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If you’re interested in learning more about how you can help support the CAMC Health System, contact the Foundation.
(304) 388-3660 • (304) 388-9861 fax
E-mail: camcfoundation@camc.org
Web: camcfoundation.org

The mission of the CAMC Foundation is to support and promote Charleston Area Medical Center’s delivery of excellent and compassionate health services, and its contribution to the quality of life and economic vitality of the region.

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On a beautiful fall evening, employees of CAMC and their families came together on the site of the former Watt Powell ballpark to celebrate. The celebration, a one of a kind event for the foundation, invited the employees and their loved ones to eat, play games, jump on inflatables, and then enjoy a movie under the stars on an extra large inflatable screen! All of this was in honor of the hard work and dedication the employees showed over the course of the past few months by contributing financially to a project to help construct the new cancer center. We believe, as do our employees, that by coming together to meet our challenges, we can exemplify the true power of many!
Each employee who donated financially to the project was entered into a prize drawing. The winners are pictured.

Fund fights cancer
After a personal experience with their daughter, Peri, having pediatric cancer, Tim and Erika Bailey have made it their goal to help other children who have been diagnosed with this terrible disease.
To help accomplish this goal, a few years ago the Baileys created the Peri and Liam Bailey Pediatric Cancer Endowment Fund in honor of their children.

The Bailey’s most recent gift was a donation to the CAMC Foundation to purchase high chairs and red wagons that will be used at CAMC Women and Children’s Hospital.
When she got back to the United States, Lim’s credit card bills began to arrive. That’s when she started looking for some help.

A co-worker told her about a fund that was set up by Drs. Ganpat and Chandrani Thakker titled, A Thank You for CAMC Employees Endowment Fund at the CAMC Foundation. They established the fund saying they were inspired by the employees at CAMC who have been donating to the employee fund to help their co-workers who are experiencing urgent and sometimes catastrophic financial difficulties.

Lim called the CAMC Foundation. “It really helped me,” Lim said. She was granted $800 toward the travel costs. “I’ve been telling people, that if it wasn’t for this fund, I would not have made it.”

Employee goes home, thanks to fund

It’s a late night phone call. It’s an unexpected visit. It’s sudden chest pain and loss of breath. It’s all of these things and much, much more. It’s a situation in which you find yourself, completely unexpectedly, yet you know where to turn. It’s been embedded in your thoughts since you were old enough to remember. It’s a call that can save a life and a visit that can keep you close to your family. It’s a time when you turn to a stranger and literally place your life in someone receiving treatment, as well as our community and others.

Year end giving: a special need

In August, the David Lee Cancer Center welcomed new physicians, Suzanne Cole, MD, and NG Gorsuch, MD. It is the first time in many years that female adult oncologists are practicing at Charleston Area Medical Center.

These physicians join Elizabeth Kunczynski, MD, and Lisa Palmer, DO, two female pediatric oncologists who practice at CAMC Women and Children’s Hospital.

“I think it’s great for the community to have female oncologists,” Cole said. “Our presence gives patients a choice. I often find myself gatewaying toward women physicians when it comes to my own health needs. Female doctors can identify with what it means to be a mother, or a wife, and how we often are in the role of taking care of our families and loved ones. A cancer diagnosis can impact these roles and affect the physical qualities that make us feel feminine. It is devastating to have to endure a cancer treatment that causes one to lose their hair or breasts, and, as a woman, I can empathize.”

Cole came here from Texas. After graduating from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and completing a fellowship at the MD Anderson Cancer Center, she was looking for an opportunity to join the practice.

“I had never been to Charleston and was uncertain what I would find,” Cole said. “But the doctors at the David Lee Cancer Center clearly have their priorities straight. They are, first and foremost, committed to providing the best medical care possible. There is a strong commitment to serve the people of this community regardless of the patient’s type of insurance, and believe it or not, many practices throughout the United States are so profit driven that patients with undesirable financial circumstances are simply denied cancer care. One of my partners told me that he slept well at night knowing that whether the patient is a senator or unemployed, the two will receive exactly the same type of care [at CAMC]. That allows us to practice medicine in its purest form to do what is right. Coming from a fellowship at MD Anderson, one of the top tier cancer institutions in the world, I was in the position to choose what practice I wanted to join. I want the people of Charleston to know that I chose to come here because of the integrity of the physicians in this group, their high ethical standards and the top notch hospital system behind them.”

Gorsuch is originally from Malaysia and trained at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, before completing residency and fellowship at the Mayo Clinic, another nationally-renowned medical institution for cancer treatment.

“I originally came here for an interview because of the proximity of CAMC to our family in North Carolina,” Gorsuch said. “I was impressed by the patient-oriented focus at the David Lee Cancer Center. CAMC puts patients’ needs and priorities first, which is one of the reasons why I decided to join the practice. In addition, I was attracted by the collegial atmosphere within the group. Everybody is very helpful and supportive to each other. Now that I’m here, I hope the extensive training I received at the Mayo Clinic help enhance the efficiency of the system and cancer care.”

Having both come from huge facilities, the benefit of practicing at a community medical center is the size of CAMC is not lost on these physicians. “I like the idea of a tertiary referral center,” Cole said. “I like to treat leukemia, and many community hospitals cannot provide the innovative therapy needed to pull these people through a life threatening acute leukemia. CAMC has every ancillary service needed. We can provide nearly every type of cancer treatment a patient might require. Also, the arrival of the proposed cancer center will provide huge advantages in that there will be more opportunities for multiple disciplines to meet once they are under the same roof, and it will be so much more convenient for patients to have everything in one area.”

“We’re already busy seeing patients,” Gorsuch said. “I anticipate that the patient wait times will continue to decrease as a result of our joining the cancer center staff. People need to know that we [the David Lee Cancer Center] can take a referral as soon as there is a diagnosis to expedite work-up and treatment.”

New cancer physicians bring expertise
Employee goes home, thanks to fund

He’s her nephew, but Helen Lim says he’s more like a brother because her family raised him. Lim is a nursing assistant in the clinical resource department, which means she works in a variety of units at CAMC.

In the spring, Lim learned that her nephew had a cardiac arrest and was hospitalized in the Philippines.

“I decided to go home, but I didn’t have the money,” said Helen Lim. The airfare alone was about $1,300 for the 29-hour trip.

She was in the Philippines for six weeks, and in the hospital every day helping care for her nephew. When she got back to the United States, Lim’s credit card bills began to arrive. That’s when she started looking for some help.

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It’s a trip to the emergency room. It’s a bumpy and confusing ride in the back of an ambulance or an extreme flight in the back of a helicopter. It’s the flashing red lights passing you as you pull over to the side of the road. And whether you are going as a patient or as a loved one of someone receiving treatment, it can be an emotionally troubling time.

When your thoughts are full of worry and concern.

To make a contribution, call (304) 388-9860 or click the DONATE NOW button at camcfoundation.org.

Dr. Gorsuch and Dr. Cole

Maybe the best thing about the arrival of these physicians is the combined expertise that they both gained during years of training at two of the top cancer hospitals in the world. Everybody is very helpful and supportive to each other. Now that I’m here, I hope the extensive training I received at the Mayo Clinic will help enhance the efficiency of the system and cancer care.

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