardee, Mid County Health Center, partners with Zenger Farm to increase access to fresh vegetables to educate patients on cancer prevention. Here, sisters Virginia Hager and Dana Puerto, members of the Community Supported Agriculture program share their favorite vegetables.
Building a Home Away from Home for Patients and their Families

Patients and families travel to Portland from Alaska, Idaho, California, rural Oregon and elsewhere to seek specialized cancer services that their regional hospital may not offer, including advanced cancer care, access to Phase I clinical trials, and pediatric and adult bone marrow transplants. Many of them will struggle to find a place to stay that can accommodate their family – and their budget.

To address the growing need at both the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute and Doernbecher Children’s Hospital for patient housing, OHSU is committed to building and raising philanthropic support for a five-story guest house on its South Waterfront campus. Scheduled to open in 2018, the OHSU Guest House will provide comfortable, affordable housing and an array of support programs for families who must put their lives on hold while caring for a loved one or undergoing lengthy treatment.

Providing a place to stay for our patients and their families or caregivers is one more way OHSU can support them in their journey.”

–Ann Raish, M.H.A., R.N., vice president for oncology services, OHSU Knight Cancer Institute

The house will significantly expand Doernbecher and OHSU’s ability to accommodate families and patients who must travel for their care. Currently, OHSU is able to offer limited assistance to patients and families seeking lodging during treatment. Doernbecher is able to provide housing to some families, but not all, through a partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities of Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Architectural plans for the OHSU Guest House are still evolving but OHSU plans to offer more than 80 beds in more than 68 units and community gathering spaces, including a roof-top garden and a play area. Two floors will serve pediatric patients and two floors will serve adult patients and their families and caregivers. Ronald McDonald House Charities will continue to serve pediatric patients and families in the new location and will also manage the adult floors and programs in an innovative new partnership. The building will include ample parking for patients and their families.

The OHSU and Doernbecher Children’s Hospital Foundations must raise $40 million in philanthropy to support this ambitious project. Even as hospital leadership is finalizing plans, donors have come forward with significant contributions, including a $2.5 million gift from the Ford Family Foundation. Your gift can help create a supportive and healing environment for patients and families facing the stress of a medical emergency. For more information, call 503 552-0682 or email supporttheknight@ohsu.edu.

Tristan has rhabdomyosarcoma, a form of muscle cancer. He is being treated with both radiation and chemotherapy five days a week. He stays at West House, a temporary facility located on the fifth floor of the Marriott Residence Inn, operated in partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities of Oregon and Southwest Washington, with his father Chris and sisters Ireland, Kaitlin and Trinity. “My wife Sara stays in Bend so she can continue working. I home-school all four kids to work around Tristan’s clinic visits and then we return to Bend on weekends. The social workers at Doernbecher are great about finding us places to stay and making it affordable, but it’s stressful to not have a consistent place to call home. West House gets filled up quickly,” said Chris.
Endowed Chair Advances Breast Cancer Research

A recent transformative gift from the Leonard Schnitzer Family is enabling the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute to continue to advance its renowned breast cancer research program.

Earlier this year family members of the late Leonard Schnitzer, including his wife Lois and six daughters, established the Leonard Schnitzer Clinical Chair in Breast Oncology in memory of Leonard, who was revered and respected for his compassion, visionary leadership and community involvement.

Born in 1924, Leonard was the ninth child of Russian immigrants Rose and Sam Schnitzer. His father started a one-man Portland scrap business in 1908 called Alaska Junk Company. Under Leonard and his brothers, the family business expanded to become the Schnitzer Group, which included scrap metal recycling, steel making, shipping, and real estate. Leonard became the CEO of Schnitzer Steel Industries in 1973 and remained chairman until his death in 2003.

Leonard spent his childhood in Portland, graduated from Lincoln High School, attended Reed College, and then later Stanford University and the University of Oregon. He was the youngest graduate from the North Pacific Dental School and practiced dentistry in the Navy during the Korean War. He was a generous supporter of numerous community organizations.

The OHSU Knight Cancer Institute plans to use the Leonard Schnitzer Clinical Chair in Breast Oncology to recruit a faculty leader for the Knight Cancer Institute’s breast oncology program.

“The Leonard Schnitzer Family’s vision and understanding of the importance of endowed faculty positions is incredibly gratifying. A gift like this allows OHSU and the Knight to recognize and support exceptional scientists and clinical leaders, who are collaborating to drive innovation and bring new hope to patients more quickly,” said Lisa Coussens, Ph.D., chair of the OHSU Department of Cell, Developmental and Cancer Biology and associate director of basic research at the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute.
Visionary Generosity Benefits Others

In March, Julie B. Poduch passed away following complications after a long battle with cancer – first breast cancer in 1999, then head and neck cancer nearly a decade later. In honor of the care she received at OHSU, she designated that 50 percent of her Vanguard retirement funds be directed to the OHSU Foundation in support of the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute.

In addition to being a very accomplished senior marketing executive, Julie was an avid volunteer for many organizations. She once stated she always focused on the greater good and making a positive difference in any setting. This motto carried through her cancer treatment, beginning in 1999 when she participated in an early breast cancer clinical trial that ultimately led to a new standard of care and treatment option for women with breast cancer. She touched the lives of countless people through her volunteer work, community advocacy, participation in cancer clinical trials, and now this final gift through her estate.

Working closely with the OHSU Foundation, Julie’s family expressed their wishes to honor the memory and values of their late daughter and sister while recognizing the outstanding care Julie received, particularly from Dr. Peter Andersen. They asked that the majority of Julie’s gift create a quasi-endowed fund to support cancer research and supportive services that benefit cancer patients. In her family’s eyes, such a fund would reflect Julie’s values: “If I can help someone, I want to do it.”

“Julie was always very generous with her time and contagious energy in supporting organizations close to her heart and that she shared a personal connection with,” said Laura Parcells, Julie’s sister. “She was so grateful for the care she received at OHSU and it was important to her to acknowledge that by helping others benefit from their compassionate care as well. Her courage and grace were an inspiration to many, and this final donation is a fitting tribute to the ideals Julie fervently believed in. I hope it inspires others to contribute!”

If you or someone in your family would like to learn how to give to OHSU through a beneficiary designation, please contact the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute Office of Development at 503 552-0682 or supporttheknight@ohsu.edu.

Leveraging Positive Outcomes

A desire to see others benefit from the progress being made in cancer research and care inspired the Harry A. Merlo Foundation to make a $1 million commitment to the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute to support an endowed fund.

“The Harry Merlo Foundation is a proud supporter of good people,” said Harry Merlo. “When you have individuals such as Phil Knight and Brian Druker working for a cause, you want to do everything possible to support them in their endeavor. I’ve seen firsthand what the Knight Cancer Institute can accomplish through research and alternatives to chemotherapy.”

Endowed funds are critically important to OHSU’s goals of attracting and retaining the most talented people and supporting the types of research and programs that will advance healing, teaching and new discoveries. The Merlo Foundation’s gift reflects the foundation’s commitment to supporting promising scientists and research that will ultimately contribute to more effective treatments for cancer patients.

“It is my hope that through this gift many others can attain the positive outcome that I have experienced at the Knight Cancer Institute,” Merlo said.
Donor Seeks to Help Others Survive Cancer

Elaine Moshofsky has always embraced new adventures. She was the first Dean of Girls at Beaverton High School, she climbed Mt. Hood and toured the Great Wall of China as a young woman, has visited every continent but Antarctica and once motored on a Harley Davidson around the University of Oregon football field before a game.

As she recalls the highlights of her full and active life, Elaine points to four tiny dots tattooed under her chin. Those dots served as markers for the radiation treatment she received after she was diagnosed with lymphoma. She was later treated for bladder and skin cancer.

Elaine’s personal experiences with cancer include supporting family members who also suffered from the disease. Both her parents and four of her six siblings have had cancer.

The opportunity to help others who encounter cancer and to fund research that will lead to more effective early detection and treatment inspired Elaine to make a gift to support the Knight Cancer Challenge.

“I survived cancer, but I want to help others survive as well,” Elaine said.

Elaine, who was treated at the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, has not only survived, she has thrived. In January, more than 120 of her family and friends gathered to celebrate her 90th birthday with a surprise party at the Multnomah Athletic Club, where she exercises regularly.

While she is a 1947 graduate of Oregon State University, and an avid Beavers fan, she also regularly attends Ducks football games at the University of Oregon, where she and her late husband, Ed, helped build the first indoor athletic practice facility on the West Coast — the Ed Moshofsky Sports Center. Ed was a 1943 University of Oregon graduate and three-year starter as an offensive and defensive lineman.

Along with enjoying sports, Elaine engages in regular bridge games with friends at the Portland Golf Club. “Every day is special after you survive cancer,” Elaine said. “You have to keep pushing yourself.”

Honoring Late Friends with a Gift

Craig and Vicky Kelly of Lake Oswego know their way around OHSU. When Vicky was 27 she was diagnosed with lupus, an autoimmune disease, and has since then undergone two kidney transplants at OHSU, most recently in 2012. Despite Vicky’s health challenges over the last few decades, she, Craig, and their two daughters — Grayce, a sophomore at Oregon State University, and Christine, a junior at Valley Catholic High School — are doing well, living life to the fullest and thankful for the lessons these experiences have taught them as a family.

The health challenges, however, don’t stop with the Kelly family. The couple has lost two of their closest friends to cancer in the last three years and recently found out another friend has been diagnosed with breast cancer. Not surprisingly, the Kellys care deeply about the success of the Knight Cancer Institute and about the continued success of OHSU as a whole. Their belief in OHSU’s ability to end cancer as we know it and desire to honor their late friends inspired the Kellys to make their gift to the Knight Cancer Challenge.

“We have been fortunate to have many blessings including wonderful friends. We have lost too many friends and family members to this dreaded disease and felt the need to do something concrete when so often we have felt powerless,” said Craig. “We want to honor those that are still so dear to our hearts.”
Research Updates

Reducing Breast Cancer Risk in Young Women

The Kay Yow Cancer Fund, in partnership with the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association and The V Foundation for Cancer Research, awarded a $100,000 grant last fall to Pepper Schedin, Ph.D., a professor of cell, developmental and cancer biology in the OHSU School of Medicine. Schedin’s internationally recognized work in young women’s breast cancer is changing the way researchers think about women’s cancer – how and when it begins, what adds to a woman’s risks, and what can be done to intervene. Schedin will use grant funds to continue research on the potential effectiveness of anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen or aspirin, in reducing cancer occurrence and preventing metastasis of breast cancer in young women.

Schedin also received $125,000 grant from the OHSU Center for Women’s Health Circle of Giving to examine the size of women’s livers during and after pregnancy and its possible connection to breast cancer deaths.

Collaborating on Early Detection Test

Immunovia AB and the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute have formed a collaboration to confirm, validate and commercialize a blood test for the early diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. The test, IMMray™ PanCan-d, will analyze a patient’s immune system for early signs of disease. The collaboration will also enable researchers to explore biomarkers for other types of cancer.

Pancreatic cancer is one of the deadliest malignancies. When caught early, survival can be improved significantly by removing tumors surgically. Given that patients rarely exhibit symptoms until the disease has progressed, screening tests are needed to find tumors when they are amenable to curative surgery. Existing screening tests that look for single biological markers of the disease are ineffective because they don’t discriminate between pancreatic cancer and less deadly conditions such as chronic pancreatitis, liver cirrhosis and other gastrointestinal cancers.

In contrast, Immunovia’s test platform, IMMray™, creates a chemical snapshot of an individual’s immune response to cancer by analysing patterns of proteins in blood that are specific to a disease.

OHSU scientists will help confirm the analytics used by IMMray™ PanCan-d by validating the test’s findings on blood samples collected from consenting patients with all forms of pancreatic disease. This process will determine whether the specific protein patterns associated with patients who have pancreatic cancer can be differentiated from the immune response characteristics of patients with other diseases such as pancreatitis.

Immunovia sought a collaboration with the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute because of its commitment to precision early detection of cancer as well as the depth of data collected on its patient samples through OHSU’s Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care.

Potential New Leukemia Target Identified

Leukemias harboring mutations in a gene called ALK may respond to ALK inhibitors such as crizotinib and ceritinib, according to a study published in Cancer Research that was conducted by OHSU Knight Cancer Institute researchers.

“Genetic lesions involving ALK have been seen recurrently in a number of different types of solid tumors, but to my knowledge, ALK mutations have not previously been implicated as a major contributor to leukemia,” said Jeffrey Tyner, Ph.D., an assistant professor of cell, developmental and cancer biology in the OHSU School of Medicine. “The discovery of new mutant versions of ALK that may contribute to the development of leukemia and can be therapeutically targeted suggests new treatment options for patients with leukemia with ALK mutations.”

Genome-sequencing technologies have dramatically increased the amount of genetic information that can be collected from a patient’s tumor; however, a lot of this genetic information is not yet clinically actionable due to our lack of knowledge regarding the relevance of many of the mutant genes, explained Tyner. Understanding which mutant genes are important in the disease process is important so that they can be paired with targeted therapies, he said.

Tyner and his colleagues conducted a series of studies that ultimately indicated that leukemia cells harboring either of the two mutations could be inhibited by several ALK inhibitors, including crizotinib and ceritinib, two therapeutics approved by the FDA for the treatment of ALK-positive metastatic non-small cell lung cancer.
Sara A. Courtneidge, Ph.D., professor in the OHSU Department of Cell, Developmental and Cancer Biology, received the 18th annual AACR-Women in Cancer Research Charlotte Friend Memorial Lectureship for her seminal contributions to current understanding of Src-family kinases, which control essential signaling pathways necessary for normal physiology and cancer development, and for her advocacy for women in science.

Charles R. Thomas, M.D., chair of the OHSU Department of Radiation Medicine, will serve a two-year term as vice-president of the Society of Chairs of Academic Radiation Oncology Programs (SCAROP) followed by a term as president of SCAROP. He was also named a deputy editor of JAMA Oncology.

Every year, philanthropy enables the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute to provide early investigator/career development, clinical research and pilot project awards to outstanding research investigators. Receiving 2015-16 Clinical Research Scholar Awards are: Joshi Alumkal, M.D., Lara Davis, M.D., Matthew Taylor, M.D., (the Juan Young Trust Award); Michael Heinrich, M.D., Emma Scott, M.D., Eneida Nemecek, M.D., M.S., M.B.A., (Reser Family Foundation Clinical Scholar Award), Jeremy Cetnar, M.D., Chris Ryan, M.D., and Gina Vaccaro, M.D.

OHSU Names Research Building for Noted Biologist

OHSU named its Biomedical Research Building after the late Hildegard Lamfrom, Ph.D., who was one of the 20th century’s most influential and accomplished women in the emerging field of molecular biology. Her exceptional career spanned four decades. Lamfrom blazed a trail for women in science, working with Nobel Laureates and mentoring renowned scientists.

Lamfrom has been honored in several gifts to the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. OHSU suggested the building name following Gert Boyle’s $100 million gift made as part of the Knight Cancer Challenge. Lamfrom is one of Boyle’s two sisters and was also influential in guiding the early career of Brian Druker, M.D., director of the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute, when he was studying chemistry.

“It is highly fitting that OHSU’s biomedical research building is now named after a pioneering female scientist who contributed so much to this field,” said OHSU President Joe Robertson, M.D., M.B.A. “We are honored by the continuing generosity of the Boyle family and this new, highly meaningful connection with Dr. Lamfrom. Her career serves as a reminder of the power of a single individual to impact many lives, and will be a continuing inspiration to current and future generations of OHSU scientists.”

Rob Shick, chairman of the OHSU Knight Cancer Council, received the ninth Annual Community Service Award from the Invest in Others Charitable Foundation. This award program recognizes the philanthropic achievements of financial advisors and financial services firms in communities across the country and around the world. Financial advisors are nominated by their peers for actively giving back to non-profits to improve their communities and make a difference in the lives of others. Shick, who is branch manager and senior vice president at Robert W. Baird & Co. in Portland, Ore., was honored on September 30 in New York City for his volunteer work with the OHSU Foundation over the past nine years raising important philanthropic resources to advance cancer research and care at the Knight Cancer Institute.
very early stages could unleash the full potential of precision cancer medicine. The aim is to detect a dangerous cancer when it first starts and treat it when it's most curable, with the fewest side effects and at the lowest cost.

These scientists will be given substantial financial support so they can focus on discovery instead of spending time securing grants. Critical to meeting our audacious challenge was a $200 million commitment from the state of Oregon that will enable OHSU to move forward with construction of two buildings: a state-of-the-art cancer research facility designed from the ground up to support a new model of combining scientific disciplines to speed progress, and new cancer care clinics for expanded clinical trials that will translate the scientific discoveries made by the team into next-generation detection tests, tools and treatments.

“This is a historic milestone for cancer research, for Oregon and for our institution,” said OHSU President Joe Robertson, M.D., M.B.A. “The support we have received to achieve our ambitious goal — putting an end to cancer as we know it — has been nothing short of stunning. We are deeply grateful to the state of Oregon for its leadership and investment at the early stages of our campaign as well as to the thousands of individuals, companies and foundations who joined us along the way.”

To fully fund its scientific vision around early cancer detection, OHSU will continue to raise $200 million over the next five years and additional support for other research and care priorities. Included in this additional support will be construction of the OHSU Guest House to comfortably house patients and families who must travel long distances to the Knight Cancer Institute and Doernbecher Children’s Hospital for care. The construction of the OHSU Guest House will be solely funded through philanthropy.

“Our work is just beginning,” added L. Keith Todd, president of the OHSU Foundation. “The Knight Cancer Challenge created an unstoppable movement against cancer. We will continue our efforts to ensure OHSU has all the resources it needs to achieve its vision. Our sense of urgency will not recede until we have fully delivered on the promise of stopping this life-threatening disease.”

Firefighters Help Fight Cancer

Firefighters from 18 union locals throughout Oregon came together to contribute $21,000 to the Knight Cancer Challenge. Their efforts were part of Unite for the Knight, a coalition of Oregon businesses and labor unions working together to raise support for the challenge.

And for firefighters the cause is especially important. Research shows that firefighters have a significantly higher incidence of cancer, particularly mesothelioma, an aggressive and rare cancer that affects the membrane lining of the lungs and abdomen. A 2014 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that firefighters are susceptible to mesothelioma at approximately twice the expected rate.

OHSU will use the money to try to find smarter, faster ways to detect cancer earlier, when the disease is most curable, said Lisa Coussens, Ph.D., associate director of basic research at OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. Coussens is OHSU’s lead researcher in mesothelioma and is working to advance the understanding of what drives cancer, in particular the role immune cells play in the disease.
THANKS TO YOU, CANCER HAS MET ITS MATCH.

When Phil and Penny Knight pledged $500 million for cancer research if OHSU could match it in two years, you rose to that challenge.

Together, we’ve raised $1 billion to help take down cancer.

Our next countdown is to cancer’s end.

JOIN US

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