Thank you for supporting our team!

Your gift to Kari and Kelsey's fund supports the heart and soul of FACC operations, including tools, training, and support for many on our fantastic team. When combined with scholarship gifts, it allows us to continue to attract skilled and compassionate specialty trainees. Thank you for investing in the future of veterinary oncology!

WELCOME

Please join us in welcoming several new team members!

Dr. Maureen Griffin joins us as a surgical oncology fellow after completing a residency at the University of California, Davis.

Dr. Kathryn Pitt completed her small-animal surgical residency and will spend this year as a surgical oncology fellow.

Dr. Theodore Chang is our newest radiation oncology resident. He joins the team from Purdue University.

After her medical oncology internship with us last year, ***Dr. Elise Martens*** stays with us to complete her three-year medical oncology residency.

Dr. Ashley Parker joins the team as a medical oncology resident, following a rotating internship at the University of Florida.

Following a year at The Ohio State University, ***Dr. Molly Gasparini*** looks forward to training as a medical oncology intern this year.

Dr. Jennifer Grover graduated from Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine and joins us as One Cure clinical trials intern.

BEST WISHES

We wish the best of luck to the following team members who have left us for new adventures and thank them for the many ways they have made a difference!

Surgical oncology fellow, ***Dr. Tristram Bennett***, returned to Sydney, Australia, to work at the Small Animal Specialist Hospital.

Surgical oncology fellow, ***Dr. Chris Thomson***, joined a private practice in San Diego, California.

Dr. Brittany Wittenberns completed her residency and started her career at the Austin Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center.

Medical oncologist, ***Dr. Monica Fernandez,*** joined Tampa Bay Vet Specialists in Largo, Florida.

Dr. Kirsha Fredrickson completed her One Cure clinical trials internship and started her medical oncology residency at the University of California, Davis.

Maria Lerma, FACC oncology technician, is leaving Fort Collins for new adventures. We wish her well and thank her for making a big difference for our patients.

WELCOME (BACK), DR. WUSTEFELD-JANSSENS

In December 2020, former Flint Animal Cancer Center surgical oncology fellow, Dr. Brandan Wustefeld-Janssens, returns to join our surgical oncology faculty. Wustefeld-Janssens comes back to us following three years as an assistant professor of surgical oncology at Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. ***Welcome back!***

Dr. Brendan Wustefeld-Janssens joins the FACC surgical oncology faculty.

OUR MISSION is to improve the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer in pet animals, translating our research and knowledge to also benefit people with cancer. We attain our mission through an innovative study of cancer, thoughtful and compassionate care, specialized treatment options, and clinical trials.

OUR VISION is to conquer cancer in all species.

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Compassionate and Comprehensive Clinical Care | Transformative and Collaborative Research | Innovative and Exceptional Teaching | Purposeful and Responsive Outreach

FLINT ANIMAL CANCER CENTER
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

LET'S STAY CONNECTED

www.csuanimalcancercenter.org

NEWSLETTER | Fall 2020

Tails of Hope

UPDATES FOR FRIENDS OF THE FLINT ANIMAL CANCER CENTER

Focusing on opportunity

After pivoting to address the crisis caused by the global pandemic last spring, the team at the Robert H. and Mary G. Flint Animal Cancer Center is thinking of the future and reimagining what is possible for cancer research, treatment, and prevention.

"Despite the pandemic, cancer hasn't taken a break and neither has our team," said Dr. Rodney Page, director, FACC. "I'm impressed with the creativity that has emerged from unprecedented uncertainty. I'm also grateful to our supporters. Without their generosity, we would not have the resources to continue our critical work, let alone dream of possibilities."

Collectively, the FACC team has identified three areas of opportunity seeded, in part, by lessons learned during the pandemic: expansion of the FACC Consult Service, execution of a new clinical service model, and acceleration of comparative oncology research.

CONSULT SERVICE

Before COVID-19, telehealth was a novel concept for the veterinary community. Strict regulations direct the types of information veterinarians can provide without having an existing veterinarian-client-patient relationship.
Out of necessity, the pandemic opened the door to opportunity as regulatory agencies allowed increased use of telemedicine. We believe the lessons learned during the pandemic will inform regulatory change. While we've been answering general questions for owners and consulting with veterinarians for more than 25 years, we've chosen to invest in upgrading our consult service interface and staffing to grow this program. We hope to serve more clients and referring veterinarians from around the world as telemedicine gains acceptance.

NEW CLINICAL MODEL

As an academic institution, we are committed to teaching D.V.M. students to be Day One-ready practitioners. It is our job to help them understand the basics of veterinary cancer during their two-week oncology rotation.

"Students have always been members of our care team," said Dr. Susan Lana, oncology service chief. "In March, when D.V.M. students moved to remote learning, we had to adjust operations quickly."

Learning to care for patients without students fast-tracked a new dual-service model that has been in design for a few years. And with this year's addition of medical oncologists Drs. Kate Vickery and Jenna Burton to the team, we are ready to implement our vision.

The new model includes a teaching service and a clinical service. In our dedicated teaching service, our team will see fewer patients to allow time for in-depth student learning. Fourth-year D.V.M. students will work with faculty to understand cancer diagnoses and treatment planning. In parallel, our dedicated clinical service permits us to see more patients, similar to private practices. It also provides our specialists-in-training with the opportunity to develop multidisciplinary management plans for complex cancers that are critical for their specialty careers.

Patients in both services will benefit from our comprehensive care model. Every treatment plan is designed and supervised by our

continued ...

THANK YOU FOR MAKING OUR WORK POSSIBLE

Your Gift at Work (2019)

6,546
PATIENT VISITS

1,605
CONSULTATIONS

427
SURGERIES

1,888
RADIATION TREATMENTS

FLINT ANIMAL CANCER CENTER
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

SPEEDING UP THE CURE

Despite a date change and circumstances surrounding the global pandemic, the Graham and Courtney Rahal Foundation raised more than $300,000 at their Ninth Annual Drivers Tournament. The famous Brickyard Crossing Golf Course at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway played host to this year's event. Proceeds will be split between One Cure and Soldiers Strong, with more than $100,000 gifted to each organization. We're so grateful for Graham and Courtney's continued commitment to speeding up the cure!

Graham and Courtney Rahal and their dogs, Arrow and Beau.

One Cure at Work (2019)

35
CLINICAL TRIALS

167
PATIENTS

956
PATIENT VISITS

medical, surgical, and radiation oncology faculty. The new model enhances learning opportunities and opens our schedule to provide expert care for more patients.

CRISIS AND POSSIBILITY

Over the last 10 years, the FACC has built a cancer research core facility, unlike any other in veterinary medicine.

"Our biorepository houses the raw materials (patient biological samples and cell lines); our labs are the toolboxes we use to identify targets for novel drug therapies; and our clinical trials program houses the work site where we test our concepts," said Page. "This structure provides a springboard for discovery."

In March 2020, the pandemic changed everything. Rather than rest, FACC scientists took the time to think creatively to take better advantage of our research infrastructure.

"When we weren't able to work in our labs, we had the time to get in our heads and think about problems related to cancer and new approaches," said Dr. Doug Thamm, FACC clinical research director. "We're discussing non-traditional collaborations between basic scientists and clinical trials or pharmacologists and medical oncologists, focusing on more robust interactions."

With the infrastructure in place and creativity flowing, Page sees countless opportunities.

"As Einstein said, 'in the midst of every crisis, lies great opportunity.' Maybe the silver lining of 2020 is the chance to imagine new possibilities." ■

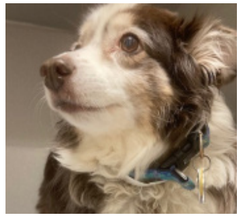
One Cure in Action

It's common knowledge among cancer researchers that tumors lacking oxygen (hypoxic) don't respond well to radiation. FACC radiation oncology section head, Dr. Susan LaRue, is working with colleagues at four universities to test a new approach that adds oxygen to tumors with the help of microbubbles.

"Solid tumors, whether in pets or people, are characterized by disorganized, leaky vessels that promote regions of low oxygenation. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of many of our cancer therapies also substantially decreases when tissue has less oxygen," said Paul Dayton, Ph.D., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University, the study's principal investigator. "In recent laboratory analysis, we have had success in using microbubbles to increase tumor oxygen levels. Based on this data, we're ready for the next steps, and I'm excited to work with Dr. LaRue and others to evaluate this therapy in dogs with cancer."

A NOVEL STUDY

The project, called *Treating Tumoral Hypoxia via Ultrasound-Guided Oxygen Release for Improving Radiation Therapy,* is funded by the National Institutes of Health. The study is enrolling canine patients with soft tissue sarcomas, a cancer of the connective tissue. These canine tumors are bulky and often radiation-resistant, with evidence of tumor hypoxia.



Ellie Mae is participating in this study for dogs with soft tissue sarcoma.

Per the protocol, microbubbles are injected into patients in the treatment group. (Control group patients will receive standard radiation therapy.) Then, using a handheld ultrasound device, technicians guide the bubbles to the tumor. The fragile microbubbles break and release oxygen into the tumor tissue. Immediately following, the tumor is treated with radiation.

If proven effective, the microbubble application paired with radiation could translate to any hypoxic tumor, whether in dogs or people, a potentially exciting breakthrough for cancer patients.

CAPITALIZING ON OPPORTUNITY

According to LaRue, the NIH-funded study provides a fruitful analysis of the microbubble application, but she saw an opportunity to learn more. Thanks to a gift from One Cure friends, Dawn and Brett Anderson, LaRue plans to biopsy the tumors before treatment, immediately after treatment, and three weeks post-treatment. Not only will the team be able to measure changes to the tumor size, but they will also be able to analyze radiation-induced tumor DNA changes at different points in time.

"This study is a win-win," said LaRue. "The microbubble study can inform future treatment for all cancer patients, while the tumor biopsies provide us with genetic information about soft tissue sarcomas that can lead to a new understanding of this disease. We have lots of possibilities." ■

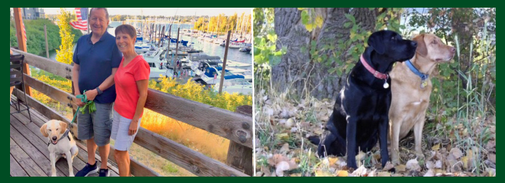
WHY WE GIVE

Nancy and Larry McDonald, and Sunshine, our new buddy

We first met the team at the Flint Animal Cancer Center after Bow, our yellow Lab, was diagnosed with cancer. Our vet recommended a local clinic but, after research, Larry said, "No way; we're taking him to CSU."

Bow had chemo and radiation; we were so grateful for the compassionate care he received. About a year later Rain, our black Lab, was diagnosed with cancer, so we returned to FACC for his treatment.

In honor of Rain and Bow, and the fantastic FACC team, we've included the cancer center in our estate plans. Our gift will support One Cure to help advance treatments for pets and people with cancer, and patient assistance to help families pay for care. We believe our legacy giving will make a difference in fighting this ugly disease.



Left to right: Sunshine, Larry, and Nancy McDonald; Rain and Bow

Your gift can make a difference for 100 patient families.

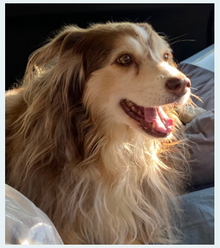
Help us reach $100,000 for patient assistance in 2020

In response to the ongoing uncertainty of our times, patient assistance continues to be a top priority for the team at the Flint Animal Cancer Center. We are so grateful for friends like you who supported our spring campaign and helped us raise more than $66,000 to date.

To fund this continuing and critical need, we are asking for your help! We're hoping to raise an additional $34,000 by the end of this year. With $100,000 we can provide lifesaving care for 100 patient families. Please consider a year-end gift to one of our patient assistance funds to ensure money isn't a barrier to care. See the enclosed envelope for details or contact Torii Kapavik, director of development, torii.kapavik@colostate.edu, (254) 424-2327 for more information.

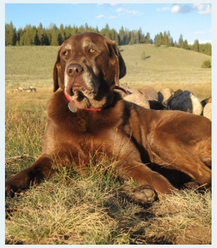
What patient assistance means to me

KIVA
Patient Assistance Fund Recipient



I am so thankful for the funds to help keep Kiva happy and healthy. She has been my best friend since I was a teenager and she has helped me through more difficult days than any human ever could. She had a scary recovery from lung cancer surgery when she developed aspiration pneumonia, a rare side effect. With two lung lobes removed and one infected by pneumonia, she required supplemental oxygen, IV antibiotics, and several days in the critical care unit until she could breathe easily again. Today, she is doing so amazing and is back to her normal, happy, crazy self. I cannot thank you all enough for helping give her back her life; I will be forever grateful.

TERRY AND BART MAYES
Founders, Holly's Legacy Fund



Holly was our remarkable chocolate Lab, who endured many health challenges in her 12 years. The compassionate care she received at CSU inspired us to create Holly's Legacy. We were fortunate to have the resources to pay for Holly's treatments. We know, however, that many seniors and persons with disabilities often live on fixed incomes and don't have resources for companion-animal care. Through our gifts to Holly's Legacy, combined with others, we hope to help these pet parents choose the best treatment option without worrying about the financial burden.

DR. SUSAN LANA
FACC Oncology Service Chief

Gifts to patient assistance funds make a difference to so many. While it's obvious that they mean the world to our patients and their families, I also want our friends to know how much these funds mean to our clinicians. To know that we have the tools and expertise to care for a patient but that money is a barrier for the family is incredibly difficult for our team members. Fortunately, thanks to gifts from our friends, we often still have the ability to help.

JOHN AND BUD
Patient Assistance Fund Recipient and Donor

For three years now, it's been on my heart to write you a letter to acknowledge the wonderful care you provided for my dog, Bud. You addressed his terminal cancer with the utmost compassion and professionalism, and I'm forever grateful to you. I loved my dog to pieces, and at the time, had no financial resources to provide the care he needed. You took us in and took care of both Bud and me at that difficult time. You are all truly special and made a difference in both our lives. I'm sending a small donation in honor of Bud and your program.