



April 2013

## **CHUCKSTRONG Tailgate Gala pushes research funding to \$1.1 million for IU Simon Cancer Center**

More than 450 people sporting tailgate attire gathered April 19 at the Indianapolis Colts complex to help push the CHUCKSTRONG campaign to more than \$1 million raised for 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 \$660,000 through corporate sponsorships, live and silent auctions and a challenge issued by the coach in which he and his wife, Tina, contributed a matching gift of \$50,000, bringing the total raised to \$1.1 million for the



CHUCKSTRONG campaign.

"After this city embraced me and my family the way that it did, we now see an opportunity to give back and do the right thing and support a great cause by raising money for cancer research and awareness," Coach Pagano said. "Every time a physician anywhere sits down with a cancer patient to go over a cancer treatment plan, there's years of research backing that up, guiding that caregivers' hands. We want to get behind that so more people have the experience I had and can get back to living and doing what they love."

AML Inc. General Contractors, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Efroymsen Family Fund, Lilly Oncology, Papa John's Pizza and Stanley Security Solutions were "touchdown sponsors" of the tailgate gala.

"The Colts have a long relationship with the IU Simon Cancer Center, and we are thrilled to be their partners in funding cancer research," Pete Ward, chief operating officer of the Indianapolis Colts and chairman of the cancer center's development board, said. "We're incredibly grateful to the more than 50 Indiana companies and foundations that generously supported this inaugural event."

Previously, through the sales of CHUCKSTRONG T-shirts and wrist bands and donations collected for two Colts cheerleaders who shaved their heads, \$454,600 was raised as fans were quick to support the fund-raising campaign initiated by the Indianapolis Colts last year after Pagano was diagnosed with cancer. In all, 18,603 T-shirts and 22,038 wrist bands were sold.

"Thousands of people rallied behind the coach to contribute to cancer research," **Patrick Loehrer Sr.**, MD, 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, said. "That's a testament to Hoosiers just as much as it is to the coach and the Colts organization. They want to make a difference. We, at Indiana University, are humbled to be on the receiving end of this generosity, and recognize our responsibility to deliver on these gifts."

Amid a celebratory atmosphere with Colts cheerleaders and more than 30 players, guests at the tailgate gala participated in everything from a 40-yard dash, punt returns and three-cone drills on the Colts practice field before turning their focus to raising money for cancer research.

Funds from the tailgate gala will be used to support cancer research projects and 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.

"There is not one cause for cancer, nor one treatment. Many different molecular and genetic events drive the development of cancer," Dr. Loehrer said. "Researchers from the IU Simon Cancer Center are working on identifying and understanding these genetic pathways, which will open new doors towards the delivery of more effective therapies with greater precision and less toxicity."

It was research that led to advancements for those with acute promyelocytic leukemia (APL), the disease Pagano was diagnosed with last fall. It wasn't until the mid-1970s that research allowed people with APL to hear the words "remission" or "cure."

**Larry Cripe**, MD, associate professor of medicine at the IU School of Medicine, a researcher at the cancer center, and Pagano's physician, has seen firsthand the advancements in medicine that have been made because of research.

"The number of drugs we had available when I started medical training was miniscule," Dr. Cripe said. "We had very few options for people and so frequently we were at a point where we had to help people understand that there literally were no drugs available to treat their cancer. Without research, we would not have moved one bit."

### **See more**

[View indystar.com photo gallery.](#)

[View Indianapolis Colts photo gallery.](#)



March 2013

## Cancer Research Day is Wednesday, May 22

The IU Simon Cancer Center hosts its annual Cancer Research Day on Wednesday, May 22.

This year, Cancer Research Day focuses on ovarian cancer, with a symposium beginning at 8 a.m. Cancer center members **Kenneth Nephew**, PhD; **Daniela Matei**, MD; **Emma Rossi**, MD; **Yan Xu**, PhD; **Karen Cowden Dahl**, PhD; and **Jeanne Schilder**, MD, will present at the symposium.

Anil Sood, MD, will present the keynote address, “Targeting Tumor Angiogenesis Using RNA Interference,” at 1:30 p.m. Dr. Sood is professor and vice chair for translational research in the Departments of Gynecologic Oncology and Cancer Biology, co-director of the Center for RNAi and Non-Coding RNA, and director of the Blanton-Davis ovarian cancer research program at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Students, fellows, and faculty conducting cancer research at IUPUI, Indiana University-Bloomington, Purdue University, and the Harper Cancer Research Institute, a collaboration between the IU School of Medicine and the University of Notre Dame, will present their research posters. Cash awards will be given for best poster(s) in each research category.

Cancer Research Day is designed to increase understanding and awareness of IU Simon Cancer Center research endeavors and encourage collaboration with other cancer research institutions in Indiana.

Cancer Research Day takes place at the IUPUI Campus Center, 420 University Blvd., Room CE 450 (Multi-Purpose Room).

[View the agenda.](#)



April 2013

## News briefs

### Researchers participate in local ACS events

In mid-April, a number of cancer center members participated in two American Cancer Society events.

For the second year, a team of researchers traded their lab coats for gym shoes when they hit the courts for the Coaches' Huddle Basketball Tournament at Butler University on April 13. Team IUSCC won the "recreational" division.

Team members included **Bryan Schneider**, MD, **Lindsey Mayo**, PhD, **Milan Radovich**, PhD, **Lang Li**, PhD, and **Joe Dynlacht**, PhD, as well as former WNBA player Lindsay Wisdom-Hylton, former European pro player and IU grad Haris Mujezinovic, and former college players Courtney Waldon (Purdue), Nadine Morgan (Purdue), and Rob Eggers (IU).

Meanwhile, **Janaiah Kota**, PhD, and his fellow members of the "Cure Cancer-IU Simon Cancer Center" team weathered chilly temperatures during the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life of IUPUI, an overnight fund-raising walk. The team raised nearly \$2,000, placing it second among the 48 teams that participated in the 12-hour event on April 13-14. (See link to photo below.)





**Team IUSCC celebrates its Coaches' Huddle victory inside historic Hinkle Fieldhouse.  
See Dr. Kota and his Relay for Life team photo.**

## **Middle school students experience day as IU cancer scientists**

**Randy Brutkiewicz**, PhD, and **Attaya Suvannasankha**, MD, on Monday hosted 32 students from Hamilton Heights Middle School who raised money for the Indiana Chapter of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. The visit gave the students an opportunity to learn what it is like to be a leukemia or lymphoma researcher and physician. While visiting the IU Simon Cancer Center, the students toured Dr. Brutkiewicz's laboratory and a cancer clinic, learned to mix chemotherapy drugs from an oncology pharmacist, and visited with a stem cell transplant patient. Dr. Suvannasankha discussed treatment options for cancer patients and shared how her education led her to a career as an oncologist.

This is the first time the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society has offered the event. For the past 15 years, students in more than 600 Indiana schools have participated in Pennies for Patients. This year, the society decided to offer middle and high schools that raised more than \$2,013 during the Pennies for Patients drive in February with an opportunity to participate in this special, hands-on field trip at the IU School of Medicine. The names of those schools were entered into a pool and a drawing produced the winner.

As a young researcher, Dr. Brutkiewicz was the recipient of the prestigious Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Scholar Award. His research focuses on how blood cancer cells hide from a person's immune system. His goal is to identify the molecules on the surface of cancer cells that allow this to happen and to develop ways to unmask the molecules so cancer cells can be identified and killed by the immune system or chemotherapeutic agents.

Dr. Suvannasankha is a physician with a laboratory interest in an incurable blood cancer, multiple myeloma. Her research focuses on determining how cancer cells become resistant to cancer treatments and identifying new ways or drugs to overcome the resistance.

This year, Pennies for Patients will raise nearly \$650,000 in Indiana. The funds raised support research, patient services, education programs and advocacy.

## **Cancer center members in the news**

- **Romnee Clark-Seaberg**, MD, is currently serving a two-year term as vice president of the Indiana Oncology Society. She will serve as president, beginning in 2014. The society's mission is to provide advocacy for cancer patients and promote standards of excellence for high-quality cancer care.
- **Tim Corson**, PhD, has received an Alcon Research Institute Young Investigator Grant of \$50,000. Dr. Corson said his grant proposal involved searching for inhibitors of KIF14, the protein his lab previously showed to be hyperactive in retinoblastoma. This could be a possible route towards a novel, targeted therapy for this cancer, he said. The Alcon Research Institute Young Investigator Grant is intended to encourage and promote the early career development of clinicians and scientists entering research in vision science and ophthalmology. Eight recipients were chosen in this second year of the international award program.
- **Hari Nakshatri**, BVSc, PhD, has been named an associate editor and a member of the reviews editor team of *Cancer Research*, the flagship journal of the American Association for Cancer Research.
- **Matthew Johnson**, MD, FSIR, has been named a councilor on the Society of Interventional Radiology's executive council for 2013-14.



**Clark-Seaberg**

- The future of basic and translational research in health care depends on the ability of large, complex health science centers to educate, discover new answers to extremely complicated problems and operate for the public good. “Enhancing the Professional Culture of Academic Health Science Centers” explores how faculty at academic health centers -- home to many medical schools in the United States and abroad -- pursue and achieve success in doing research. Edited by **Thomas Inui**, MD, and **Richard Frankel**, PhD, director of the Walther Center for Research and Education in Palliative Care at the IU Simon Cancer Center, the new book is part of a five-part series on enhancing the productivity of academic health science centers. It is targeted to policy makers, educators and administrators, as well as researchers interested in the present and future of research activities in academic health centers.

**Reminders**

**●HPV vaccine presentation slated for May 6**

John Schiller, PhD, head of the Neoplastic Disease Section, Laboratory of Cellular Oncology, Center for Cancer Research at the NCI, presents “HPV Vaccines: Past, Present and Future” at 4 p.m. Monday, May 6 in Walther Hall, room 203. Dr. Schiller played a central research that led to the development of current HPV vaccines and is continuing work on developing second-generation HPV vaccines. His presentation is sponsored by the IUPUI Center for HPV Research.

**●Missed a Combined Seminar Series?**

Have you missed a Combined Seminar Series? You can now watch it online. An archival listing of past Seminar Series events is [here](#). Also, you can find the current lineup of speakers [here](#).

**●IUSCC’s Cancer Center Support Grant due in fall 2013**

In September 2013, the IU Simon Cancer Center’s National Cancer Institute Cancer Center Support Grant (CCSG) will be due. Consequently, the cancer center’s executive committee and research program leaders are currently undertaking a critical review of the program and its membership, as well as finalizing program themes, goals and aims. All members are encouraged to assist their program leaders as they begin working on their respective narratives. The program leaders will need assistance from their members on compiling research highlights for those narratives. Program leaders are also planning retreats and participation among members is important. The CCSG is an important source of funding for the cancer center’s shared facilities. This support, along with IU Simon Cancer Center funding, assures that cancer center members have access to the highest quality technology for their research.



**●Membership changes**

Membership criteria into the IU Simon Cancer Center has changed to include full-time faculty of any Indiana university who contribute on some level to the cancer center’s mission of research, education, patient care and community outreach. Full membership criteria is [here](#).

**●Researchers: Share your news**

Is your research about to be published in a journal? Are you about to present your research at a professional meeting? Have you received national funding for your research? Share your news with [Michael Schug](#), IUSCC communications manager.

●Funding opportunities

For the latest funding opportunities, visit <http://www.cancer.iu.edu/research/funding/>.

New members

[Grzegorz Nalepa](#), MD, PhD  
*Department of Pediatrics/Pediatric Hematology-Oncology*  
Associate member, [Experimental and Developmental Therapeutics](#)

[Fletcher White](#), MS, PhD  
*Department of Anesthesia*  
Full member, [Cancer Prevention and Control](#)

[Siyuan Zhang](#), MD, PhD  
*University of Notre Dame*  
Associate member, [Breast Cancer](#)