

**MACKENZIE BARRON &
CLARE RONNEBAUM**
DIPG Warriors
see page 8-9



2023 ANNUAL REPORT 2024 PROGRESS REPORT



**“It’s amazing to think
that a donor three
years earlier gave us
the opportunity to
participate in this
life-saving trial.”**

- Carla Ronnebaum



THE CURE STARTS NOW®

LETTER FROM THE CEO

Sixteen years ago, when we awarded our first grant, we recognized the need to approach funding cancer research in a new way. Understanding the importance of planning for long-term projects, we noticed how quickly others would shift focus from one novel concept to the next. Instead of abandoning unsuccessful projects, it became clear we needed to capitalize on good ideas and cross-examine the failures to make improvement possible.

“When we started, we knew nothing about the biology of this disease. To say that when I started 15 years ago, we were at 0, and if we were to say that 10 is curing the disease, I would say we’ve gone past those early numbers and we’re at 5 or 6 right now. We have a real chance to push this forward in the next five or six years.”

- Dr. Chris Jones, The Institute of Cancer Research and The Cure Starts Now grantee

Our first grant was as valuable as it was modest to DIPG. We insisted that the data collected from this project be preserved and made available for future trials as a registry, all to ensure we would not fund duplicate studies. Today, that data has

helped to form the creation of an international registry of pediatric data that spans **over 100 hospitals in 29 countries.**

At The Cure Starts Now, we fight cancer differently. We question conventional thought and work hard to find the cure. Through this strategic approach, we are uncovering the essential clues to defeating cancer and solving one of society’s toughest puzzles. Motivated by the support of over 1,000 families in our warrior programs, we fight for the day we can deliver the cure that has been promised to my daughter and these families. Each donation helps us reach this goal, and your support helps fund the groundbreaking research that truly makes a difference.



Brooke Desserich
Co-Founder and Mom to
DIPG Angel Elena



ELLA-BRATING CHICK-FIL-A

Ella was a sweet and sassy 4-year-old when she was diagnosed with *diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma* (DIPG) in 2008. Her parents, Mark and Renae Newmiller, were devastated to learn that the brain tumor was inoperable and incurable. Chris Latta, Owner and Operator of Chick-fil-A, read Ella’s story in the newspaper and wanted to do something to help her family. This began the first "Ella-bration," a fundraiser hosted by Chick-fil-A, to help her family pay for medical bills, travel, and anything they needed.

The Ella-brations eventually evolved as the Latta family began planning the first Ella’s Race presented by Chick-fil-A.

Sadly, a few months before the race was set to take place Ella passed away at only eight years old. By this time, Mark and Renae founded the North Carolina (Raleigh) Chapter of The Cure Starts Now to honor Ella and support vital research for DIPG.

The race continued as planned in memory and celebration of an exceptionally brave little girl.

“Our goal for this race is really to raise enough money so no other child has to suffer like Ella did, and we can find a cure and stop this horrible disease.”

- Chris Latta, Owner/Operator of Chick-fil-A at Falls Village and Six Forks & Strickland, NC

Each year, hundreds of people participate in Ella’s Race to raise money for pediatric brain cancer research and honor Ella’s memory. Since its inception twelve years ago, the event has raised over \$235,000 for The Cure Starts Now.

“To bring hope to children and families who are facing a hopeless diagnosis. That’s her legacy, and we couldn’t be prouder.”

- Renae Newmiller

To learn how your business can honor our children and families, contact our Director of Partnerships, Melissa Fleming at melissa.fleming@thecurestartsnow.org



Ella’s Race begins as runners launch across the start line.

BREAKING RED TAPE

How We're Working with the Federal Government to Help Families

Originally intended as an expedited access portal for terminal patients, various ALS (*amyotrophic lateral sclerosis*) advocacy groups collaborated with Senator Braun of Indiana in 2020 to create the Promising Pathway Act. Learning of the proposed bill, the Musella Foundation requested The Cure Starts Now's involvement as a champion for terminal and rare pediatric cancers. Together, we teamed up with Senators Braun and Gillibrand to transform this groundbreaking legislation into what it is today—the Promising Pathway Act 2.0 (PPA 2.0).

Key Initiatives of PPA 2.0

- To fix health inequalities by letting patients with the same rare and terminal disease get access to experimental treatments without having to apply individually.
- To allow pediatric terminal and rare diseases to have better parity with adult rare and terminal disease access to trials.
- To utilize third-party registries for all PPA experimental research data so patients and the medical community can benefit from the information.
- To provide some measure of insurance coverage for PPA-based trials.

Envisioned as an alternative to Compassionate Use and Right to Try legislation with the Food and Drug Association (FDA), this new bill would allow drug companies to seek expedited approval for drugs that target rare and terminal patient categories. It defies the current convention that patients must independently audition for access to experimental treatments. Under PPA 2.0, patients would no longer be victims of healthcare inequities inherent to a system that forced them to learn more about experimental options than their doctor. PPA 2.0 requires that patient data collected by the FDA and drug companies be shared with medical

professionals. This enhances future trial data and provides the most basic of patient protection. With PPA 2.0, diseases that solely impact children – especially those that are terminal and rare – would receive special consideration, allowing them access to promising therapies. In short, PPA 2.0 offers lifesaving hope to pediatric patients with rare and terminal diseases who have been left with no other options.

In October 2023, Keith Desserich, Chairman of The Cure Starts Now, testified in front of the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging in support of the Promising Pathway Act 2.0. As Keith testified, he stressed that current acts are not an alternative for PPA 2.0.

Focused on presenting the obstacles faced by families and addressing the lack of therapies available for our children facing the unimaginable, Keith was joined by speakers from other foundations, medical professionals, and 130 families around the country. The support continues with weekly meetings with Senate health staffers, awareness meetings with families, and coordination calls with the 120+ foundations supporting this vital bill. PPA 2.0 already has bipartisan support with over 10 Senate co-sponsors with preparations ongoing with the House of Representatives in planning the next steps.

Learn more about how to support our efforts at:
thecurestartsnow.org/PPA

"I know this from not only dealing with the loss of my daughter but also in calls with over 200 families per year. They are asking for help, any help, in their last and final days."

– Keith Desserich



Senator Braun (IN, R) presents The Promising Pathway Act to the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging in October 2023.



Keith Desserich defends The Promising Pathway Act to the United State Senate Special Committee Board on Aging in October 2023.

REFLECTIONS OF GRACE

Grace Ekis was a loving little girl who enjoyed princesses, horses, soccer, and especially her family and friends. She was bright, engaging, mature, and thoughtful beyond her five years. She was always dancing; even on days she didn't have dance class, she would put on her shoes and dance in the driveway. Her parents, Tamara and Brian Ekis, were devastated by the news of their sweet girl's DIPG diagnosis. When Grace earned her wings on Valentine's Day in 2008, her parents decided to channel their grief into establishing a foundation devoted to making a difference. The foundation's name, Reflections Of Grace, signifies the effect their daughter had on the lives of those she touched throughout her short life.

In their mourning, Tamara and Brian learned they were not alone in their journey as they befriended Brooke and Keith Desserich, whose daughter Elena battled DIPG at the same time as Grace. A bond was forged in shared experiences and heartache. That bond only deepened when the Desserichs'



Left: Tamara (middle) and Brian (right) Ekis accept the 2023 Changemaker Award at the 2023 DIPG/DMG Symposium in Lexington, Kentucky, presented by Keith Desserich (left).

Right: Tamara Ekis speaks in support of the Promising Pathway Act at Washington D.C. in October 2023.

foundation, The Cure Starts Now, reached out to Reflections Of Grace inviting them to be one of the first members of the DIPG/DMG Collaborative, a cooperative effort of independent foundations from around the world that support DIPG/DMG research.



Grace Ekis, DIPG Angel

Tamara now represents the DIPG/DMG Collaborative on The Cure Starts Now's Board of Directors. Through this amazing partnership, Reflections Of Grace has expanded their impact, becoming one of the first partners to join in funding both the DIPG/DMG Registry and the Collaborative Network for Neuro-oncology Clinical Trials (CONNECT) consortium. Tamara and Brian continue Grace's fight providing financial, emotional, and educational support for families, raising awareness for pediatric brain tumors, and funding research for a cure. Since joining the DIPG/DMG Collaborative in 2011, Reflections Of Grace has provided over \$681,000 in funding. Grace was someone who was always bringing people together. Her legacy continues today in Reflections Of Grace and alongside The Cure Starts Now through the DIPG/DMG Collaborative.

Become a partner and help give kids like Grace an opportunity for hope. Contact Keith Desserich at keith@thecurestartsnow.org to learn more.

AVERY THE CANCER REBEL™

Avery was a compassionate yet fearless Warrior who faced *diffuse midline glioma* (DMG) with unwavering courage. In her two-and-a-half-year battle, her generous community rallied around her in support, raising over \$143,000 for research towards a cure.



Avery Lafferty donning her Cancer Rebel™ beanie.

Two years into her diagnosis, one of The Cure Starts Now Chapter Directors gifted Avery a winter hat with the words "Cancer Rebel" stitched across the front. It was a fitting tribute to her strength, although, at that moment, no one knew how true those words would become.

As her tumor began to take away her abilities—simple pleasures like kicking a soccer ball or balancing on skis—Avery didn't waver. She refused to let her circumstances define her, instead choosing to continue trying, pushing, and fighting with all her strength.

At 12 years old, Avery gained her angel wings in July 2024. Her legacy continues to fuel efforts in funding research and finding a cure for brain cancer. She remains a symbol of strength, resilience, and the belief that every battle, no matter how difficult, is worth fighting. Our fight for a cure is

"In the end, our lives aren't just measured in years, they're measured in the lives of people we touch. In that respect Avery (Cancer Rebel) will live for an eternity and maybe beyond."

— The Lafferty Family

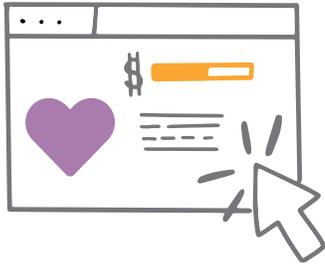
carried on in her honor and all the Cancer Rebels who face the unimaginable with courage and refuse to back down.

Join the Cancer Rebel cause and donate to fund research in honor of Avery: donate2csn.org



From left to right: Avery, Lisa, Alexis, and Paul Lafferty.

7 Ways to Give



1 Fundraise

2 Matching Sponsor

3 Stock



4 In-Kind

5 Donor-Advised Fund

6 Will

7 Donate!

Let's talk!

brooke@thecurestartsnow.org
(513) 772-4888
thecurestartsnow.org



SHARING SELINA'S SPIRIT

Selina was the right amount of sweet and sassy. She loved softball, Girl Scouts, and musical theatre. She was talented and creative with arts and crafts and playing her cello. Selina was incredibly outgoing and made friends easily in her fourth-grade class. She dreamed of being a scientist or art teacher one day.

At nine years old, Selina was diagnosed with *diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma* (DIPG). Shortly after the diagnosis, Selina slipped into a coma-like state. After several weeks, she stabilized and was able to go home. Gentle hand squeezes and some eye movements gave little comfort to her parents, who were still coming to terms with her condition.



Selina's family honoring her at their annual bowling event, Bowling for Pediatric Cancer, in 2022.

During her treatments, one thing that brought her comfort was Ed Sheeran's music, so her parents bought tickets to his concert at Gillette Stadium. Meanwhile, her community fan club came together and arranged to have Selina meet the singer backstage to make her dreams come true.

Selina gained her angel wings after a brave eight-month battle. Selina's parents, Ken and Michelle Oehmen decided to turn their pain into purpose, aiming to keep Selina's legacy alive by

"I remember the moment I heard, 'Your daughter has less than a year to live.' That pain and grief will last forever. We try to do our part so no parent has to hear those words and experience the same pain."

— Ken Oehmen

helping to fund the cure for DIPG. In 2018, they established the Massachusetts (Somerset) Chapter of The Cure Starts Now.

Since becoming a chapter, the Oehmens have raised over \$93,000 toward pediatric brain cancer research in Selina's honor. Their generous community has supported them through events such as Bowling and Jeep Convoy for Pediatric Cancer, Family Game Night, Poker Run, and a 24-hour live Stream-a-Thon. Ken and Michelle also raised funds in national campaigns including Relay for Research, Giving First, and Hearts of Gold. We are honored to walk alongside them in their journey and help them continue to make an incredible impact!



Michelle and Ken Oehmen address their community during Massachusetts (Somerset) Chapter's Bowling for Pediatric Brain Cancer event in 2023.

To learn more about the Massachusetts (Somerset) Chapter: donate2csn.org/somerset-mass

BE A HERO THIS HOLIDAY

Has a Warrior or Angel touched your life in a meaningful way? Become a matching donor for Giving First™, an 8-hour livestream give-a-thon featuring over a hundred families coming together to fundraise. Show our smallest of cancer Warriors that you are putting them first this holiday season. Don't wait until after Thanksgiving, Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday to

donate to research that will save lives. Giving First is your chance to **put our kids first** by amplifying the impact of donations with your matching contribution—from \$1,000 to \$250,000, every dollar makes a difference!

You can join the ranks of our esteemed matching donors by contacting Grace Desserich at grace@thecurestartsnow.org.



Rollin' Jokers present a check for \$2,000 to Lisa Hill (second from right) and Brooke Desserich (right) of The Cure Starts Now during the 2023 Giving First livestream.



Mark (second from right) and Missy Meinhardt (right) present a check for \$31,112 to Keith (second from left) and Grace Desserich (left) of The Cure Starts Now during the 2023 Giving First livestream.



SWEETS TO BEAT BRAIN CANCER

This isn't just any bake sale—it's a year-round extravaganza where anyone can don an apron and bake for a cause close to our hearts. This year, fearless Warriors, passionate Ambassadors, and loving Angel families whipped up treats for a cure! Their dedication and delicious creations prove that, when it comes to fighting pediatric brain cancer, every cupcake counts.

Lilly (5), Tennessee – Raised over \$1,100



With two wins against brain cancer under her belt, Lilly is a little fighter with a big goal: to cure cancer. With unwavering determination, Lilly took charge of her bake sale fundraiser, creating sweet treats and manning the register like a pro!

“Our babies need a cure. They deserve to be healthy and happy. They are the future of this world, and they should be treated with the best medicine out there.”

– Jacob & Sandy Raley, Lilly’s Parents

Theo (8), Oregon – Raised over \$400



Diagnosed with medulloblastoma in the spring of 2022, Theo spent a year in and out of hospitals during treatment. 2024 has been a year of celebrating cancer-free and fundraising for a cure!

“The Cure Starts Now is important not only to me, but to my whole family. Help not fight one cancer but eliminate all brain cancer.”

– Connie Lopez, Theo’s Mom

Honoring Amelia (4), Nova Scotia – Raised over \$500



Little Amelia gained her angel wings after a two-year battle with DIPG. In honor of this sweet girl who would have started primary school this year, teachers in her community hosted a bake sale to raise funds for a cure in her honor.

“I am still trying to make sense of a world without Amelia. But the one thing I am sure of is that I have to do good. I wouldn’t wish what we are going through on any other family, and that is why we must do better. That is why we must find a cure.”

– Jillian Villegas, Amelia’s Mom

Brooke (10), Pennsylvania – Raised over \$5,000



Brooke and her best friends hosted their second annual bake sale this spring. The group worked hard, making signs and organizing duties to ensure everything ran smoothly. This year, Brooke's Bake Sale was a testament to the power of community coming together to make a difference!

“It is the most heartwarming thing, as a cancer momma, to see your warrior child and their young friends and peers recognizing the importance of raising awareness and funds... so that, someday, children won't ever have to watch their friends fight to survive or say goodbye to them.”

– Samantha Ross, Brooke’s Mom

Host your own fundraiser with My Bake Sale: mybakesale.org



Amélie Courtney's Annual Birthday Cupcake Fundraiser: Raised over \$3,600



Cupcakes for a Cure in honor of Clare Ronnebaum: Raised over \$1,000



Sunshine Bake Sale in honor of Addison Varns: Raised over \$275



Kenley Castro's Valentine's Day Bake Sale: Raised over \$1,000

LITTLE GIRLS, MIGHTY MIRACLES



In 2018, two-year-old Clare and three-year-old Mackenzie were diagnosed with *diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma* (DIPG). With an 8- to 11-month prognosis and only a **1% chance of survival beyond five years**, their families braced for a fight with tremendous odds stacked against them. After completing radiation and enrolling in a clinical trial funded by donations like yours, both girls continue to defy the odds and recently celebrated **six years post-diagnosis!**

CLARE

At nine years old, Clare has been off her clinical trial for more than two years and her tumor has remained stable. When her brain cancer journey began, her parents, Carla and Chris Ronnebaum, could never have imagined they would be in a position to keep fighting, given her initial prognosis.

“Grateful doesn’t begin to describe how we feel to have Clare with us today. It’s amazing to think that a donor three years earlier gave us the opportunity to participate in this life-saving trial.”

– Carla Ronnebaum

Since Clare’s diagnosis, **the 5-year survival rate for DIPG has increased from 1% to 2%**, a statistic the Ronnebaums look forward to seeing increase with more funding.

The hope for progress does not change the reality of Clare’s diagnosis. Carla and Chris face constant worry as they navigate their DIPG journey. “There’s no rule book to follow when your child is diagnosed with a terminal brain cancer, or what to do when she surpasses the prognosis,” Carla noted. As DIPG parents, they are hypervigilant in analyzing any awkward movement or slurring of words, hoping that the symptoms of Clare’s tumor remain at bay. Access to a clinical trial has given Clare six years and counting with her family, and we continue striving for a future with the cure.



“Progress is being made. In a handful of years, new research is being discovered that is moving the needle. I know it may not seem like much to others, but it means everything to families like mine.”

– Chris Ronnebaum



Top to bottom, left to right: Carla, Chris, Maren, and Clare Ronnebaum.



“WE NEED MORE CLARES AND MACKENZIES.”

- CARLA RONNEBAUM

MACKENZIE

At three years old, a fall landed Mackenzie in the emergency room. What they thought would be a routine CT scan ended in learning they might only have 18 months with their little girl. Their world shifted from potty training and ABCs to radiation, clinical trials, and frequent MRIs. Thomas recalled long, sleepless nights in the hospital, searching the web for DIPG success stories, only to be met with bleak statistics.



Six years later, they have become the success story they once desperately sought. While they feel blessed to reach this milestone, Lynn says, “We are now living in what Tom and I call the space in between – we are in the unknown.” The Barron family has found themselves joyful to overcome the initial prognosis, but terrified by how little is known about what the future holds. They continuously keep an extra eye on Mackenzie,

they fear every headache or stumble, hoping no symptoms can be considered evidence of progression and praying the DIPG monster isn’t awakened.

“Our faith in miracles continues, however we need more funding and research to find a cure so more kids like Mackenzie can survive and more importantly, THRIVE.”

- Lynn Barron



MIGHTY MIRACLES

Six years ago, Clare's and Mackenzie's families were told their daughters might never attend kindergarten, that there were no options, and they should spend what time they had left making memories with their girls. Today, thanks to the generosity of donors like you, both girls are now attending third and fourth grade. These remarkable young ladies have proved that life-saving clinical trials will lead to a brighter future. Many families facing similar diagnoses look to them as inspiring examples

of the possibilities that lie ahead with increased funding for research. The hope for the Ronnebaums and the Barrons is that others will care enough for their girls, and for all children battling brain cancer, to make a donation and help fund life-saving research.

“We want the world to pause, just for a moment, and acknowledge that we can do more for kids with cancer. We are just like you in every way except for one; we are the parents of a child with cancer/terminal cancer and our only goal is to give our child, our family, a chance at a normal life.”

- Thomas Barron



Left to right: Lynn, Noah, Mackenzie, Kayla, and Thomas Barron.

Your donation today makes a difference in the life of a child tomorrow: donate2csn.org

\$34,405,660

**RAISED IN RESEARCH AND SUPPORT SINCE 2007
IN CONJUNCTION WITH OUR DIPG/DMG COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS**

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

BALANCE SHEET

As of December 31, 2023

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$3,470,014
Contributions Receivable	1,374
Other Assets - Prepaid Expenses	659,519
TOTAL ASSETS:	<u>\$4,130,907</u>

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$39,658
Grants Payable	1,227,428
Other Liabilities:	
Accrued Compensation	61,136
Deferred Revenue	27,663
Operated Lease Liability	348,046
TOTAL LIABILITIES:	<u>\$1,703,931</u>

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	\$1,923,616
Temporarily restricted	503,360
TOTAL NET ASSETS:	<u>2,426,976</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS:	<u>\$4,130,907</u>

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES & CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

For the Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2023

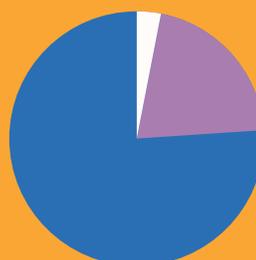
REVENUE, GAINS, & OTHER SUPPORT

Contributions	\$3,524,402
In-Kind Donations	93,403
Special Event Revenue	2,118,552
Other Support-Program Revenue	2,875
TOTAL REVENUE, GAINS, AND OTHER SUPPORT:	<u>\$5,739,232</u>

EXPENSES

Program Services:	
Medical Research	\$2,284,695
Medical Symposium	428,714
Family Support Program	1,415,604
Fundraising	1,101,887
Management and General	94,543
TOTAL EXPENSES:	<u>\$5,325,443</u>

Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$413,789
Net Assets - Beginning of year	2,013,187
Net Assets - End of year	<u>\$2,426,976</u>



IN 2023

77.5% PROGRAM EXPENSES & RESEARCH FUNDED

20.7% FUNDRAISING EXPENSES

1.8% OVERHEAD

To learn more about our Board of Directors and Councils, please go to thecurestartsnow.org/who-we-are/councils/

THE POWER OF BIG IDEAS

The Cure Starts Now is not just another cancer charity. We believe the best research projects combine institutional collaboration, novel strategies, exceptional expertise, and a healthy dose of hard work. These principles guide our organization and reflect the investments made in the research we support. They also form the foundation for how our Medical Advisory Council (MAC) selects our funded projects.

To ensure we are funding the most cutting-edge research, we accept grants from all over the world. By building relationships with doctors, researchers, and institutions, we create a global network of communication that encourages collaboration. At The Cure Starts Now, even how we accept grants is radical. Rather than just funding the hospital in our backyard or sitting back and hoping good grants show up at our door, we often work with researchers to help build innovative grant projects from beginning concepts. These grants represent some of our largest and most successful projects, such as the development of a linked and organic clinical trial data registry. Projects like these would not be possible without the help of the MAC and our generous donors.

We understand the value of every dollar you donate, which is why we ensure that funds are not wasted on duplicative research. We value success and failure, knowing we will not get it right every time. In many cases, we take the time to review a previous project's results to help make connections, offer suggestions, and be present for the next phase. This time-intensive structure requires consistent communication throughout the grant's lifecycle, and it pays off because this is where we often see the most success.

The Cure Starts Now is committed to pushing the boundaries of cancer research through collaboration and strategic funding. Our Medical Advisory Council plays a vital role in selecting and guiding research that aligns with these values, ensuring every grant has the potential to make a lasting impact. By supporting novel approaches and fostering global partnerships, we aim to disrupt conventional research methods and accelerate the path to a cure. With the dedication of the MAC, our researchers, and the generosity of our donors, we are not just funding research—we are shaping the future of cancer treatment for generations to come.

Learn more about the grants we've funded:
thecurestartsnow.org/grants

GRANT APPROVAL PROCESS



OVER \$34.4 MILLION* IN RESEARCH AND SUPPORT FUNDED

See grants funded prior to 2022 at: thecurestartsnow.org/grants

2022

- Funding of PBTFCF 2022 \$25,000
- SIOPe DIPG/DMG Registry \$779,018
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital \$50,000
- The Institute of Cancer Research \$501,183
- Hunter Medical Research Institute \$200,000
- University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center \$100,000
- The Hospital for Sick Children (SICKKIDS) \$100,000
- UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh \$100,000
- SonALAsense \$198,436
- Hunter Medical Research Institute \$232,932
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital \$153,867
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital \$60,000
- Erasmus University Medical Center \$432,354
- University of Queensland Diamantina Institute \$100,000

2023

- Funding of PBTFCF 2023 \$25,000
- University Medicine Gottengen \$50,000
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital \$50,000
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital \$200,000
- SIOPE DIPG/DMG Registry \$715,852 USD (€643,014)
- University of Colorado Denver \$200,000
- Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center \$100,000
- Children's Cancer Institute \$181,736 USD (\$282,633 AUD)
- Funding of PBTFCF 2023 \$25,000
- The University of Alabama at Birmingham \$100,000
- Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai \$100,000
- Nemours Children's Hospital \$50,000
- Princess Máxima Center for Pediatric Oncology \$98,306
- University of Newcastle \$116,997

- Children's Hospital Colorado \$100,000
- Children's Cancer Institute \$50,000
- Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai \$100,000
- University of Chicago Medical Center/Washington University St. Louis \$100,000

2024

- Cincinnati Children's Hospital \$93,250
- ...and more currently going through approval!

* Denotes grants funded with our DIPG/DMG Collaborative partners. All numbers reflect financial data accurate at time of print.

OUR DEDICATED CHAPTER FAMILIES



Alabama (Birmingham)
Director: Elizabeth Adams
Inspiration: Madeline



Australia
CEO: Eleni Millios-Hullick
Inspiration: Amy



California (Kenley Strong)
Director: Melissa Castro
Inspiration: Kenley



California (Sarah's Dreams)
Director: Shannen Nelson
Inspiration: Sarah



Canada (Amelia's Avengers)
Director: Jillian Villegas
Inspiration: Amelia



Canada (Edmonton)
Director: Amanda Nevesely
Inspiration: Naomi



Canada (Victoria)
CEO: Cari Comboye
Inspiration: Liam



Colorado (Warriors for Princess Piper)
Director: Carrina Waneka
Inspiration: Piper



Connecticut
Director: Robyn Staub
Inspiration: Lea



Connecticut (Milford)
Director: Stacey Arisian



District of Columbia
Director: Neely Agin
Inspiration: Alexis



Indiana (Adalynn STRONG)
Directors: Kate & Zach Jessen
Inspiration: Adalynn



Indiana (Addison's Sunshine)
Directors: Heidi & AJ Varns
Inspiration: Addison



Indiana (Courage for Carter)
Director: Joanna King
Inspiration: Carter



Indiana (Courage for ConLei)
Director: Jill Engel-Walworth
Inspiration: ConLei



Indiana (Lauren Hill)
Director: Lisa Hill
Inspiration: Lauren



Kentucky (Northern)
Director: Miriam Imfeld
Inspiration: All Children



Louisiana
Director: Trey Gibson
Inspiration: Emilie



Maryland (Brenna Strong)
Director: Bonnie Corcoran
Inspiration: Brenna



Massachusetts (Central)
Director: Abby Arpano
Inspiration: Kate



Massachusetts (Somerset)
Directors: Ken & Michelle Oehmen
Inspiration: Selina



Michigan (Savannah Smiles)
Director: Laurel Cash
Inspiration: Savannah



Missouri (Show-Me A Cure)
Director: Dior Toynton
Inspiration: Maeleigh



Nebraska
Director: Jesse Shumaker
Inspiration: Madelyn



Nebraska (Jimmy the Great)
Director: Nick Moran
Inspiration: Jimmy



New Hampshire (Gilford)
Director: Jesse Thompson
Inspiration: John Bradley



New York (Mandy's Mark)
Director: Kim Kuck
Inspiration: Mandy



North Carolina (Charlotte)
Director: Adrena King
Inspiration: CJ



North Carolina (Elise's Warriors)
Director: Heidi Richardson
Inspiration: Elise



North Carolina (Raleigh)
Director: Mark Newmiller
Inspiration: Ella



North Dakota (Connor's CUREsaders)
Director: Brooke George
Inspiration: Connor



North Dakota (Karing for Keaton)
Director: Jennifer Sundeen
Inspiration: Keaton



Ohio
Directors: Brooke & Keith Desserich
Inspiration: Elena



Ohio (Harleigh's Angels)
Director: Josh Hines
Inspiration: Harleigh



Ohio (JTHF)
Director: Tim Hayden
Inspiration: Jeffrey



Ohio (Northeast)
Director: Jane Midgley
Inspiration: Kasey



Ohio (Sophie's Angel Run)
Director: Mark Meinhardt
Inspiration: Sophie



Pennsylvania (Western)
Director: Alyssa Hawranko
Inspiration: Alyson



Texas (Austin/Round Rock) Team Brock
Directors: Melissa & James Fleming
Inspiration: Brock, Katelyn, Alexis, & Parker



Texas (Big Brave Bees)
Director: Adam Santos
Inspiration: Belle



Texas (Cedar Hill)
Director: Tanika Pierce
Inspiration: Sarai



Texas (Central)
Director: Vicky Cha
Inspiration: Jade



Texas (Eliana's Love)
Director: Kariny Flores
Inspiration: Eliana



Texas (Hearts for MK)
Directors: Gena & Harrison Keller
Inspiration: Mary Katherine



Texas (Houston)
Director: Althea Lee
Inspiration: Nicole



Texas (North)
Director: Michelle Bjornberg
Inspiration: Sydney



Texas (Parker County)
Director: Cassy Ballinger
Inspiration: Robert



Virginia
Director: Ginny Pritchett
Inspiration: Morgan



Washington
Director: Julie Couture Caplan
Inspiration: Victor



Wisconsin (Awesome Ali Shines On)
Director: Tricia Verhaalen
Inspiration: Alison



Wisconsin (Brayleighville)
Director: Christi King
Inspiration: Brayleigh

Denotes Member of Strategic Advisory Council (SAC)

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CHAPTER? CONTACT US AT FAMILYSUPPORT@THECURESTARTSNOW.ORG

GROUNDING IN CINCINNATI AND GROWING GLOBALLY

The Cure Starts Now Ohio Chapter, located in Cincinnati, is proud to announce they have been independently certified as #1 pediatric cancer charity in funding and growth in the Cincinnati area. In the 17 years since the passing of their daughter Elena, the Desserich family has dedicated their lives to finding the Homerun Cure™ for cancer. Headquartered in Cincinnati, their efforts have sparked change worldwide, funding over \$23 million in pediatric brain cancer research.

With the largest increase in pediatric grant expenditures in the area last year, The Cure Starts Now has become the fastest-growing cancer charity in Cincinnati. These achievements are further highlighted by Cincinnati Children's Hospital being ranked the nation's #1 Best Children's Hospital by U.S. News and World Report.

We are honored to fund groundbreaking research conducted by the medical research staff at Cincinnati Children's. Their innovative efforts are crucial in the fight against pediatric cancer, and together, we are making strides toward a cure.

[Learn more: CincyCharity.org](https://www.cincycharity.org)



"The incredible breakthroughs and advancements in research since Elena passed have been possible because of support from people like you."

Elena only survived 9 months with her diagnosis of DIPG 17 years ago, but today we are seeing incredibly brave kids surviving past the unimaginable 5-year mark"

– Brooke Desserich, Co-Founder & CEO of The Cure Starts Now



OVER \$7 MILLION
IN CANCER RESEARCH
FUNDED JUST IN
CINCINNATI



OVER \$23 MILLION
IN CANCER RESEARCH FUNDED
WORLDWIDE



150+ GRANTS
AT OVER
100 HOSPITALS
IN **29 COUNTRIES**



BUILT A GLOBAL
NETWORK OF
1,000+
FAMILIES
WHERE FAMILY NEVER
FIGHTS ALONE

2023 TOP DONORS

\$100,000+

Bob and Dawne Litterst
Brooke Healey Foundation
Commonwealth of Kentucky
Facebook
Fidelity Charitable
Graeter's Ice Cream Company
Raymond James Charitable
The Cure Starts Now - Australia
Zoey Ganesh Charitable Fund

\$50,000-\$99,999

Anna's Bake Sale Foundation
Bartley J Madden Foundation
Cincinnati Children's Hospital
HP Blast Corporation
Love4Lucas Foundation
Reflections of Grace
The Melina Michelle Edenfield
Foundation

\$25,000-\$49,999

Aidan's Avengers
Aubrey's Army Foundation
Broadview Motion Design
Capital Group Co Charitable
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Fight Like Emilie Foundation
Keith and Brooke Desserich
Mecha Management Company
Musella Foundation for Brain Tumor
Research
Omaha Community Foundation
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Taylor Gaal
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Whitley's Wishes
Yuvaan Tiwari Foundation Inc

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Bill Palmisano
Bruce and Nancy Axmacher
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Credit Suisse Foundation
Cybergrants-Bank of America
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Gaunt Family Charitable Foundation
Greater Cincinnati Foundation
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Jackson Hewitt Tax Service
Jay Rissover
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John and Beverly Duvall III
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Judith Helt Ross
Kathryn Johnston
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Love Chloe Foundation
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PTC Therapeutics, Inc
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Ronald and Lora Ogden
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Stripe
Yourcause, Union Pacific Giveplus
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Anthony and Heidi Varns
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Lori Mulvaney
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Marty Charitable Fund
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Wegmans
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Youssef Berrada

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YourCause, Standard Insurance
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\$1,500-\$2,499

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Adam and Sarah Stulberg
Amanda Lee
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Region 88
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2024 FUNDRAISING EVENTS: OVER 190 EVENTS WORLDWIDE!

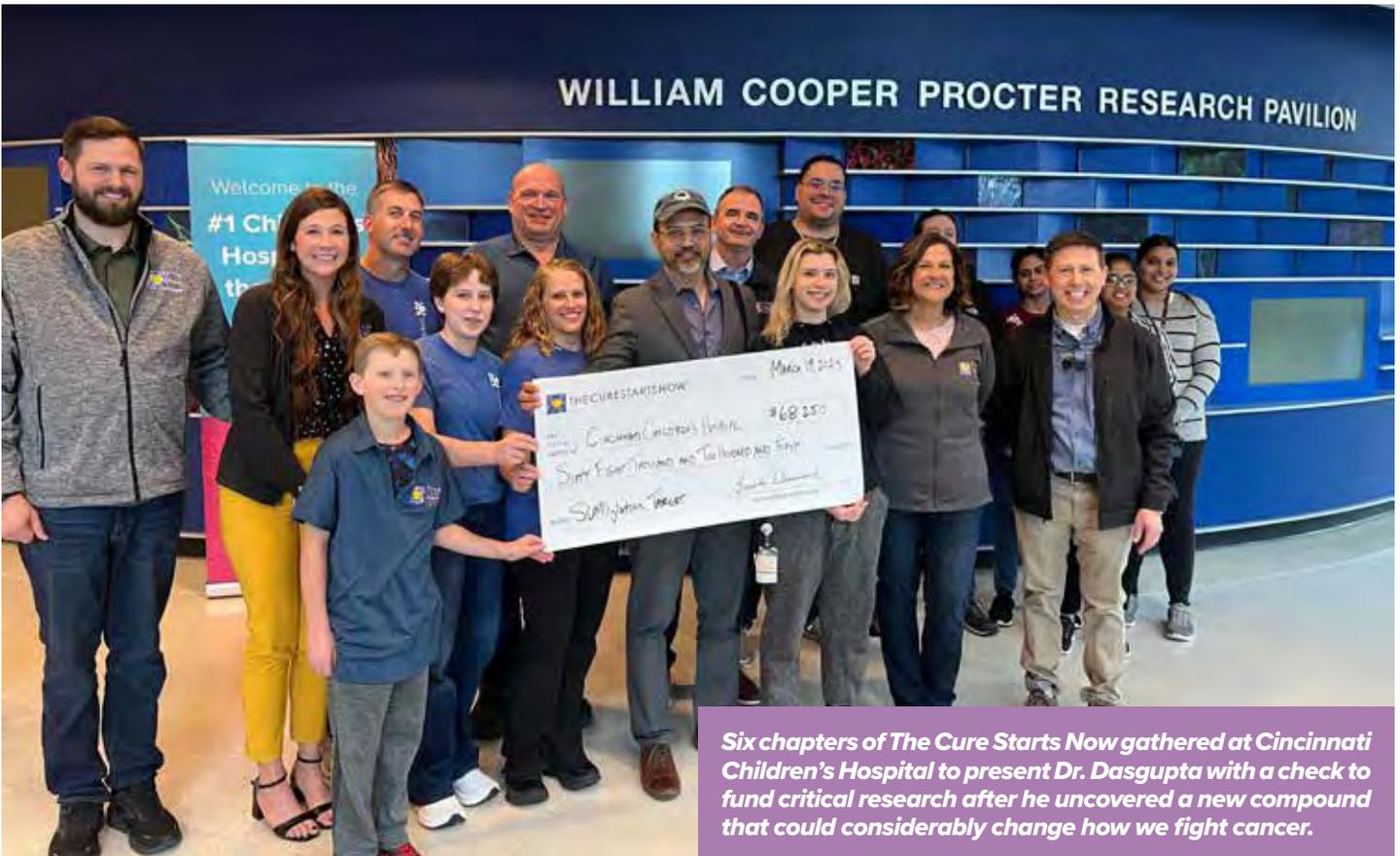




International Headquarters
 10280 Chester Road
 Cincinnati, OH 45215
 thecurestartsnow.org

SINCE 2007, THE CURE STARTS NOW HAS:

 HOSTED 7 INTERNATIONAL BRAIN CANCER SYMPOSIUMS	 FOSTERED A NETWORK OF OVER 150 BRAIN TUMOR EXPERTS	 OVER \$34 MILLION LED FUNDING OF DIPG/DMG & MEDULLOBLASTOMA RESEARCH AND SUPPORT WITH 120+ TRIALS
 AUTHORED THE LEADING INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES DIPG.ORG & MEDULLOBLASTOMA.ORG	 HELPED CREATE THE LARGEST LINKED DIPG/DMG SPECIFIC REGISTRY	 LAUNCHED WARRIOR PORTALS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR 1,000+ FAMILIES
 FOSTERED THE FOREMOST CONSORTIUM FOCUSED ON BRAIN CANCERS	 OVER 1,000 WARRIOR FAMILIES FIGHTING TOGETHER	 UNIFIED OVER 25 FOUNDATIONS IN THE DIPG/DMG COLLABORATIVE



Six chapters of The Cure Starts Now gathered at Cincinnati Children's Hospital to present Dr. Dasgupta with a check to fund critical research after he uncovered a new compound that could considerably change how we fight cancer.