



Second Chuckstrong Tailgate Gala generates \$655,000 for research at IU Simon Cancer Center

Sporting tailgate attire, more than 500 people gathered May 2 at the Indiana Farm Bureau Football Center for the second annual Chuckstrong Tailgate Gala, raising \$655,000 for cancer research at the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center.

Hosted by the Indianapolis Colts and head coach Chuck Pagano, the Chuckstrong Tailgate Gala raised funds through corporate sponsorships and live and silent auctions. The total also included \$25,000 that was generated when quarterback Andrew Luck graciously tossed "touchdown" passes to 25 different donors and \$75,000 that was given by the coach and his wife, Tina, as a matching gift.

"We're here for one reason and one reason only. And that's to raise money for cancer research," Coach Pagano said. "Our goal and our vision every day as a team is to chase the Lombardi Trophy. The goal and vision of the Chuckstrong event is to do the same thing. We've got a vision and a goal to someday find a cure for all cancers."

Top-level "touchdown" sponsors for the event included The Efroymson Family Fund, Sergio Aguilera and Lori Efroymson-Aguilera, AML Inc. General Contractors, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, DairyChem, Lilly Oncology, Papa John's Pizza, and Sol and Kay Raso.

"We are incredibly grateful to the many companies and individuals who have generously sponsored this event," said Pete Ward, chief operating officer of the Indianapolis Colts and chairman of the IU Simon Cancer Center's development board. "The Colts have been supporting cancer research at IU for many years, and we are thrilled that the Chuckstrong initiative continues to support this important work."

Amid a celebratory atmosphere with Colts cheerleaders and more than 50 players, guests at the tailgate gala participated in activities such as a 40-yard dash, punt returns, tackling stations and three-cone drills on the Colts practice field before they turned their attention to raising money for cancer research.

Funds from the tailgate gala will be used to support cancer research projects that accelerate the translation of laboratory discoveries to the bedside of patients in Indiana and beyond. Research is at the heart of progress against cancer, supporting advancements to find better ways to prevent, detect and treat the disease.

"Only through research can we truly change the face of cancer," said Patrick Loehrer Sr., M.D., director of the IU Simon Cancer Center, H.H. Gregg Professor of Oncology and associate dean for cancer research at the IU School of Medicine. "We must also be more clever and do our homework to look at the circuitry of each person's

particular type of cancer and find novel ways to short circuit its growth. This will lead to better treatments and open the doors for the possibility of more cures."

Last year, the Chuckstrong initiative raised \$1.1 million, which included \$646,000 in inaugural gala proceeds and \$454,600 generated from sales of Chuckstrong T-shirts and wristbands and other donations. In all, 18,603 T-shirts and 22,038 wristbands were purchased by fans who quickly supported the fundraising campaign initiated by the Indianapolis Colts after Pagano was diagnosed with acute promyelocytic leukemia.



Held at the Indiana Farm Bureau Football Center, the second annual Chuckstrong Tailgate Gala raised \$655,000 for cancer research at the IU Simon Cancer Center.

Photo by Banayote

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IU, Paradigm team up to test genomic sequencing for women with aggressive form of breast cancer

May 15, 2014

INDIANAPOLIS -- Indiana University cancer researchers are testing whether therapy incorporating advanced genomic technology will provide better outcomes than current treatments for those with an aggressive form of breast cancer.

Researchers at the [Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center](#), led by Bryan Schneider, M.D., associate professor of medicine, and Milan Radovich, Ph.D., assistant professor of surgery and of medical and molecular genetics, are using targeted DNA sequencing in a new clinical trial for women with triple negative breast cancer, to test whether certain treatment choices improve survival rates.

"This trial takes a group of patients who have received standard chemotherapy but haven't had the response one would hope," said Dr. Schneider, who is also the Vera Bradley Investigator in Oncology, associate professor of medical and molecular genetics, and associate director of the [Indiana Institute for Personalized Medicine](#).

Following chemotherapy and surgery, patients who are at high risk for relapse will be eligible to participate in the trial.

"In this group, we will use our understanding of genomics to identify the gas pedal for each woman's specific cancer and see if we can find a drug that will block the gas pedal in a way that is better than non-specific chemotherapies," Dr. Radovich said.

The researchers' goal for using a genomic approach is to improve survival in this group of patients.

The trial will enroll 130 women. Half will receive the standard of care, while genomic sequencing will direct therapy for the other half. Sequencing is used to find mutations (changes in the blueprint of the tumor) or changes in expression (over- or under-excitement of specific genes) that may drive the cancer.

In partnership with [Paradigm](#), a nonprofit genomic sequencing and molecular information company based in Ann Arbor, Mich., and Phoenix, the researchers will analyze the DNA and RNA (the cancer cell's blueprint genomic landscape) from the tumors that remain after standard chemotherapy. They will then search for any known therapies that might help eliminate the cancer.

After the sequencing is completed, the IU Simon Cancer Center researchers will evaluate and discuss each patient's results. Each woman in the sequencing group will then be assigned a drug that has been selected to best treat her particular form of triple negative breast cancer based on her individual results. This form of therapeutic individualization that uses the unique genetic blueprint of each tumor to guide therapy is a departure from the "one-size-fits-all" approach that has been commonly used in cancer care.

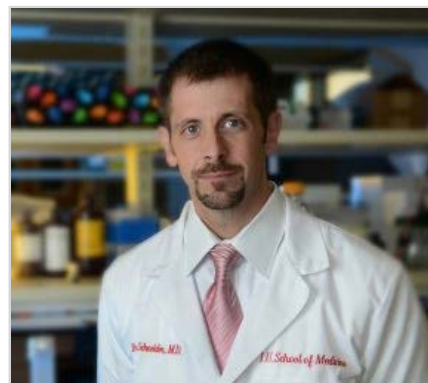
"This trial is one of only a handful in the world that tests, through a controlled scientific study, whether the use of next-generation sequencing (NGS) to identify specific disease drivers -- and the selection of treatments for women based on those genetic markers -- actually improves survival rates for women," said Paradigm CEO Robert Penny, M.D., Ph.D. "Our ability to interrogate the patient's tumor for DNA mutations, DNA copy number variations, chromosomal changes and mRNA gene expression with next-generation sequencing with clinical quality results is a real differentiator in helping to improve patient care."



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Dr. Bryan Schneider



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Dr. Schneider likened tumor mutations to typos. A minor typo in a sentence doesn't usually prevent a reader from being able to read the sentence. But add a lot of typos or a typo in the wrong place, and the sentence becomes unreadable. Thus, mutations can make a normal, well-behaved cell turn into a problematic cancer cell with a new set of instructions. Dr. Schneider and colleagues will be looking at a set number of targets in which they know the mutations can signal cells to become cancerous.

"If the mutation is taking place in a certain gene or protein that controls a certain function, and if the mutation has caused damage in that pathway, one can intuitively pick a drug that may also be interacting in that very same pathway to either try to stop or shut down an overly activated pathway," Dr. Schneider said.

Work from this innovative trial may eventually lend itself to other cancers.

"We envision a day when we can predict a handful of drugs that will best treat the tumor, derived from the tumor's unique acquired genetic variability, and then further counsel the patient on which of these might be least toxic based on a person's unique inherited genetic variability," Dr. Schneider said.

The trial, managed by the [Hoosier Cancer Research Network](#), is open to women with triple negative invasive breast cancer (stage I-III), who have completed preoperative chemotherapy and have completed surgery of their primary tumor with significant residual disease at time of surgery.

For more information about this trial, contact Jessica Sollars, R.N., at 317-278-5117.

This trial is made possible, in part, by the [Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer](#), the [Walther Cancer Foundation](#) and the [Strategic Research Initiative](#), a \$150 million, five-year research collaboration of the IU School of Medicine and Indiana University Health.

In addition to Drs. Schneider and Radovich, the trial involves the expertise of Sunil Badve, MBBS, M.D., professor of pathology and laboratory medicine and of medicine; Paul Helft, M.D., associate professor of medicine; Kathy Miller, M.D., associate professor of medicine and Ballvé Lantero Scholar in Oncology; Bert O'Neil, M.D., the Joseph W. and Jackie J. Cusick Professor of Oncology and professor of medicine and director of the cancer center's Phase I oncology program; and Gail Vance, M.D., the Sutphin Family Professor of Cancer Genetics and professor of medical and molecular genetics and of pathology and laboratory medicine. The team represents two of the cancer center's research programs: [breast cancer](#) and [experimental and developmental therapeutics](#).

Watch a video about this trial at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdMJBfdCJNc>.

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News briefs

IU Simon Cancer Center awards more than \$222,000 for 12 shared resource pilot projects

The IU Simon Cancer Center recently funded 12 shared resource pilot projects, totaling \$222,360. Since the fall of 2013, the cancer center has awarded two rounds of such funding to 24 projects, totaling more than \$419,000.
[full story >](#)

4 IU researchers earn ACS Institutional Research grants

Four Indiana University researchers are recipients of a 2014 American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant. Funds from the grant are designed to provide seed money to support junior faculty.
[full story >](#)

2014 Cancer Research Day winners announced

The IU Simon Cancer Center hosted its annual Cancer Research Day on May 29. A record 141 abstracts were submitted. Visit www.cancer.iu.edu/crd to view the winners.

HOG changes name

Hoosier Oncology Group, an independent nonprofit cancer research organization in Indianapolis, has changed its name to [Hoosier Cancer Research Network Inc.](#) The change reflects the company's steady growth over 30 years into a nationwide and international network of more than 130 member sites and more than 400 physicians and research practitioners.
[full story >](#)



Two-day NCI symposium focuses on immunology, immunotherapy

The Center for Cancer Research at the National Cancer Institute is hosting a two-day national symposium Oct. 9-10 entitled " Cancer Immunology and Immunotherapy: Delivering the Promise." The program includes recent

advances in the field and provides a forum for discussion and debate on the current understanding on the immunotherapy of cancer. Registration is now open and abstracts are being accepted for the poster session. Deadline for abstract submission is Aug. 15. Registration is free, but seating is limited, so be sure to register early. The full meeting program, online registration and instructions for abstract submission can be found at <http://ncifrederick.cancer.gov/events/CancerImmunology/default.asp>.

Indiana Drug Discovery Alliance seeks applications; due July 1

The Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute Molecular Therapeutics Program is seeking applications for a competitive program that will provide funds and essential consultation to support the early stage development of therapeutics.

[full story](#) >

24 Hours of Booty returns

24 Hours of Booty is back for a third year in Indianapolis at Butler University June 27-28. The cancer center's team, Pedaling Cures, will once again ride



to raise awareness and funds for cancer research. Proceeds benefit Livestrong and the IU Simon Cancer Center. Last year,

Pedaling Cures rode a total of 3,517 miles and raised \$11,155. **Eddy Srour**, PhD, is the team captain. For more information, check out www.24hoursofbooty.org.

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