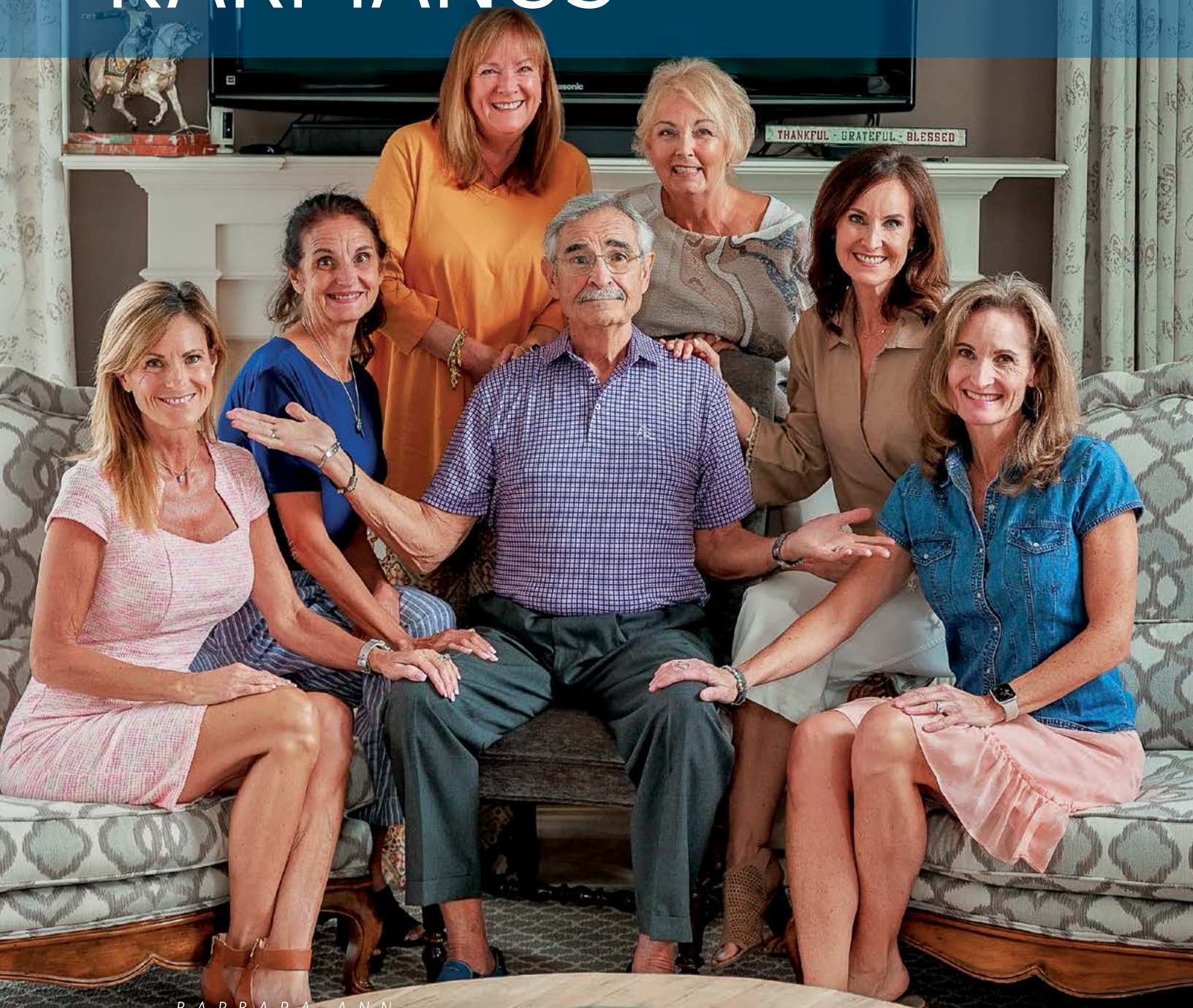


Generosity. Impact. Compassion.

Autumn 2025

CHAMPIONS of KARMANOS



BARBARA ANN

 **Karmanos**

CANCER INSTITUTE

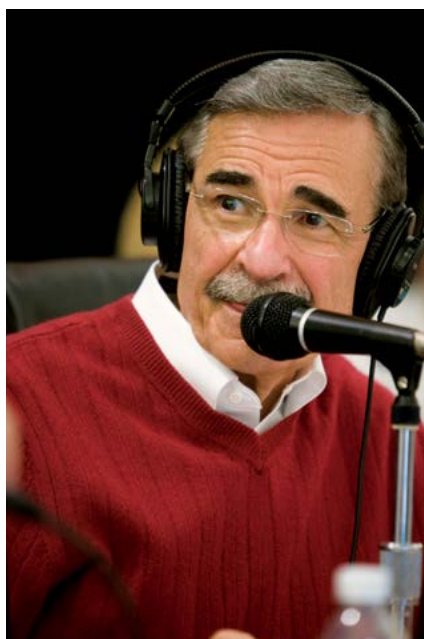
Wayne State University

DECADES OF SUPPORT IN GRATITUDE

Gail Purtan suffered from metastatic ovarian cancer for the better part of two decades, and it was because of her diagnosis that the Purtnans became involved with Karmanos Cancer Institute.

Dick Purtan, Gail's husband, celebrated radio personality and philanthropist, recalled that time. "Well, actually, it goes back quite a few years," he described.

After Gail's diagnosis in 1997, Dick's attorney and long-time friend, Henry Baskin, told him about a magnificent cancer doctor at Karmanos named **Vainutis Vaitkevicius, M.D., MACP, (Dr. Vee)**, calling him a legend in ovarian cancer care. He became Gail's doctor and treated her from diagnosis through multiple recurrences. In addition to the incredible care she received



Dick Purtan on air in February 2010
©David Yarnall Photography



Dick and Gail Purtan at a Karmanos fundraising run



Dick with wife Donna

from Dr. Vee, she underwent at least ten surgeries, all performed by the brilliant surgeon, **Charles Lucas, M.D.** The Purtan family credits both men with adding years to Gail's life. Sadly, she passed away on Oct. 31, 2018.

Before her passing, Dick and Gail were champions of the work being done at Karmanos, supporting groundbreaking research to help detect ovarian cancer, including research advancements related to genetics and immunotherapy. Since then, Dick and their daughters have continued to donate in Gail's memory. The Purtan Family Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation at Karmanos honors Gail's legacy, making an incredible difference for countless women impacted by ovarian cancer.

In addition to funding research, Dick donated his time and talent as a

Karmanos board member from 1999 to 2022, and his support of Karmanos is ongoing.

Losing Gail was devastating for Dick and his girls. But, like Gail wanted for her husband of 60 years, Dick has found happiness again. Donna, his wife since 2020, joins in his support of Karmanos. "It's a fabulous organization," she said.

"We received great care and treatment from Karmanos. Every year since then, we've given back as a small thank you for all they did for Gail and my family," Dick said.

Gail was a tireless advocate for ovarian cancer survivors. Her kindness, loving spirit and steadfast determination helped many others diagnosed with the disease, and her legacy lives on.

A WOMAN'S CAUSE FOR CAUSES

Leslie Cameron Devereaux was born on Oct. 2, 1942, to Adelyn Brockway and Richard (Dick) C. Devereaux. Leslie spent summers and winters at the family vacation home on the Au Sable River, where Leslie first developed a deep love and appreciation of nature and wildlife. Leslie attended Seaholm High School in Birmingham, Michigan, and earned her bachelor's degree from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. As a graduation present, her parents sent Leslie and a cousin to Europe, where she contracted encephalitis. After several years in an East Coast medical facility, she returned to Michigan. "She fought back," said her attorney, Curtis Mann. "She got around slowly on a walker with her dog Ding-a-ling. She never complained.

"I got to know Leslie Devereaux in 1978," said Attorney Curtis Mann, "and we became great friends. Leslie was a very special person to me."

"In 1985, the family business that started in 1905 was sold, which was the source of a lot of wealth," Mann recalled. Dick had passed away years before from lung cancer. In his memory, Adelyn and Leslie set up the Richard C. Devereaux Foundation. "Leslie wanted to help causes that were important to her," Mann said. Those causes included the Detroit Zoo (Leslie was particularly proud of the award-winning Devereaux Tiger Forest at the Detroit Zoo, considered to be one of the country's finest zoological exhibits), the Devereaux Memorial Library in Grayling, the Deering Library at Northwestern University, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and Karmanos Cancer Institute.

Karmanos approached her about supporting a new Mobile Cancer Screening Program, which her largesse helped get on the road. As Karmanos' needs changed, she continued to support experimental cancer research, which she found

intriguing. A waiting room at Karmanos' main campus location in Detroit bears the Richard C. Devereaux Foundation name. Her estate most recently made the establishment of an Endowed Chair for Lung Cancer Research possible to support cancer investigations further.

Leslie is remembered for her kind and generous heart and love of her community. A humble yet renowned philanthropist, Leslie served as president of the Richard C. Devereaux Foundation until her death and strongly supported many worthy organizations in a variety of different areas.

Leslie Cameron Devereaux died on Sept. 27, 2024, at 81 years old.



CANCER RESEARCH AND CARE CRUSADER: **MARY MATUJA**

Since the 1960s, Mary Matuja has been an advocate for cancer research, treatment and care. When the Michigan Cancer Foundation, forerunner of Karmanos Cancer Institute, wanted to establish a fundraising chapter in Macomb County, Marge Morgan called upon her friend Mary Matuja to help. The Macomb County chapter was one of many established regionally that put on events to help raise money for cancer research at the Michigan Cancer Foundation, such as golf outings, garage sales, and more. That chapter grew under their leadership, and the relationship that Mary established with Karmanos continues unabated today.



Marge later had her own journey with cancer. She transferred from another cancer center to Karmanos to be treated by **Vainutis Vaitkevicius, M.D., MACP (Dr. Vee)** and his team, but sadly, passed away from a cancer that was too advanced. "I've been living her legacy and my own," said Mary.

"I was treated at Karmanos for endometrial cancer. Fortunately, we caught it in time. It was stage I. I can't compliment the wonderful people at Karmanos enough who are dedicated to their patients."

She boasted, "Karmanos is at the forefront of cancer research and treatment. We were the first in Michigan designated by the National Institutes of Health as a Comprehensive Cancer Center and one of only 57 in the country."



Above: At the release party of Mary's memoir "Hello America"

Left: Mary and husband Robert Matuja at a Karmanos fundraising event

Right: Mary posing next to her book's promotional poster at her release party



"I stay involved to help raise funds to continue such a high level of quality service and such important research. Every family is involved with some tragedy of cancer. We must keep up our support to provide better services and help researchers trying to find a cure for any number of cancers," she said.

She believes that's what keeps her and other people working with the same determination as the Karmanos team. In addition to her board service and advocacy, Mary is an ardent contributor to Karmanos and its vision of a cancer-free world.

Mary can cite "chapter and verse" about the uniqueness and effectiveness of Karmanos Cancer Institute, from the positive impact on patients of Dr. Vee, a Lithuanian who fled Nazi Germany and worked at Wayne State University, and his team, to **Jerome Horwitz, Ph.D.**, a chemist who, in the 1960s, synthesized a cancer drug as an anti-leukemia agent that became AZT, the first drug approved to treat AIDS.

That ardor and commitment to a cause greater than herself mirror Mary's life story of perseverance, determination, and compassion. Born and raised in Czechoslovakia during the Nazi invasion in the early 1940s, Mary chronicled her journey to America in her memoir, "Hello America," and donates a portion of the book's proceeds to Karmanos Cancer Institute.

COMMITTING TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE TO CREATE A LASTING LEGACY

Justin Klamerus, M.D., MMM, has been affiliated with Karmanos Cancer Institute for over a decade, serving as its president from 2017 to 2022, and in 2022, assuming the role of executive vice president and Chief Clinical Officer for its parent company, McLaren Health Care.

"I am enormously proud of the work we do at Karmanos and, as I served in various roles there, my work is some of the proudest work of my career. We provide the best care every day at Karmanos, even though we don't necessarily have all the resources that some of the larger cancer centers across the country have," he said. "That means all of us must play our part to support the team and their great clinical and research efforts."

Dr. Klamerus has three causes that touch his heart. "And so," he said, "in thinking about my trust and what I want to leave behind, there's Karmanos, the Michigan Animal Rescue League in Pontiac, and a university I'm affiliated with. Those are the things I hope will be my legacy." The University of Olivet, formerly Olivet College, is where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree and now serves on its board of directors. Dr. Klamerus also contributes to the Behavioral Health Fund there. He explained, "With the rising demand for behavioral health services, it's expensive to provide those needed services."

By remembering Karmanos in his estate plan, he will leave a legacy of giving that addresses the growing complexity of health care and the need for constant research to identify and combat existing and future cancers.

He is also a current and regular donor. "A program that I believe in strongly is the Leah A. Davidson Endowment for the Healing Arts, which, as I have seen first-hand, has enormous benefits for patients as they face an active diagnosis and have finished treatment. It's a place to heal and renew themselves. Leah's treatment for lymphoma led to a secondary leukemia. She underwent a bone marrow transplant, but unfortunately lost her life to that disease. I'm proud to say that she received wonderful treatment at Karmanos." Leah and her husband Jeffrey Davidson started the Healing Arts Program before she died. Jeffrey and his wife Beth continue to raise funds for this important program. The program has expanded beyond its original location at the Lawrence and Idell Weisberg Cancer Center in Farmington Hills to other Karmanos facilities in the state.

“ Karmanos Cancer Hospital and our satellite cancer centers across the state impact tens of thousands of lives in our region. We all need to support those endeavors in all ways possible!”

– Justin Klamerus, M.D., MMM

"Investing in Karmanos, now and in the future, is vital. All of us involved in delivering health care today realize how complicated the environment is. Health systems are faced with providing more and more sophisticated care with declining reimbursement, increasing regulation, increasing complexity, and I think," said Dr. Klamerus, "all of us involved who have the resources to do so have a responsibility to give back."

Cancer is a disease of aging. One in two men and one in three women will face this diagnosis at some point in their lives. "Karmanos Cancer Hospital and our satellite cancer centers across the state impact tens of thousands of lives in our region," he explained. "We all need to support those endeavors in all ways possible!"



IN MEMORY:

A UNIQUE 10-YEAR TRIBUTE TO RAISE AWARENESS OF TESTICULAR CANCER

Dennis Donald Kubit was just shy of 31 years old in 2012 when he was diagnosed with testicular cancer. It claimed him in November 2014, and with that, a decade-long resolve by his loving family and friends. His urologist referred him to Karmanos Cancer Institute nearly 11 years ago. Dennis' oncologist first treated him at the downtown Detroit facility and then at the Lawrence and Idell Weisberg Cancer Center in Farmington Hills. With the frequent treatments Dennis underwent, he and his family developed a great rapport with his oncologist, the nurses and staff. His dad, Dennis Edward Kubit, said, "His doctor became an extension of our family."

When his initial treatments started downtown, "we'd walk the halls," recalled his father. "Dennis said that there was an awareness of prostate cancer, pancreatic cancer, and breast cancer in women, but there was no awareness of testicular cancer." Though rare, testicular cancer is most commonly diagnosed in males aged 20 to 34.

"Dennis wanted to tell people, especially young men, that it's not something they should be shy about," said his father, who used to distribute shower cards to remind them and show them how to test themselves.

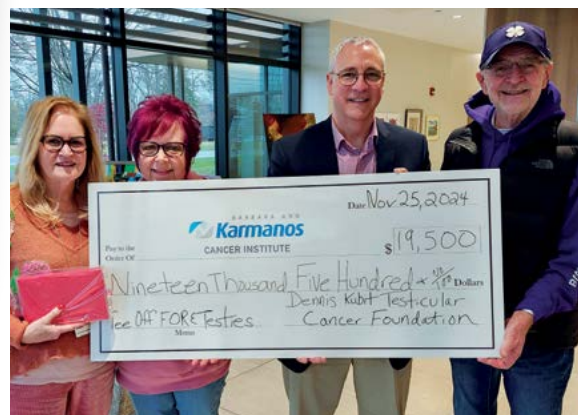
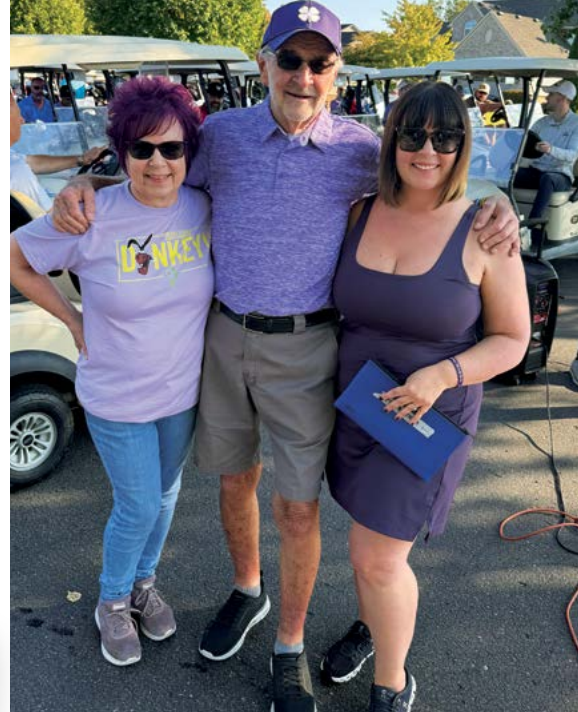
The younger Dennis was an avid golfer. In October 2015, his parents, sister, brother-in-law, and wife hosted the first "Tee Off FORE Testies" golf outing in his memory. That year, 19 teams competed, and \$6,000 in net proceeds went to Karmanos through the non-profit Dennis Kubit Testicular Cancer Foundation.



The outing grew over the next 10 years, with avid and continued participation from Dennis' family, personal friends and coworkers. "Our most recent and final outing was last October," said Kandice. "To represent my brother's legacy, we have contributed \$148,300 to Karmanos."

"The golf outing idea grew out of discussions with my son on how to raise awareness," explained Dennis. "When it's at the top, it's time to stop" was one of his son's famous sayings. With gratitude to everyone who've supported the outing, he especially acknowledges the teams who've come out and the sponsors who believed in the mission for 10 years.

"We had assurance from Karmanos that the majority of our donations would go to advanced research toward testicular cancer. It's crucial that we keep pushing the awareness of this disease because there's little recognition of how it affects young men," Dennis said. "If caught early, it's 100% curable!"



Top: Denise Kubit, Denis' mom, Dennis Kubit, his father, and Kandice Moynihan, his sister, at the 2024 golf outing in memory of Denis Kubit, Jr.

Bottom: The Kubit family presented the proceeds of the last golf outing to Arnold D'Ambrosio, Chief Development Officer at Karmanos

Why did the Kubits keep up this labor of love for the past decade to support Karmanos Cancer Institute? Gratitude certainly. And Dennis' dad said, "The personal attention given to my son. His physician used to maintain a picture of him in her office and stayed connected with our family, as did some of his nurses after he died." The quality of care is why.



“There is an extremely high likelihood I am cured,” underscoring the enormous positive outcomes donations to Karmanos can make possible.

– Jeffrey Zonder, M.D.

THE PROFOUND IMPACT OF A DONATION

For over 20 years as a clinical researcher, “I’ve been focused on multiple myeloma and other related plasma cell disorders, including one called amyloidosis, a rare blood disorder, since my training,” **Jeffrey Zonder, M.D.**, said. “It’s been something I was interested in as a fellow at Karmanos. I stayed and built the Multiple Myeloma and Amyloidosis Multidisciplinary Team from the ground up.”

Dr. Zonder is a clinical researcher and an oncologist specializing in hematology who also oversees some of Karmanos’ translational research efforts, collaborating with basic scientists in the lab. Translational research refers to “bringing basic science findings to research them in the clinic,” he explained. “At any given time, 10 to 20 studies are open in myeloma and amyloidosis at Karmanos Cancer Institute,” said Dr. Zonder. “To conduct those studies and do academic work,

I need to see patients. I want to identify patients who might benefit from participation in these clinical trials.”

Karmanos has one of the most well-known amyloidosis programs nationally and one of the largest myeloma programs in the state, a program that distinguishes Karmanos.

Karmanos is a member institution of the Multiple Myeloma Research Consortium and a member of the Southwest Oncology Group. “So, we can open trials that are conducted with those consortia,” he said. “I’ve also had the opportunity to design and lead trials as a part of multi-institutional collaborations.”

He explained that clinical research takes all forms, testing new therapies, non-chemotherapy medications to improve kidney health, treatments, and even phone apps to track dietary intake.

“Clinical research is very expensive, and a single multi-center study can sometimes cost a million dollars or more.” He emphasized that even small studies with short interventions can cost a couple of hundred thousand dollars.

“Donations and active involvement with our program have been incredibly

impactful over the years,” he recalled. “In order to do independently designed research of new therapies, testing ideas that may be of great value to cancer patients, you need independent funding. This last year, we’ve been doing basic science research with a brand new drug developed at City of Hope that is currently in a breast cancer study. There are plans to develop it in other cancers, which, without funding, couldn’t otherwise be done.”

Amyloidosis is a rare disease with only 5,000 diagnosed cases a year in the U.S. “We see at least 50 new amyloidosis patients a year and follow a couple hundred of the ongoing cases. Even being able to conduct a modest study, which can cost \$250,000 to \$500,000, can have a huge impact because it’s so hard to conduct research on ultra-rare diseases.

“When patients and others provide donations to support the myeloma program, I always reach out to personally thank them because it makes our critical work possible,” he added.

Dr. Zonder, himself a cancer survivor treated at Karmanos, says, “There is an extremely high likelihood I am cured,” underscoring the enormous positive outcomes donations to Karmanos can make possible.

4100 John R St.
Detroit, MI 48201

This inaugural edition of **Champions of Karmanos** highlights the stories of our donors and the impact their gifts have in our fight to discover new treatments and cures for cancer.

You will learn about the power of hope and compassion. Most importantly, you will understand the bond shared between our donors, patients and staff working together to save lives. Every contribution makes a difference, and we are sincerely grateful for your assistance.

Your support is needed to conduct and expand research that pushes the boundaries of discovery, to acquire advanced equipment, to build state-of-the-art facilities, and to develop new therapies. Contributions allow Karmanos to escalate its stellar reputation as a place of compassion, medical excellence, and scientific breakthroughs. You are true partners in our work and play a vital role in saving lives and transforming cancer care. Your generosity means more patients will receive innovative treatments, novel drug therapies, and programs that address both the physical and emotional impact of the disease, which are currently unavailable at other medical centers.



With your help and the dedication of outstanding physicians, researchers, nurses, and the entire clinical staff, we will write the next chapter in cancer care. Remember, should a loved one, a neighbor, or you ever need the very best in cancer care, Karmanos will be there for the journey. Thank you again for your support.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Arnold D'Ambrosio".

Arnold D'Ambrosio
Chief Development Officer

Your Gift Will Save Lives

Your contribution, no matter the size, will allow Karmanos' physicians, researchers, nurses, and medical technicians to provide the very best in cancer care. Each gift is a step toward finding cures and new treatments that help those diagnosed with cancer. Thank you for your support!

By giving to Karmanos Cancer Institute, you will be:

PROVIDING THE BEST CANCER CARE AVAILABLE.

You, your family members, neighbors, and loved ones have access to the best cancer care possible.

GUARANTEEING THE BEST CANCER CARE CLOSE TO HOME.

Knowing that a world-class cancer center is a brief car ride away is a tremendous comfort to those in metro Detroit and the surrounding communities.

CREATING AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

Karmanos stands out in cancer care by providing screenings, early detection, novel therapies, leading-edge radiation treatments, and specialized surgical procedures, creating a city where people live healthier lives.

ATTRACTING AND KEEPING RESIDENTS IN MICHIGAN.

A superior cancer center promotes a strong quality of life in a region. Having outstanding health care facilities in metro Detroit makes the area more attractive for people to relocate to and live.

PARTICIPATING IN THE REBIRTH OF DETROIT.

Expanding the impact of a nationally recognized NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center presents a unique opportunity to contribute to the rebirth of our great city. Your support will not only help save lives but also uplift the city and state.



Learn more about how to make a difference by scanning the QR code or visiting karmanos.org/donate.

CONTACT

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