

# WHAT DID I FORGET?

## EASILY OVERLOOKED ITEMS IN YOUR ESTATE PLAN

If you're taking another look at your existing estate plan, or just starting your planning journey, be sure to include the following items — in addition to a will — to make things easier for you and your loved ones. In most cases, you won't need to involve an attorney.

### Be Sure You Have:

- 1. A high-level overview** that lays out the basics of your finances and plans. Include:
  - Where to find your will and other documents, and who the key people are — your agents under the powers of attorney and executors or personal representatives.
  - Financial assets (where accounts are held and who owns them).
  - Insurance coverage (property/casualty, health, life).
  - Property and vehicle information.
  - Regular household bills that you pay.
- 2. A detailed description of your finances** (account numbers, contacts at financial institutions, etc.).
- 3. A personal property memorandum** that is referenced by your will and states how you want property distributed and/or sold. This allows you to assign sentimental or valuable assets to specific people without having to change your will if you change your mind.



- 4. A plan for your pets** to ensure that your furry friends are taken care of. A legally binding pet trust can be created, or you can make provisions in your will for how you want your pets cared for in your absence.
- 5. Your digital estate plan**, which includes online account details.
- 6. Advance directives, powers of attorney and other end-of-life planning tools** to communicate your basic wishes. Add personal messages and detailed plans for your funeral, memorial and other specifics.
- 7. An ethical will**, which is your opportunity to hand down your values in a document or video. Think of it as a personal record of your life — how you've lived it and how you want to inspire others.

## Explore Your Legacy at Karmanos Cancer Institute

Wherever you are in the process, your estate plan is a powerful way to show your love for your favorite causes, such as Karmanos. Please contact Denise Lowe at 248.226.2163 or [lowed@karmanos.org](mailto:lowed@karmanos.org) to learn more about including us in your future plans.



CANCER INSTITUTE  
Wayne State University

KARMANOS CANCER FOUNDATION

4100 John R, Detroit, MI 48201

Gerold Bepler, M.D., Ph.D.  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*

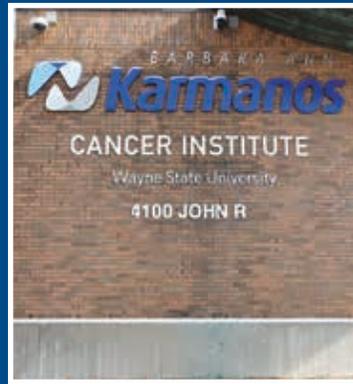
1.800.KARMANOS 1.800.527.6266 [karmanos.org](http://karmanos.org)



**Our mission:** To lead in transformative cancer care, research and education through courage, commitment and compassion.

# LEGACY OF HOPE.

SPRING 2022



A CHARITABLE AND GIFT PLANNING GUIDE FOR THE BARBARA ANN KARMANOS CANCER INSTITUTE

## FIGHTING FOR A CANCER-FREE WORLD



The U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation was founded in 2016 by siblings Ryan and Kelley LaFontaine. The Foundation's mission is to provide vital funding for cancer research grants in the state of Michigan. Throughout the past six years, U CAN-CER VIVE has raised \$3 million with 100 percent of the proceeds supporting cancer research. The mission of the Foundation is a world without cancer. Kelley shares, "We embrace what our parents taught us over the years, which is to give back and help others."

The LaFontaine family has had a significant family history with cancer. Ryan LaFontaine explains their passion: "I was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 29 in 2008. Today, I am a 14-year Hodgkin lymphoma survivor."

The LaFontaine family was affected deeply when their family member, Lauren, lost her battle with cancer at the age of 14. Though they have faced adversity, the family has remained steadfast with embracing the importance of prioritizing their faith, family and friends.



The **U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation** is operated solely by passionate volunteers. They host events throughout the year raising dollars for cancer research in Michigan. The Foundation hosts several annual events, [see list on page 3.](#)



**LOOK INSIDE** to learn about the amazing gift that the U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation gave to the Karmanos Cancer Institute!

# BRINGING HOPE TO PANCREATIC CANCER PATIENTS

The Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute recently received a \$352,437 grant from the U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation to help fund a pancreatic cancer research study. The outcomes of this study will help define new standards of care for patients undergoing chemotherapy for this disease.

Asfar Azmi, Ph.D., associate professor, Department of Oncology, leader, Molecular Therapeutics Research Program and director, Pancreatic Cancer Research Initiative at Karmanos Cancer Institute and Wayne State University School of Medicine (WSU SOM), and M. Najeeb Al Hallak, M.D., M.S., member of the Gastrointestinal and Neuroendocrine Multidisciplinary Team at Karmanos and assistant professor in the Department of Oncology at WSU SOM, are leading a pilot study titled, “A pilot study of serial blood profiling for microRNA expression signature to Gemcitabine/Nab-Paclitaxel in pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma patients.”

“There are limited, effective therapies for this disease, and more importantly, there are no strategies to date to tell us early on if a treatment is working or not,” Dr. Azmi said. “In our study, we collect blood from the patient during the course of chemotherapy treatment and analyze the blood for certain markers. If

those markers predict response or resistance to chemotherapy, we will then have new knowledge to help produce scientific advances for the best treatment option for those faced with this disease.”

Pancreatic cancer is the third leading cause of cancer death in the United States, and the state of Michigan is among the states with higher rates of pancreatic cancer diagnoses. Pancreatic cancer is considered incurable in the majority of patients due to advanced stage at diagnosis, and often once diagnosed, the only treatment option is chemotherapy.

“It will be a groundbreaking research finding if we are able to identify that microRNA signature in the blood that tells us, ‘This chemotherapy is the best treatment option for the patient,’ and avoid ineffective treatments that allow a patient’s symptoms to worsen and the cancer to spread,” said Dr. Al Hallak. “This grant will significantly help improve testing quality and even expand the testing beyond just the microRNA to find other signatures for those patients, which can even influence future research into new drug therapies for pancreatic cancer treatment.”

“At U CAN-CER VIVE, we have focused a great deal of our cancer grant funding toward research tackling



Left to right: Liz Schumacher, Events Committee, U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation; Carol Peters, Events Committee, U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation; Kelley LaFontaine, Co-Founder, U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation; Todd McKay, Board Member, U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation; Gerold Bepler, M.D., Ph.D., president and Chief Executive Officer, Karmanos Cancer Institute; Asfar Azmi, Ph.D., associate professor, Department of Oncology, leader, Molecular Therapeutics Research Program, director, Pancreatic Cancer Research Initiative, Karmanos and WSU SOM; M. Najeeb Al Hallak, M.D., M.S., medical oncologist, member of the Gastrointestinal and Neuroendocrine Oncology Multidisciplinary Team, Karmanos, and assistant professor of Oncology, WSU SOM; Linda Filipczak, RN, BSN, MBA, Foundation Officer, Karmanos Cancer Institute.

pediatric cancers, as well as those with a very low survival rate. This research specifically looks at pancreatic cancer, which in addition to having a low survival rate, is also underfunded,” said Kelley LaFontaine, co-founder of the U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation. “Our hope at U CAN-CER VIVE is this grant funding will provide the doctors and researchers with the necessary support to fulfill their mission and ultimately discover findings that raise the quality of life and outlook for those afflicted with this disease.”

Currently, there are 10 patients enrolled in the pilot study. The U CAN-CER VIVE grant makes it possible to double the number of participants to 20. Karmanos Cancer Institute is a national leader in clinical trials and is at the forefront of offering treatments that define the new standards of care. In fact, the Karmanos Cancer Institute offers more cancer treatments and clinical trials not found elsewhere in Michigan.

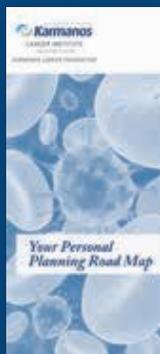
“There is so much more to learn and understand about cancer and cancer treatments, and at Karmanos, it’s a team effort,” said Gerold Bepler, M.D., Ph.D., president and CEO of Karmanos Cancer Institute. “The collaborative relationship between researchers and physicians in this study, and funding like the U CAN-CER VIVE grant help to advance our ability to give patients their best advantages in surviving a cancer diagnosis and living longer.”



**You can join the U CAN-CER VIVE Foundation in helping create a world without cancer with a gift to Karmanos Cancer Institute. Contact Linda Filipczak at 248.226.2156 or [filipczl@karmanos.org](mailto:filipczl@karmanos.org) to learn more.**

## Free Resource

Because you’re an important part of our work, we want to give you a tool that can help you organize your assets and plan ahead. Use the enclosed card to request your copy of **Know Your Worth** and see the three essential steps for creating your estate plan.



## U CAN-CER VIVE ANNUAL EVENTS

**FEBRUARY 14: Ur My Valentine** celebrates Valentine’s Day with heartfelt teddy bear deliveries to children and adults in the hospital.

**JUNE 3: Evening for the Cure** is an enchanted evening held at M1 Concourse to raise dollars for cancer research.

**JULY: Fit for the Cure:** A family-fun day filled with outdoor activities for all, and entrepreneurial initiatives on display from children that encourage and support cancer research.

**JULY 24: Drive for the Cure:** Cancer patients are invited to spend the day at M1 Concourse racing around the track and getting an experience of a lifetime!

**AUGUST 27: Run for the Cure Run:** Guests can walk, jog, skip or run their way toward a cure for cancer through the U CAN-CER VIVE 5K in Downtown Milford.

**SEPTEMBER 20: Golf for the Cure:** The largest event of the year; golfers join in for a fun day of golf and raising vital funds for a cure.

**NOVEMBER 29: Comfy for the Cure** provides comforting blankets and shirts for those battling cancer.

**NOVEMBER: No Shave November:** A fun way of raising awareness for cancer research by, well, not shaving!

**DECEMBER: Wishes for the Cure:** An internal initiative in which U CAN-CER VIVE supports cancer families in need during the holiday season.

➤ Learn more at [www.ucancervive.com](http://www.ucancervive.com).