



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

IU SIMON CANCER CENTER

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center



IUSCC news

February 2016

Kay Yow Cancer Fund awards \$100,000 grant to women's cancer research at IUSCC

The Kay Yow Cancer Fund awarded a \$100,000 women's cancer research grant to the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center.

The grant was awarded during a news conference Feb. 23 at the National Collegiate Athletic Association headquarters in White River State Park.

Since 2009, the [Kay Yow Cancer Fund](#) has supported a women's cancer research grant at an institution based in the host city of the annual NCAA Women's Final Four. Indianapolis plays host to the games in April.

Before her death, Coach Yow invited the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) and The V Foundation for Cancer Research to partner with her to establish the Kay Yow Cancer Fund, which is committed to being a part of finding an answer in the fight against women's cancers through raising funds for scientific research, assisting the underserved, and unifying people for a common cause.

"Coach Yow was very specific in her direction that the Kay Yow Cancer Fund support research to enhance the quality of life of those individuals battling cancer and to help find a cure," said Stephanie Glance, executive director of the Kay Yow Cancer Fund. "This research grant will continue the legacy of Coach Yow and the fund's mission of supporting women's cancer research."

In 2011, IU Simon Cancer Center researcher Chunyan He, ScD, was named a recipient of a Kay Yow Cancer Fund grant. Dr. He studies genetic susceptibility and the role of environmental and lifestyle factors in the development of breast cancer.

The Kay Yow Cancer Fund works in collaboration with The V Foundation Scientific Advisory Committee to identify and review grant proposals supporting women's cancer research. To date, the Kay Yow Cancer Fund has allocated more than \$5.28 million in support of women's cancer research and serving the underserved.

See [photo gallery](#) from the Feb. 23 news conference.

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IU cancer researcher opens Congressional briefing on stigma

An Indiana University cancer researcher has been invited to speak on Capitol Hill during a congressional briefing on stigma and its impact on public health.

[Lisa Carter-Harris](#), PhD, assistant professor at the [Indiana University School of Nursing](#) and a researcher at the IU Simon Cancer Center, will open “The Impact of Stigma on Public Health and Public Health Policy” briefing on March 2. The briefing is coordinated by Lung Cancer Alliance, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy organization.



Carter-Harris

Dr. Carter-Harris explained that she was contacted by [Lung Cancer Alliance](#) shortly after an academic journal published her research about stigma. Her research delved into why stigma exists for those diagnosed with lung cancer as well as stigma that impacts those who are at risk of developing the disease.

“We are so pleased Dr. Carter-Harris is able to join us for the third briefing in our ongoing series,” said Laurie Fenton Ambrose, president and CEO of Lung Cancer Alliance. “Her perspective on stigma and its impact on the public health system is a crucial voice on a topic that continues to be a priority concern associated with lung cancer and so many other diseases.”

Dr. Carter-Harris was pleasantly surprised by the invitation. “I didn’t think people were paying attention to a subject that is near and dear to my heart. I was pleased that someone other than my mother actually read my work,” Dr. Carter-Harris said with a laugh.

Her groundbreaking research also looked into why people don’t participate in lung cancer screening. She found three barriers to screening:

- A sense of stigma that may stem from a generational divide that exists between patients, who are typically older, and today’s younger health care providers. The older generation grew up in an era in which smoking was glamorized, while the younger generation has repeatedly been told about the dangers of tobacco use. People feel they would be blamed for their disease because of their smoking history, according to Dr. Carter-Harris.
- There is a sense of distrust among patients about the health care system, tobacco industry, and government.
- People say they don’t have time to be screened.

"I'm a nurse practitioner, so from a clinical standpoint, for a patient to feel that they're to blame for their disease, regardless if they smoked, that seems to promote inequity," Dr. Carter-Harris said. "We have demonized tobacco, which has been successful in smoking cessation efforts, but has also resulted in the unintended stigma that patients feel."

Dr. Carter-Harris is a scientist with the cancer center's [Cancer Prevention and Control](#) research program. The goals of that program are to prevent cancer occurrence and increase effectiveness and adherence to cancer screening. The program's researchers also work to educate the public both about the importance of stopping tobacco use and never starting its use.

"The invitation of Dr. Carter-Harris to speak on Capitol Hill is a credit to her commitment and seriousness in addressing the destigmatization of lung cancer among patients," **David Haggstrom**, MD, co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control program, said. "We are grateful for the contributions she makes to the scientific community in the Cancer Prevention and Control program."

Lung cancer is the leading cancer cause of death. It will kill more people than colorectal, breast, and prostate cancer -- the second-, third-, and fourth-leading cancer killers -- combined each year.

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Dr. Loehrer's dream becomes reality

By Brian Hartz



Patrick Loehrer Sr., M.D., sits outside his dream, a new clinic which brings cancer care to western Kenya.

More than a decade ago, Patrick Loehrer Sr., M.D., traveled to Kenya. He returned with a dream.

Although more developed than other African nations, Kenya was by no means immune to the challenges of delivering healthcare to those in rural, resource-limited communities. The HIV/AIDS pandemic continues to ravage the country and chronic diseases, such as cancer, are on the rise. Tens of thousands of people still desperately need treatment.

In response to the increasing cancer cases, Dr. Loehrer, director of the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center, co-founded the **Academic Model Providing Access to Healthcare (AMPATH) Oncology Institute** in 2009 to help build a sustainable oncology health care system in western Kenya where none previously existed.

Dr. Loehrer's dream, however, did not become fully realized until 2015, when AMPATH's new outpatient clinic in Eldoret, known as the Chandaria Cancer and Chronic Diseases Centre, opened its doors. Prior to its construction, chemotherapy had been conducted in a tent. Now, Kenyans will be treated in a gleaming, state-of-the-art, four-story facility that will be the largest building on the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital campus.

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“This will be the first public facility dedicated to treating people with cancer in western Kenya.”

— PATRICK LOEHRER, SR., M.D.

The facility is already screening about 1,000 patients per month for breast and cervical cancer, the latter of which is the leading cause of cancer death among all Kenyans. “This will be the first public facility dedicated to treating people with cancer in western Kenya,” Dr. Loehrer said. “It will serve a population of 18 million to 20 million.”

The Chandaria Centre is named after a Kenyan businessman and philanthropist who helped fund the building. Significant funding also came from the Ruth Lilly Philanthropic Foundation, Pfizer and the IU Simon Cancer Center.



The Chandaria Cancer and Chronic Diseases Centre

In addition to cancer treatment, the first floor will have space dedicated to caring for people afflicted by cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases, diabetes and mental illness. There will also be floors for research and education—key components of AMPATH’s goal of building a sustainable cancer and chronic disease treatment program.

Several other IU personnel played key roles in moving the Chandaria Centre from dream to reality: Fredrick Chite Asirwa, M.D., a Kenyan doctor who completed his residency and oncology fellowship at the IU School of Medicine, is the current co-director of AMPATH’s oncology program; R. Matthew Strother, M.D., who also completed his residency and fellowship at IU, is a former AMPATH team leader who helped establish the oncology program in Eldoret; and Robert Einterz, M.D., director of the AMPATH Consortium and the **IU Center for Global Health**. Dr. Einterz is one of the four co-founders of AMPATH.

Dr. Einterz's team has been involved in everything from the design of the building to fundraising and communications. He said the Chandaria facility is not only a beacon of hope for Kenya and Kenyans, but also for people closer to home.

"It is this partnership between Kenyans and North Americans that awakens the power of academic institutions to help the populations we purport to serve," Dr. Einterz said. "Particularly those who are left out. That's been a problem all along. Cancer has been a problem over there just as long as it has here."

The Chandaria Centre is fully staffed and operated by Kenyans, including Dr. Asirwa, but Dr. Loehrer said the facility's foundations rest firmly on Hoosier values – literally. Michael Greven, a Columbus, Ind.-based contractor, oversaw construction of the building. Greven and his wife, Liz Nolan-Greven, own an environmentally friendly construction company known as EcoSource, and in August 2012, they, along with their son, Liam, relocated to Eldoret to devote themselves full-time to the construction of the Chandaria Centre.

Dr. Loehrer said the example set by the Greven family – and the entire AMPATH organization – is something of which the best and brightest future oncologists will surely take note.

"It really epitomizes what people from Indiana are like," he said. "We are relatively self-effacing people who are humble, but we want to make a difference. This is about making a difference for a large disadvantaged population on the other side of the world. Millennials are very interested in international work and global health, so what this does, it's an attraction for people applying here for medical school and residencies. It is something that makes us stand out from many other universities."

The oncology institute is part of the AMPATH consortium. Dr. Loehrer said the consortium – whose efforts have been lauded by the **National Cancer Institute** as a sterling example of cancer care delivery in low-income countries – is akin to an international space station for global health.

"We have investigators from a variety of different institutions ... all working together in one place," Dr. Loehrer said. "Most global health initiatives are typically one investigator dealing with another investigator, so you have a partnership of two people, rather than the institutional commitment which has been seen here. In some cases, you might have an institutional commitment to one area, but the fact that you have multiple institutions working together to change a health care system for an entire population is something that's unheard of."

Echoing Dr. Einterz, Dr. Loehrer emphasized that the work the consortium has been doing in Kenya will also serve Americans, particularly Hoosiers. He said an IU-led grant, if funded, will examine how community health care

workers can be enlisted to help with cancer screenings in low- and middle-income areas around Indianapolis. “This is a lesson learned from Kenya about how we might be able to get more people involved in promoting good health care behaviors over here.”

The Chandaria Centre is also destined to serve as an enduring physical manifestation of AMPATH’s mission, which is to lead with care. That means putting the focus on treating people, first and foremost, Dr. Loehrer said.

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“When you go to Kenya, it’s a stark reminder of why we became physicians—and that’s to help other people. Your soul gets rejuvenated. You get reminded about why you’re a doctor.”

— PATRICK LOEHRER, SR., M.D.

“When you go to Kenya, it’s a stark reminder of why we became physicians—and that’s to help other people. Your soul gets rejuvenated. You get reminded about why you’re a doctor,” Dr. Loehrer said.

Brian Hartz, an Indiana University graduate and Hoosier native, is a seasoned journalist and writer who has lived in Bloomington as well as New Zealand; Toronto; and Victoria, British Columbia. And he edited magazines at each stop. Brian now lives in St. Petersburg, Fla.

THE AMPATH CONSORTIUM

The **AMPATH Consortium** consists of the Indiana University School of Medicine, Brown University School of Medicine, Duke University Medical Center/Hubert-Yeargen Center for Global Health, Lehigh Valley Hospital, University of Notre Dame/Eck Institute for Global Health, Providence Portland Medical Center, Purdue University, University of Massachusetts Medical School, University of Utah School of Medicine, University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine, and the University of California San Francisco.



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News briefs

Mark your calendar: Cancer Research Day is May 12

The annual IU Simon Cancer Center Cancer Research Day is Thursday, May 12. 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, are eligible to present. The call for abstracts will open soon. Watch for e-mails and visit cancer.iu.edu/crd for more details. The cancer center's Cancer Research Day is an annual event that aims to increase understanding and awareness of IU Simon Cancer Center research endeavors and encourage collaboration with other cancer research institutions in Indiana.

IUSCC joins cancer organizations in signing letter to Vice President Biden

More than 185 cancer organizations and cancer centers, including the IU Simon Cancer Center, signed a thank-you letter to Vice President Biden for his commitment to the Cancer Moonshot. [Read letter.](#)

Office of Visual Media offers foldable fabric printing for academic posters

The Office of Visual Media, a long-standing source for printing academic posters, is now offering fabric printing. Convenient for packing and traveling, the fabric is foldable and virtually crease-free, with the same quality as traditional paper. Posters can be printed as wide as 48" and in any length. [Poster templates are available](#) for downloading. In a time crunch? Call to see if same-day service is available. Visual Media continues to offer graphic design, medical illustration, photography, and poster design/layout. E-mail vismedia@iu.edu or call 274-7478.

24 Hours of Booty kick-off party is March 2

The 24 Hours of Booty Indianapolis 2016 kick-off party is 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 2 at Three Wisemen Brewery. 24 Hours of Booty benefits the Livestrong



Foundation and the IU Simon Cancer Center. Last year, the cancer center's team, Pedaling Cures, was the runner-up in total funds raised with \$17,175.

Overall, more than \$127,000 was raised for both the cancer center and the Livestrong Foundation. See [more details](#) about the kick-off party.

Indiana Cancer Consortium annual meeting is April 26

The Indiana Cancer Consortium hosts its 2016 annual meeting from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 26 at the Ivy Tech Corporate College and Culinary Center. All cancer center members are welcome. Richard Wender, MD, chief cancer control officer of the American Cancer Society, is the keynote speaker. [Learn more and register.](#)

ACS launches new interactive statistics Website

The American Cancer Society has launched a new interactive cancer statistics Website. The site offers a new way to explore the data the society publishes in its annual *Cancer Facts & Figures* report. [Explore the site.](#)

Cancer center members in the news

- **Lawrence Einhorn**, MD, has been named one of The 50 Most Influential Physicians in History by Medscape. Medscape said: "We've endeavored to identify the giants of medicine who we feel stand apart due to the extent of their achievements and their impact on the development of medical practice."
- Feb. 11 was National Inventors' Day. Four IUSCC members -- **Mark Kelley**, PhD; **Keith March**, MD, PhD; **Sophie Paczesny**, MD, PhD; and **Mervin Yoder**, MD -- were among the IUPUI inventors cited on this [list](#).
- **Lois Travis**, MD, ScD, has been invited to speak at the 2016 annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research at a new symposium entitled "The Science of Surviving: Looking Back to Inform the Future." She will present "What Have We Learned from Survivors of Adult-Onset Cancers" April 17 in New Orleans.



Cary

- **Clint Cary**, MD, MPH, and colleagues wrote "[Variation in prostate cancer treatment associated with population density of the county of residence](#)," which was published in *Prostate Cancer and Prostatic Diseases*. [Reuters](#) reported on the study.
- **Hong Du**, PhD, and **Cong Yan**, PhD, were among the co-authors of "[CD45 Phosphatase Inhibits STAT3 Transcription Factor Activity in Myeloid Cells and Promotes Tumor-Associated Macrophage Differentiation](#)," which was published in *Immunity*.

● Inspired by the loss of her mother to lung cancer, Purdue University faculty member and IUSCC member **Karen Hudmon**, Dr, PH, has helped change the way tobacco cessation counseling is taught. [Read more.](#)



Kacena

- **Melissa Kacena**, PhD, is leading research that is studying bone healing in space through a partnership with the Department of Defense and NASA. [Read more.](#)

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