

OUR MISSION

IS TO RAISE AWARENESS AND FUNDS TO IMPROVE TREATMENT AND SURVIVABILITY OF PEDIATRIC CANCERS.

The **Triumph Over Kid Cancer Foundation** mission is to improve the lives of children with cancer by raising their spirits, raising public awareness, and funding research to improve treatment and survivability of pediatric cancers. **To give our work the greatest impact, our research is conducted through agreements with institutions like MD Anderson Cancer Center and Texas Children's Hospital, who agree to match the funds we raise.**

TOKC'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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05/07/1993 - 02/17/2014

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TOKC began its mission 11 years ago, when our founders, James and Mecklin, agreed to form the foundation to partner with MD Anderson Cancer Center to fund the Children's Sarcoma Initiative, providing funds for new pediatric cancer research. TOKC completed that project in 2013, raising 1.5 million dollars, which was matched by MD Anderson Cancer Center.

The functioning of the Children's Sarcoma Initiative taught us that the great challenge in pediatric cancer research is the lack of understanding the causes of those cancers and how they mutate over time. This led to TOKC's second project with MD Anderson Cancer Center, the Genomic Research And Sequencing Project for Pediatrics – **GRASP**. Whole genome sequencing is essential for researchers to understand the genesis and life cycle of pediatric cancers necessary for researchers to develop cures and new treatments for those cancers. But, while adult cancer has benefited greatly from genomic research, little work has been done in whole genome sequencing for pediatric orphan cancers due to the cost. **GRASP** provides longitudinal whole genome sequencing for childhood cancers, specifically, pediatric bone cancers, pediatric melanoma, and pediatric medulloblastoma. This was an ambitious project, but it holds the most promise for the future. Due to the importance of this work in solving the problem of pediatric cancer, TOKC pledged to raise 1.5 million dollars for this project, beginning in 2014, and MD Anderson Cancer Center once again agreed to match those funds dollar for dollar. The **GRASP** Project was fully funded at the end of 2017, creating the only longitudinal whole genome sequencing project exclusively for pediatrics.

Now, with the completion of **GRASP**, we are returning to our roots and funding specific drug research. First, **we have pledged to raise 1 million dollars, again matched by MD Anderson Cancer Center, to fund a Phase II drug trial of a drug born from the Children's Sarcoma Initiative.** This drug is a promising step in the treatment of metastatic osteosarcoma, which

currently has no cure. We have currently funded \$500,000 of the 1-million-dollar pledge for that project. Also, for the first time we are working with Texas Children's Hospital on a cutting-edge immunotherapy pediatric cancer project. TOKC will raise 1 million dollars, which Texas Children's Hospital agreed to match, to fund this research into the future of pediatric cancer treatment. We have also funded \$500,000 of that 1-million-dollar pledge also. The neglect of research into pediatric cancer cures has cost our communities an endless stream of positive, promising lives, and we hope this research helps turn the tide in the fight against pediatric cancer.

Also, in an effort to bring some joy into the tragic lives of children with pediatric cancer, we partnered with Thomas Morstead and the What You Give Will Grow Foundation to spend a combined \$130,000 to develop an outdoor pediatric balcony play area at Ochsner Hospital for Children in New Orleans, and that project was completed in November, 2021.

TOKC's **DoThatOneThing!** Council has now expanded beyond the high schools in the Coastal Bend to include chapters in College Station, New Orleans and Kingsville, as well as having adult **DoThatOneThing!** organizations associated with community businesses. The program has resulted in over 1,000 volunteers continually giving their time to bring Joy to children with cancer at TOKC events, Driscoll Children's Hospital, and Ronald McDonald House Charities South Texas, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Texas Children's Hospital and Ochsner Hospital for Children.

Thank you for supporting TOKC and providing the promise of hope and a better future for children with cancer everywhere, just like my brother James.

Mecklin V. Ragan, M.D., Co-Founder,
Triumph Over Kid Cancer Foundation



James was always our Wingman, and we were always his. The issue of wings was always special to James because his thoracic surgeon had a unique method of making the incision so that the curved surgical scars across the back brought wings to mind. His pediatric patients always refer to them as "Angel's Wings." To help us continue James' dream and to remind us of why we do what we do, each year we will have a special pediatric cancer patient as our guest so we can always remember James and the reason we bring Hope and Joy to children with cancer.

Mecklin V. Ragan

James' 2014 Wingman - Hannah Meeson

Diagnosed at 4-years old with anaplastic medulloblastoma (brain tumor).

James' 2015 Wingman - Robby Lee

Diagnosed at 15-months with pediatric melanoma with lymph node metastasis.

James' 2016 Wingman - Myles Anderwald

Diagnosed at 7-years old with Osteosarcoma with primary tumor in left femur.

James' 2017 Wingman - Andrew Ross

Diagnosed at 8-years old with stage 4 pancreatic neuroendocrine cancer with liver metastasis (adult tumor).

James' 2018 Wingman - Emma Turner

Diagnosed at birth with stage 3 spindle cell embryonal rhabdomyosarcoma.

James' 2019-2020 Wingman - Asher Cochran

Diagnosed at 8-years old with rhabdomyosarcoma.

James' 2021 Wingman - Julian Galloway

Diagnosed at 4-years old with medulloblastoma.

*"And I suppose none of you have looked into the face of a doctor who has cared for you since you were a kid who wants nothing more than to save your life and instead has to tell you that you have no more options and you need to go enjoy the rest of the life you have left. If you could look into the face of that doctor and see that sadness and despair, then you would fund pediatric cancer research and help those doctors. **I want you to remember my face. Because my face is the face of every kid that dies from a pediatric cancer that isn't profitable to cure. My face is the face of every kid that dies because the drugs don't have "a rigorous business plan demonstrating demand and self sustainability."***

And everyday you ignore a cancer like pediatric cancer, you cost this country the energy and leadership of thousands of kids just like me with infinite potential to secure the future of our Country."

James A. Ragan, CPRIT 2012



Triumph Over Kid Cancer Foundation

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