Finding Courage to Heal: 
Nationally Recognized Program Benefits Patient

When Kris Sirca first got a headache in the fall of 2012, she wasn’t worried. The 65-year-old retired school teacher simply started taking aspirin around-the-clock and waited for the headaches to end.

But they didn’t end. The headaches continued for weeks, gradually getting worse, until one night, her husband insisted they go to St. Jude Medical Center’s Emergency Department. An MRI revealed a large mass on her brain, which was quickly identified as glioblastoma, a particularly aggressive type of malignant brain tumor.

Within hours, Dr. Bradley Noblett, a highly respected neurosurgeon at St. Jude, successfully removed most of the tumor with image-guided stereotactic surgery, using advanced computer and navigation technologies to avoid damaging vital areas while removing as much tumor as possible.

But, with cells that typically extend like thin tendrils into the surrounding brain tissue, eventually, glioblastomas simply regrow. “This is not a cancer you are ever rid of,” explains Dr. Noblett, who has helped make St. Jude a national center of excellence in neuroscience. “Instead, the goal is to manage it using surgery, newer chemotherapies and more targeted radiation therapies. There is no cure for this common cancer, but each small breakthrough in treatment moves us closer.”

Fortunately, the hospital that Kris had come to so many times before, for her husband’s gall bladder attack, her father’s stroke and a dozen other medical crises, turned out to also offer one of the nation’s finest neurosurgery and oncology programs. Over the last year at St. Jude, Kris has used every advantage in fighting the cancer, from an expert multi-disciplinary team of specialists, to innovative support services and one of the state’s most successful cancer rehabilitation programs.

“It is wonderful to have experts in surgery and oncology managing your care, but St. Jude is about so much more than just the medicine,” says Kris, who is a leader in the non-profit Knots-of-Love that provides beautifully knitted caps for chemo patients throughout the U.S.; over 3,000 caps have been personally crocheted by Kris. “They cared for me spiritually, protected me emotionally, and helped me find the courage to heal.”

If Kris’s future holds another surgery, it may very well take place in the Northwest Patient Tower’s “smart” neurosurgery suite, one of the first of its kind in Southern California. Slated to open later this year, the state-of-the-art suite is designed to create the optimal surgical environment and includes intraoperative MRI, allowing St. Jude Medical Center’s surgeons to navigate the brain using highly precise, real-time images. Typically found only at major academic research hospitals, the “smart” neurosurgical suite with iMRI will allow more complete removal of tumors, even from hard-to-reach areas of the brain.

Continued on Back...

Celebrate National Doctors’ Day • March 30, 2014

Every day St. Jude Medical Center’s doctors touch the lives of many patients and their families. We invite you to recognize doctors who have made a difference in your life by making a Doctors’ Day donation to the St. Jude Memorial Foundation.

For more information on how to make a donation, call Sonya Longbotham at (714) 446-5871.
Message from Terry Brick,  
Memorial Foundation Board Chair

I can’t tell you how proud and excited I am to become chair of the St. Jude Memorial Foundation board of directors at such a promising time. I’m proud because over my last eight years on the board, I’ve seen this institution advance their medical technology and capabilities in many specialties. The excellence of their staff and programs has been recognized by several authorities, including:

- Highest national ranking for a cardiac surgery program—three stars—from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, achieved by only 12% of U.S. hospitals.
- Chosen as one of only 20 medical centers across the United States to participate in the SWIFT PRIME study, a new clinical trial for acute ischemic stroke patients.

- Noted for excellence in emergency stroke care on the Target: Stroke Honor Roll by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association.
- A Blue Cross and Blue Shield “Blue Distinction Center” for demonstrating expertise in providing quality care for cardiac care, knee and hip replacement and spine surgery.
- Accreditation with commendation for their cancer services by The American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer, after rigorous process and performance evaluation.
- Recognition for the St. Jude Kathryn T. McCarty Breast Center as a Certified Quality Breast Center by the National Quality Measures for Breast Centers and designation as a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology.
- 38 St. Jude physicians were named Physicians of Excellence by Orange County Medical Association and St. Jude Heritage Medical Group recognized as top medical group in Orange County by Consumer Reports.

My excitement stems from the quantum leap forward that St. Jude will take when the new Northwest Patient Tower opens later this year. The cutting-edge technology and equipment will advance surgical capabilities required for the treatment of heart disease, cancer and neurological and spine disease. One unit in the tower will be specialized for orthopedics. Already the promise of our facilities is attracting the best and brightest in these fields.

However, the medical center would not have been able to do this without the generous gifts from our community. I’d like to express the memorial foundation board’s gratitude to the community members and organizations listed to the right who have given significant gifts of $25,000 or more to ensure that St. Jude has the advanced technology and state-of-the-art equipment that our community deserves.

We are deeply grateful to the Crosson Family for their $500,000 challenge match. By year end, their leadership gift had inspired more than $2 million in gifts to the new tower.

And finally, we appreciate all of you who have responded so generously to the campaign for the new tower. Your outpouring of support has helped us fund $16 million of the $20 million in technology and equipment needed by May 2014.

To those of you who are still thinking about making a gift to the Northwest Patient Tower, I assure you there is no other cause that would have greater impact on ensuring outstanding medical care for your friends, family and neighbors.

Northwest Patient Tower Donors:
Community Members and Organizations

Gifts of $25,000 and Above

- Ann Peppers Foundation
- Anonymous
- Terry Pratt Brick
- The Bridgford Family
- Betty Buflkin
- Albert J. Crosson Family
- Robert A. Curry
- Damas de Caridad
- Mr. and Mrs. James L. Davis
- The Dhont Family Foundation
- Estate of William R. Dickson
- Dr. and Mrs. John E. Dymond
- Estate of Darlene Engler
- Mr. Paul Goldenberg
- Dr. and Mrs. Timothy G. Greco
- Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Paul Hughes
- The Fred A. Jordan Family
- Dr. and Mrs. Bertram Justus
- Mrs. Junko Klaus
- Mildred N. and Russell H.* Knott
- Richard Kratz, M.D.
- Estate of Albert W. Lau
- Dr. and Mrs. Joseph S. Lawton
- Estate of Harold and Henrietta Lee
- Helen Lettice
- John Lin Charitable Foundation
- Drs. Michael and Donna Marino
- McCarthy Building Companies, Inc.
- Carlos and Haydee Mollura and Family
- La Vada A. Moudy*
- Estate of Francis Murdock
- Estate of Virginia and Burt Polin
- Estate of Mr. Carrol Reams
- Paul A. Riffel Family
- Susan and Mel Shaw
- St. Jude Medical Center Guild
- Mr. and Mrs. Charles U. Steichen
- Stephen and Barbara Straub
- John and Jeanette Svet
- Albert Toscano
- Wellington and Colleen White
- Vinyl Technology, Inc.
- Mrs. Doris Winters

*Deceased.

As of December 31, 2013.
Save the Date: 
Damas Honors Dr. Sugarman

This year’s Damas de Caridad “Building Dreams Together” event on April 5th will have added significance as they pay tribute to Michael Sugarman, M.D., for all of his contributions to St. Jude Medical Center and their patients.

Dr. Sugarman is a fitting honoree, as this event will again benefit advanced technology and equipment for the new Northwest Patient Tower on St. Jude’s campus. Damas members are working hard to surpass the $77,000 raised at their 2013 event.

“Everything about this year’s event will be bigger and better,” says event chair Susan Shaw. “We will have live and silent auctions, a meal catered by the wonderful Anaheim White House, and many interesting opportunity baskets.”

“Over the past 53 years, our organization’s efforts have raised nearly $2 million for St. Jude Medical Center,” says Lorraine Lappi, Damas de Caridad president. “We invite everyone to join us in this worthwhile cause as well as pay tribute to a deserving physician.”

“Damas de Caridad has done so much to support growth and excellence at St. Jude Medical Center,” says Sugarman. “I’m proud and humbled to be chosen by this generous group.”

Charitable Gift Annuity: Income for Life

How a Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA) works:

• A CGA is a simple agreement that promises you a fixed income in exchange for an irrevocable gift of cash or other assets.

• Income payments are based upon rates suggested by the American Council on Gift Annuities; the amount depends upon the age and number of beneficiaries (see rate chart).

• The donor may qualify for an income tax deduction in the year of the gift, and a portion of the annuity payments is tax-exempt.

Charitable Gift Annuity benefits include:

• Fixed payments for life.

• An immediate income tax deduction for those who itemize.

• Recognition in the Sister Jane Frances Society, our estate giving legacy society. For more details, visit stjudemedicalcenter.org/plannedgiving.

• The personal satisfaction of knowing that your gift will help St. Jude Medical Center continue to offer the quality medical care that it has provided to the community since it opened in 1957.

So mark your calendar for “Building Dreams Together” on Saturday, April 5th at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

To reserve a space now for yourself and friends, call Susan Shaw at (714) 525-7758 or log on to DamasDeCaridad.com. Space is limited.

For more information, contact Carolyn Swanson at (714) 992-3033 or email her at Carolyn.Swanson@stjoe.org.

Current CGA Single Life Payout Rates

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<th>For Ages</th>
<th>60-64</th>
<th>65-74</th>
<th>75-84</th>
<th>85-89</th>
<th>90+</th>
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<td>Rate Range</td>
<td>4.4-4.6%</td>
<td>4.7-5.7%</td>
<td>5.8-7.6%</td>
<td>7.8-8.7%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
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Rates subject to change. Please call for details.
According to Dr. Noblett, who is involved in a number of clinical trials, the future holds promise in effectively treating glioblastoma, including vaccines that recognize and attack the tumor cells. “But perhaps equally important to all that Western medicine can offer is something harder to measure: the spirit and optimism of the person fighting the cancer,” explains the fellowship-trained surgeon. “Kris’s inner strength and vitality are nothing short of amazing. If anyone can beat this, it is Kris—and we will use every available option to help her.”

“The new tower is about continuing to offer world class care in this community,” says Dr. Noblett, “for Kris and all the others who will walk through our doors looking for hope and healing.”