Hope after Harvey

With generous support, MD Anderson weathers the storm
CONTENTS
IN THIS ISSUE

4 NEWS MAKERS
Team Harvey
MD Anderson ensures patient care, employee support throughout hurricane ride-out and recovery.

9 Fashion makes the grade
Pediatric patients rock the runway at Little Galleria back-to-school event.

8 It takes a village
MD Anderson thanks grass-roots fundraisers for $1.4 million.

10 Philanthropy with a plan
Giving vehicles offer donors satisfaction and peace of mind.

14 Julie and Ben Rogers Award
William Atkinson named honoree for excellence in administration.

SECTIONS
6 Moon Shot Momentum
7 Philanthropy in Action
7 Survivors Say
12 Among Friends
13 Spotlight
14 Donors Make a Difference

Back Cover:
iPromise: Rodi and Bob Franco

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER
29: Houston
Little Galleria Spooktacular
31: Houston
Brown Foundation Award for Excellence in Oncology Nursing

NOVEMBER
7-8: Houston
Board of Visitors Reception and Annual Meeting
11: Houston
Boot Walk to End Cancer™
15: Houston
A Conversation With a Living Legend®: Rich Kinder
28: San Antonio
A Conversation With a Living Legend®: UT System Chancellor William H. McRaven

DECEMBER
1: Beaumont
Santa’s Elves
7: Houston
Santa’s Elves
9: Houston
Little Galleria Breakfast With Santa

ACCESS ANSWERS
To become a patient: Call 877-632-6789 or fill out the self-referral form at www.mdanderson.org.

PROMISE

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
Development Office - Unit 705
P.O. Box 301439
Houston, TX 77230-1439
713-792-3450
800-525-5841
mdanderson.org/gifts
promise@mdanderson.org
youtube.com/MDAnderson

Marshall E. Hicks, M.D.
President ad interim

Todd Pullin
Senior Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Patrick Mulvey
Vice President for Development

Brette Peyton
Executive Director, Public Relations

Sarah Watson
Editor, Program Director
Development Communications

Allison Schaffer
Assistant Editor
Senior Communications Specialist

Leslie Friedman
Senior Communications Specialist

Marily Scaria
Senior Communications Designer

Contributing Writers
Katrina Burton
Rodi and Bob Franco
Diane Server
Adrienne Schladern

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Email us your thoughts: promise@mdanderson.org.
MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors welcomes seven new members

FOR THE PAST 60 YEARS, the MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors (BOV) has been integral to advancing the institution’s mission to end cancer, supporting education, prevention and research initiatives and advocating for cancer patients across the globe. New members as of Sept. 1 are:

Randy A. Foutch – Tulsa, Oklahoma
Foutch, a business and community leader with more than 30 years’ experience in the oil and gas industry, is founder/chairman/chief executive officer of Laredo Petroleum Inc., an independent energy company focused on the exploration, development and acquisition of petroleum and natural gas. He was president from 2006 to 2008. He belongs to the National Petroleum Council and chairs the Advisory Council of the Energy Institute at The University of Texas at Austin.

Winell Herron – Bellaire, Texas
Herron, a longtime H-E-B team member, is the company’s group vice president of Public Affairs, Diversity and Environmental Affairs. She serves on many boards including those of the March of Dimes, Houston Zoo, Houston Museum of African American Culture, the Ensemble Theatre, Community Artists’ Collective and the Texas Lyceum. Herron also is a board trustee for The University of the Incarnate Word and a board member of the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts in San Antonio, where H-E-B is headquartered.

R. Stan Marek Jr. – Houston
Marek, after an active duty tour with the United States Marine Corps Reserves, began working as a project manager, estimator and sales manager for The Marek Companies, one of the largest residential and commercial interior contractors in the southwest. He became president and chief executive officer in 1982. Marek also focuses on workforce development, sustainability and comprehensive immigration reform. He has leadership positions in several major construction industry organizations. Marek is a graduate of Texas A&M University and serves on the board of trustees at St. John’s School and the board of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Walker N. Moody – Houston
Moody serves as a partner and chief operating officer for Tudor, Pickering, Holt & Co. Asset Management, having operational responsibility for the asset management division, and sits on the firm’s management committee. Moody previously was with Goldman, Sachs & Co., within its Investment Management Division. Prior to Goldman, Moody was a captain in the U.S. Air Force with international affairs and strategic planning duties in the Middle East and the Pentagon. He also was a Social Aide-de-Camp at the White House. In 2011, Gov. Rick Perry appointed him to the Oversight Committee of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas. A pediatric brain cancer survivor, Moody is a lifelong volunteer for cancer prevention and children’s charities.

Jerry Simon – Houston
Simon served as a paratrooper in the elite 82nd Airborne Division of the U.S. Army and is a commercial-rated jet pilot. He is active in Houston’s business and nonprofit communities, serving the past 22 years as managing director in the wealth management group for Northern Trust. A member of Angel Flight and Veteran’s Airlift Command, he has used his personal aircraft for over a decade to fly patients and families to Houston, mainly to and from MD Anderson, for medical treatment. He is on boards and executive committees of the Houston Symphony, Junior Achievement of Southeast Texas, The Lone Star Flight Museum and the Houston Area Pastor Council. Simon is trustee emeritus for Goodwill Industries and trustee for the Houston Symphony Endowment.

Cyvia Wolff – Houston
Wolff is one of Houston’s most respected citizens and philanthropists. In 2007, she and her late husband established the Cyvia and Melvyn Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship at the University of Houston C.T. Bauer College of Business, now one of the nation’s top 10 entrepreneurship programs. Wolff has served on the boards of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Shepherd School at Rice University; the Houston Holocaust Museum; the Houston Public Library; Texas Children’s Cancer Center; and Congregation Beth Israel, where she is a past president. She’s a longtime supporter of MD Anderson, chairing the 2014 A Conversation With a Living Legend® Houston honoring Dr. Condoleezza Rice.

Isabella Arjona-Zappala – New York, New York
Arjona-Zappala is a passionate community leader and is active in supporting and raising funds for health care, college scholarships and wounded veteran programs. With her husband, Ambassador Joseph Zappala, she has helped advance the mission to end cancer by donating and raising funds over the past 15 years. In 2000, the couple hosted events in New York and Madrid, Spain to celebrate the opening of MD Anderson España.
LENDING A HELPING HAND
Harvey underscores institution’s core values of caring, integrity and discovery

BY BRETTE PEYTON

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, MD Anderson returned to full operations through teamwork, planning and the support of its internal and external communities. While the institution is dedicated to providing excellent care for thousands of cancer patients, MD Anderson also is committed to assisting and supporting staff affected by the storm. An estimated 35% of MD Anderson’s 20,000-person workforce had to evacuate or experienced damage to their homes or vehicles during Harvey.

“This storm directly impacted the lives of our colleagues, and we are focused on doing everything we can to help get them back on their feet,” says Marshall Hicks, M.D., president ad interim. “I continue to be awed by the compassion I’ve seen across our institution and have never been more proud to be a part of the MD Anderson family.”

As the storm hovered over Houston in late August, MD Anderson activated its ride-out team to ensure consistent, quality care for patients in the hospital. Nearly 1,000 employees remained on-site for several days to care for 538 patients in the hospital, 15 patients in the Emergency Center and nearly 300 family members. Teams across the institution coordinated efforts despite being on an island surrounded by floodwaters.

Outpatient services closed after all appointments on Friday, Aug. 25, and reopened Thursday, Aug. 31, with limited services including some chemotherapy, surgery and radiation treatments. The institution returned to normal staffing on Tuesday, Sept. 5, and to normal operations the next day.

“During an average week, MD Anderson has more than 13,000 outpatient appointments, so we had an obligation to our patients to quickly and safely resume our outpatient services to continue offering every patient excellent care,” says Karen Lu, M.D., senior vice president and chief medical officer ad interim. “Our care teams were on the phones with patients throughout the storm to answer their questions and get them rescheduled as soon as possible. It was a team effort, and we proved that while the storm significantly impacted our people, we are committed to coming together to serve those who entrust us with their lives.”

Planning and teamwork also protected MD Anderson’s research facilities. There were no major losses of power that would have impacted research freezers, and Veterinary Medicine leadership and staff were on-site to care for laboratory animals.

To maintain the safety of patients and employees, the emergency incident command team monitors the Category 4 storm as it intensifies.
HOPE, POST-HARVEY
Caring Fund aids flood-weary employees

BY ALLISON SCHAFFER

Tiffanie Powell, a planner in MD Anderson’s Facilities department, coordinates new construction and renovations to ensure necessary equipment, rooms and offices at the institution are up and running. But in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, Powell faced massive repairs at home.

“This wasn’t my first hurricane, and I live in a house on a hill, so I didn’t think anything was going to happen. We went to the grocery store, we got sand bags and my son built up a fort around the door. That Sunday we experienced a lot of rain, but the water only reached the front of the garage,” says Powell.

“The next day, I went into panic mode. I walked into my son’s room to wake him and stepped into ankle-deep water.”

The water came in through the back of the house, flooding each bedroom. She walked through chest-high water to a neighbor’s home, where they waited several hours to be rescued by boat and then evacuated to a local shelter.

To help displaced employees such as Powell, MD Anderson encouraged support for its Caring Fund, which provides financial assistance to employees affected by government-declared natural disasters. Support poured in from employees, patients and their families, Cancer Network members, the MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors (BOV) and the Advance Team advisory board. The fund also benefited from sales of #MDAndersonStrong T-shirts, designed in recognition of the team spirit that enabled the institution to weather the storm.

“These employees are part of our MD Anderson family,” says Marsha Shields, BOV chair-elect. “Since that catastrophic week, their predispositions to care for others have driven them to continue to work and to serve our cancer patients in need. Now it’s time for us to help care for them as they struggle to reestablish some degree of normalcy to their personal lives.”

Powell, who received support from the Caring Fund, is grateful for the resources MD Anderson has offered employees following the hurricane.

“To have this source of hope, it really means a lot,” she says. “It touches my heart, and I just want to say thank you.”
MD Anderson’s Moon Shots Program is a comprehensive, accelerated effort to significantly reduce cancer deaths and transform cancer care. Moon Shot teams pursue innovative projects prioritized for greatest patient impact, and specialized platforms serve as research engines to provide infrastructure, systems and strategy. These efforts will help support all other cancer research at MD Anderson. Funding for the initiative, launched in 2012, is from private philanthropy, institutional earnings, competitive research grants and commercialization of new discoveries.

Private philanthropic commitments to the Moon Shots Program total more than $449 million.

**AREAS OF FOCUS:**
- B-cell lymphoma
- Breast cancer
- Chronic lymphocytic leukemia
- Colorectal cancer
- Glioblastoma
- High-risk multiple myeloma
- Human papillomavirus-related cancers
- Lung cancer
- Melanoma
- Myelodysplastic syndromes and acute myeloid leukemia
- Ovarian cancer
- Pancreatic cancer
- Prostate cancer

**WHAT’S YOUR MOON SHOT?**
Contact us at promise@mdanderson.org and tell us why MD Anderson’s Moon Shots Program is important to you.

**DIANE SARVER** is a four-time ovarian cancer survivor. Although she didn’t have any of the typical symptoms — bloating or a feeling of fullness and/or constipation — a physical therapist recommended she look further into the fluid in the left side of her neck. A biopsy in January 2010 revealed stage IV ovarian cancer. Diane’s first round of chemotherapy put her in remission, but the cancer came back two years later. After two additional recurrences in less than three years, Diane decided to look at other options.

I had heard many MD Anderson success stories, so even though it’s not close to me, I decided it was time to learn what might be available. It takes quite a bit of travel time to get to Houston from Oregon, but when you have the opportunity to be on a potentially lifesaving clinical trial, the travel becomes manageable and part of a welcome routine.

A friend of mine knows Dr. Robert Bast, vice president for translational research at MD Anderson, so she made a call of introduction for me. After a thorough consult, I was told of two clinical trials for which I was a good candidate.

I joined a Phase IB trial that is part of the Ovarian Cancer Moon Shot™. I take two oral medications twice a day — olaparib, which is FDA-approved, and AZD2014, an investigational drug. There is an entire team at MD Anderson that is extremely helpful when one begins a clinical trial. All my questions, from insurance benefits to housing, were answered for my specific needs.

After about the first seven weeks, all of my test results had normalized without side effects, a remarkable response. Because of this I am called an ‘unusual responder.’

I am appreciative every day to have the opportunity to participate in this clinical trial at MD Anderson. Everyone, from the housekeeping staff to those in the restaurants, gift shops and labs, and especially the clinicians, has impressed me with kindness and a focus on patient care. For a committed patient, a clinical trial could be life-changing and life-sustaining. I cannot encourage people enough to gain knowledge, ask questions and learn to become your own best advocate.

Deciding to plunge into an early phase clinical trial is not done without careful consideration, but I am grateful every day for those who conceptualized and those who facilitate the program. It is an exciting and forward-thinking mission to reduce morbidity and mortality for these 13 areas of focus, so I am fortunate indeed to have found my Moon Shot!

**About the**

**Cancer Prevention and Control Moon Shot platform**

- **Michael Walsh Jr.,** executive director, Cancer Prevention and Control
- **Ernest Hawk, M.D.,** vice president, Cancer Prevention
- **Mark Moreno, vice president, Governmental Relations**

Estimates based on a broad range of scientific evidence indicate that more than 50% of cancers can be prevented. Approximately 50 million lives worldwide could be saved this decade by implementing known, effective preventive strategies. Sharing these lifesaving prevention messages and enabling sustainable cancer control initiatives require sophisticated, cooperative efforts.

Research advances in cancer medicine must be shared and translated into health systems, communities and daily life. The mission of the Cancer Prevention and Control Moon Shot™ platform is to accelerate efforts to develop, disseminate, and amplify evidence-based strategies, community services, policy interventions, and knowledge targeting measurable reductions in cancer incidence and mortality. The platform helps ensure that prevention strategies impact population-level health outcomes on a transformative scale.

**Key initiatives include:**
- **EndTobacco®**
- **Be Well Communities™**
- **Project ECHO® superhub for oncology**
- **Reducing exposure to ultraviolet radiation**
- **Preventing hereditary breast and ovarian cancers**
- **Increasing HPV vaccination rates**
SURVIVORS SAY

LEARN MORE AT www.mdanderson.org/gifts

SHOOTING DOWN A RARE CANCER

Annual sporting clays tournament supports ACC research

BY LESLIE FRIEDMAN

Kimberly Smith admired her brother-in-law, Ryan Smith, not only for his kindness and thoughtfulness — he always put others first — but also for how he fought his diagnosis of stage IV adenoid cystic carcinoma (ACC), a rare cancer that arises within the secretory glands.

Ryan was 26 when he was diagnosed, newly married to Kimberly’s sister Ashley and an MBA student at Louisiana State University. He remained positive, and his spirit was an inspiration to all who knew him.

Kimberly was studying for the bar exam, putting in long hours.

“Going through law school and taking the bar were so difficult for me, but Ryan always pushed me to succeed, even while going through his own treatment,” says Kimberly, who now works in Houston as a Harris County assistant district attorney.

Kimberly and her husband, Landon, were among many who rallied around Ryan and Ashley during his treatment at MD Anderson. He died in June 2014 at age 28, just three months shy of the birth of his son, Turner.

The family soon established the Ryan W. Smith Endowed Fund for Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma Research to fund research and help improve the lives of MD Anderson patients fighting the disease.

To raise money for the fund, Landon suggested creating a sporting clays event because of Ryan’s longtime enjoyment of the sport. Thus, the annual Shooting Sporting Clays fundraiser, held each April in Port Allen, Louisiana, was born in 2015. It’s raised more than $33,000 to date. The family-oriented event has become a labor of love for all involved in its planning and execution. Kimberly says it’s held in memory of Ryan not only to continue his fight, but also to create a legacy for his son.

Throughout the year, she expresses her gratitude for the care Ryan received by serving as a weekly coffee cart volunteer at MD Anderson.

“I miss Ryan so much, and volunteering at MD Anderson provides me a huge connection to him,” says Kimberly.

ADRIENNE SCHLADERER, an eight-year survivor of mantle cell lymphoma, shared her inspiring story at the Making Cancer History® Seminar in Aspen in July.

I’m living proof of the importance of being your own advocate, making informed health decisions, knowing your options and seeking treatment at MD Anderson, which has the world’s largest cancer clinical trials program.

I moved to Aspen in 2005 after living in Europe for 30 years. I was working 50 hours a week as a hotel events manager and skiing five days a week. In 2009, after a colonoscopy, I learned I had stage IV mantle cell lymphoma, a very aggressive and until recently deadly type of cancer. I had no symptoms whatsoever.

I didn’t want to leave Aspen. I had a dog, a life and a job. The University of Colorado was using the same protocol as MD Anderson, so I decided to have treatment in Denver. It was a brutal nine months, with chemotherapy and an autologous stem cell transplant. I lost 25 pounds from my present weight of 115 pounds. I returned to Aspen in September and worked out daily. It took a year to get my strength and weight back to normal, but I did ski on Thanksgiving Day.

Three and a half years later, a routine check-up in Denver showed that I had relapsed. After much discussion about an action plan of chemotherapy and possibly another transplant, I decided I was done with this regime.

I went online and searched for options. MD Anderson had an ibrutinib clinical trial for mantle cell lymphoma, and my internist in Aspen agreed it was worth a shot. After all, MD Anderson is the best cancer center in the world. What attracted me to ibrutinib besides its effectiveness was that its side effects were nothing compared to what I had experienced. My goal was not just to stay alive, but also to maintain my active lifestyle.

Dr. Michael Wang accepted me in his study. I take three pills a day. It’s like taking vitamins: no side effects. I’m one of the longest patients on this trial. There’s no cure for mantle cell lymphoma, but I’m in remission for almost five years now. It’s like I was never sick.

I have my active life back, thanks to being fit, having a positive attitude and the medical attention I receive from Dr. Wang and his team. I’m happy and healthy, a ‘thriving’ who is not simply surviving but living life to the fullest. I am Making Cancer History.
IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Third-party fundraisers raise more than $1.4 million

BY ALLISON SCHAFFER

It’s the perfect recipe for success — thousands of motivated, grassroots fundraisers, hundreds of ideas and just one cause: finding an end to cancer.

Third-party events benefiting MD Anderson have brought in nearly $10 million over the past five years. These events are conceptualized, organized and executed solely by individuals and foundations committed to Making Cancer History. Events run the gamut from bake sales and cook-offs to fun runs and bike rides, each supporting research and patient programs at MD Anderson.

“We’re grateful for the support and continued commitment of our third-party partners,” says Tom Buchholz, M.D., professor, Radiation Oncology. “Their hard work is advancing cancer treatment at an accelerated pace, enhancing the lives of our patients and cancer patients everywhere.”

James Dudley and Britton Holland are two such partners. Their event, the Stock Grill Challenge, features a unique cooking challenge that “levels the playing field” for contestants by having them compete for the best barbecued chicken, ribs or brisket while using the exact same equipment. The challenge also includes an open category and a fundraising category in which all funds go directly to MD Anderson.

“The first Stock Grill Challenge (www.stockgrillchallenge.com) was in November of 2011,” says Dudley. “We raised about $4,500 that first year. We raised about $20,000 last year, and we’ve raised about $100,000 over the course of six Stock Grill Challenges. We hope to top that this year on Nov. 11.”

Like most other third-party event organizers, Dudley has a personal stake in the mission to end cancer. His wife, Ann Margaret, was diagnosed with breast cancer not long after a Stock Grill Challenge to raise money for triple-negative breast cancer.

“We want all of the support and checks to go directly to MD Anderson,” says Dudley. “Third-party events give people the confidence and the security that their donation is going straight to the hospital — exactly where we want it to go.”

To learn more about supporting MD Anderson through third-party events, email myfundraising@mdanderson.org.
FASHION MAKES THE GRADE

Pediatric patients model the latest trends for back-to-school

BY SARAH WATSON

The sixth annual Little Galleria Back to School Fashion Show, hosted in August by The Houston Galleria and MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital, showcased the season’s coolest looks for fashion-forward students. Runway models included young cancer patients and their siblings, MD Anderson staff and Page Parkes models. KHOU-TV’s Mia Gradney provided commentary for an audience of more than 250 MD Anderson supporters.

Special guest Michael Roth, M.D., associate professor, Pediatrics, described the fashion show as an opportunity, along with enrichment programs such as school, art, camp and sports, to help patients experience the simple joys of “being a kid.”

Before the models took to the runway, Roth introduced a short video, “We Keep Kids Running,” developed by orthopaedic surgeon Valerae Lewis, M.D., that features a number of patients who participated in the fashion show.

The event was part of a series of Little Galleria events benefiting MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital. Participating retailers included Gap, Janie and Jack, Crazy 8, Francesca’s, Topshop, Kid’s Atelier, Vera Bradley, Athleta, White House Black Market, Trina Turk, Robert Graham and Macy’s.

To learn more about MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital, visit mdanderson.org/children.

Video at http://bit.ly/2wUqFnl

PASSING THE TORCH

To help make a difference for people with cancer, Turi Scheurich, age 7, of Houston, recently visited MD Anderson’s Development Office to contribute $20 she and her twin sister, Amelie, raised at their lemonade stand. Their mother, Kaitlyn, is a former MD Anderson employee who strives to inspire generosity in her daughters and continue the family’s philanthropic values through the next generation. Their donation will support the work of Samir Hanash, M.D., Ph.D., professor, Clinical Cancer Prevention, and his efforts to develop blood-based screening and diagnostic tests for the early detection of breast cancer.
PLANNED GIVING

Philanthropy that offers peace of mind
After losing his wife of 55 years to cancer, Jim Baker of Clearwater, Florida, changed his estate plans to include an endowment benefiting MD Anderson in her name. He also established two charitable gift annuities to receive steady income while supporting the institution.

Bruce and Susie Peden of Fort Worth believe strongly in supporting groundbreaking science. After reading about MD Anderson for years, they dedicated a portion of their estate to the institution’s world-class research program.

Doris Zagon of Pembroke Pines, Florida, lost her son, Michael, when he was only 14. In his memory, she made a bequest through her estate to create the Michael Louis Zagon Children’s Sarcoma Endowment.

Baker, Zagon and the Pedens have unique perspectives on estate planning, with one common bond: They are members of the MD Anderson Legacy Society, which honors donors who use planned giving to invest in MD Anderson’s future and its mission to end cancer. Planned giving includes any gift made in life or at death as part of a donor’s overall financial and/or estate planning.

Various options available to donors include appreciated securities, charitable bequests, charitable gift annuities, charitable lead trusts, charitable remainder trusts, life insurance, real estate, retirement plans, revocable living trusts and tangible personal property. These giving vehicles can benefit a variety of programs at MD Anderson, providing seed money for basic science and clinical research, enhancing patient care, enabling professional education programs and supporting capital projects such as patient care and research facilities.

“Planned gifts of all types and sizes not only offer donors the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families, but also can generate income and reduce income taxes,” says Patrick Mulvey, vice president for Development.

A JOINT DECISION
Investing in MD Anderson — and each other

Patty Abbott knows firsthand the advantages of planned giving. Though her husband, Jerry, died recently, the plans they put into place years ago are ensuring a reliable and secure source of retirement income for Patty while helping finance the future of cancer research and patient care.

About a decade ago, soon after Jerry became an MD Anderson patient, the Abbotts began supporting the Annual Fund. Later, to receive a steady income stream and benefit the institution they loved, they created five charitable gift annuities. This allowed them to make a generous contribution to MD Anderson and receive needed income. Additionally, they designated MD Anderson to receive a portion of their estate, directing their gift to particular areas of interest.

Annuities can be set up as single life, offering income until the donor dies, or joint life, adding a layer of financial security for a surviving spouse. The Abbotts decided on the joint life annuity option, and Patty will continue to benefit financially from this decision for the rest of her life.

“We are blessed to have such a world-class cancer center as MD Anderson, and it gives me great satisfaction to support the clinicians and researchers who are making a difference for patients around the world,” says Patty. “It’s an investment in the present and the future.”

TO LEARN MORE on making a planned gift to MD Anderson, email plannedgiving@mdanderson.org or call 866-928-9494.

LEARN MORE AT www.mdanderson.org/gifts
GETTING TO KNOW

Don Woo

BY SARAH WATSON

Don Woo is president of Houston-based Mission Constructors, where he is principal-in-charge and directs the general management and operations of the firm, which provides construction management, value engineering and construction services throughout Texas. An active civic leader, he has been a member of the MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors (BOV) since 2010 and currently chairs its Development Committee. He received the 2006 Asian Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneur of the Year award, and in 2008, the Greater Houston Communication Foundation named him an Outstanding Community Volunteer for his advocacy as a member of MD Anderson’s Advance Team advisory board. Also that year, Woo was an honoree of the Gee Family Association Education Fund of Greater Houston. He received the 2006 Asian Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneur of the Year award, and in 2008, the Greater Houston Communication Foundation named him an Outstanding Community Volunteer for his advocacy as a member of MD Anderson’s Advance Team advisory board. Also that year, Woo was an honoree of the Gee Family Association Education Fund of Greater Houston. He received the American Jewish Committee Institute of Human Relations Award in 2010 and in 2017 was named a Junior Achievement Hall of Achievement Laureate. He and his wife, Nancy, have three children, all Rice University graduates: Christian, Class of 2013, and Lauren and Austin, Class of 2016. Their graduation on the same day their dad received his MBA there was a first in the history of Rice’s business school.

What three words best describe you?
Humble, loyal, determined.

Tell us about the Development Committee.
The Development Committee is an important component of MD Anderson’s overall fundraising initiative. We engage and educate the membership on the institution’s needs and priorities and also reach out to private and corporate entities to raise awareness of MD Anderson’s research advances and how philanthropy can help drive progress. In addition to attending and hosting events, we connect with current and former patients, cultivating their interest in becoming involved with MD Anderson. Our goals also include referring patients, raising funds and securing philanthropy.

What is most important in life?
Faith in God, family and friends.

How do you like to spend your spare time?
I enjoy spending quality time with family, having dinner with our dear friends, reading and keeping up with the market and current events.

How did you get involved with the BOV?
I began my involvement with MD Anderson through the Advance Team in 2002, focusing on kids and cancer prevention.

What has been most rewarding as a BOV member?
Although bittersweet, it is from referring friends and others with cancer from all over the country to MD Anderson. Hearing their wonderful experiences, with great results and hope for their futures, when they complete their treatment is a priceless reward. Being a BOV member is being an ambassador of MD Anderson.

Why do you support MD Anderson in Making Cancer History?
Over the years I have seen what cancer has done to friends and family members. If we can be of any assistance, we should do so with open arms. We have the best cancer research hospital in the world in our own back yard, and the future holds great possibilities. What a shame it would be not to assist in helping MD Anderson end this terrible disease so future generations will not have to face this burden.
ZOO-MING IN
Closed-circuit TV channel entertains pediatric patients with animal-oriented programming

BY KATRINA BURTON

MD Anderson Children’s Cancer Hospital offers patients and families a new television channel, San Diego Zoo Kids, featuring real-life zoo animal experiences through closed-circuit television. The innovative programming is available on monitors in every patient room, staff access areas and waiting areas at the hospital.

“At the Children’s Cancer Hospital, we’re dedicated to providing our young patients with the world’s best cancer treatment, all while enhancing their care experience,” says Richard Gorlick, M.D., division head and chair of Pediatrics. “We’re thankful to the San Diego Zoo Kids channel for providing a wonderful educational opportunity and adding to our resources for our patients and families.”

Funded by businessman and philanthropist T. Denny Sanford, San Diego Zoo Kids was launched mainly for hospitals and medical facilities treating pediatric patients. The programming offers up-close video encounters with animals, short videos about caring for animals and quizzes about animals and their habitats.

“The stories we tell not only entertain children and their families during what can be a stressful time, but also hopefully inspire a new generation to appreciate wildlife and their natural habitats,” says Douglas Myers, president and chief executive officer of San Diego Zoo Global. “We’ve heard from several doctors, nurses and families that providing these animal stories has been a resource of calm and comfort for their young patients.”

San Diego Zoo Kids, installed in 96 children’s hospitals and Ronald McDonald Houses in 27 states across the United States and in Mexico, Canada and Australia, partners with local zoos to film animals in their zoo habitats. San Diego Zoo Kids partnered with the Houston Zoo to film animal stories that are edited and uploaded to MD Anderson’s designated channel.

“The Houston Zoo is honored to contribute to this important project,” says Lee Ehmke, president and chief executive officer of the Houston Zoo. “The entire zoo team is excited to share charming and fascinating animal stories with our young neighbors and their families.”

Kate Unger, family programs coordinator for the Houston Zoo, introduces a prickly performer at a launch event welcoming the San Diego Zoo Kids channel to MD Anderson Children’s Cancer Hospital.

Olivia Degn passes out goodie bags courtesy of the San Diego Zoo to patients, families and guests.

Lee Ehmke of the Houston Zoo explains his team’s partnership in providing content for the channel.

Unger offers a close-up look at a feathered friend from the Houston Zoo.
ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOLADES

William Atkinson, division administrator for Internal Medicine, receives $15,000 Rogers Award

BY ALLISON SCHAFFER

William Atkinson recently accepted the 31st annual Julie and Ben Rogers Award for Excellence in Administration. He received $15,000 in recognition of his leadership and dedication to MD Anderson’s mission to end cancer.

Atkinson is responsible for all financial, human resources, strategic and budgetary oversight for the academic division of Internal Medicine, with more than 150 clinical and research faculty and more than 350 classified employees. He joined MD Anderson in 2007, working in Physicians Referral Services and Emergency Medicine before joining Internal Medicine.

“Bill exemplifies collaborative leadership,” says Shibu Varghese, senior vice president, People and Business Operations, HR Administration, and a member of the Rogers Award selection committee. “He empowers and engages his team toward successful outcomes. Based on the nominations, it’s evident that his style of leadership is welcoming to his peers, direct reports and faculty.”

Regina Rogers, a senior member of the MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors, established the award in 1987 as a tribute to her parents, the late Julie and Ben Rogers of Beaumont, Texas. Her mother, Julie, and brother, Arvey Rogers, M.D., were treated successfully at MD Anderson.

“Like too many others, my family has been touched by cancer,” says Rogers. “It’s an honor to be able to give due credit to the very best and brightest at MD Anderson: the outstanding men and women who work harder and harder each day to make a difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families.”

2017 FINALISTS

• Shamsha Damani, program director, Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences
• Ray Gerwitz, director, Police Administration and Support Services
• Randy Vidrine, medicine department administrator, Melanoma Medical Oncology and Sarcoma Medical Oncology
• Tricia L. White-Rhemtulla, department administrator, Health Disparities Research
MAKING THE CANCER JOURNEY MORE ACCESSIBLE
Family foundation supports MD Anderson’s The Woodlands location

BY LESLIE FRIEDMAN

Kathy Harkey was the light of the room, an engaging woman who cherished gatherings with family, friends and neighbors. Before moving to The Woodlands in 1996 with her husband, Don, she worked as an industrial hygienist in Beaumont, Texas, and co-founded ICU Environmental Health and Safety, one of the largest and most respected health and safety companies on the Gulf Coast. She was a beloved wife, mother, daughter, sister and friend who could overcome almost any obstacle.

In January 2012, business entrepreneurs Kathy and Don were building a store, Woodlands Unique, when Kathy found a small lump on her right breast. She chose MD Anderson’s location in The Woodlands for treatment, undergoing six months of chemotherapy.

While visiting her daughter Kate in Germany that December, Kathy experienced breathing problems and was admitted to a hospital. Upon returning to Houston, she learned the cancer had spread to her liver. Kathy remained upbeat and resilient through three more months of chemotherapy and three clinical trials, but the cancer continued to spread. She died at 58 in April 2014.

Don continues Kathy’s legacy, from piloting Woodlands Unique to launching The Kathy S. Harkey Breast Cancer Foundation. Through the foundation, his goal is to help fund the development of life-extending treatments for metastatic breast cancer.

“It’s a long, arduous journey when you have breast cancer, and when you see what someone has to go through, you want to make a difference,” he says.

Don donated a $5,000 refrigerator to MD Anderson in The Woodlands to store drugs for clinical trials. He appreciated that Kathy could have her treatment so close to home.

“MD Anderson’s Houston area locations are the way to go since they are so accessible,” he says. “I donated the refrigerator so that The Woodlands facility can offer more clinical trials.”

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With a portion of proceeds from the store’s sales donated to the foundation, Don has contributed more than $75,000 to MD Anderson and the support group Breast Friends.

CONVENIENT CARE CLOSE TO HOME
In addition to MD Anderson’s campus in the Texas Medical Center, MD Anderson provides cancer care at these Houston-area care centers: Bay Area, Katy, West Houston (diagnostic imaging), Bellaire (diagnostic imaging), Sugar Land, The Woodlands, Memorial City (surgical clinic) and The Woman’s Hospital of Texas (gynecologic oncology). MD Anderson is the exclusive provider of breast radiology services for 15 of Memorial Hermann’s breast care centers across the Houston area.
RODI AND BOB FRANCO, of Bellaire, Texas, are the proud parents of Michael, who was successfully treated for acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) while a patient at MD Anderson. In gratitude, the Francos are making an annual donation to MD Anderson to honor and celebrate their son’s good health.

When our son, Michael, was feeling exhausted and having trouble focusing during his senior year at Rice University, his girlfriend, Fran, insisted that he see a physician at the student medical center. Michael’s blood work indicated leukemia. With the Rice physician’s referral, we rushed him to MD Anderson’s Emergency Center. That’s where we met Dr. Tapan Kadia. Dr. Kadia steadily and clearly explained that Michael’s health situation was dire. He ordered the first of many bone marrow aspirations and admitted Michael to the intensive care unit immediately to begin chemotherapy under observation.

Days later, Michael was diagnosed with ALL, and Dr. Kadia introduced us to our clinical trial team. Our only hope was that Michael tolerated and responded to a clinical trial designed for young adults with ALL. Michael would undergo almost three years of chemotherapy, with the most intense treatments in the first eight months.

Amazingly, Michael was an ‘early fast responder.’ And though he had many negative side effects, he persevered. During his treatment, he graduated from Rice with a double major in math and applied math and worked for BP in its high performance computing center.

Today, Michael is a Ph.D. student in applied math at the University of California, Berkeley, and comes home several times a year to confirm his continued remission.

Michael’s successful journey started with his unwavering confidence and optimism, sustained by the support of Fran, our friends and family. We believe in MD Anderson’s world-class research and collaborative care and are grateful to Dr. Kadia and our clinical team.