

2012

HELPING HAND

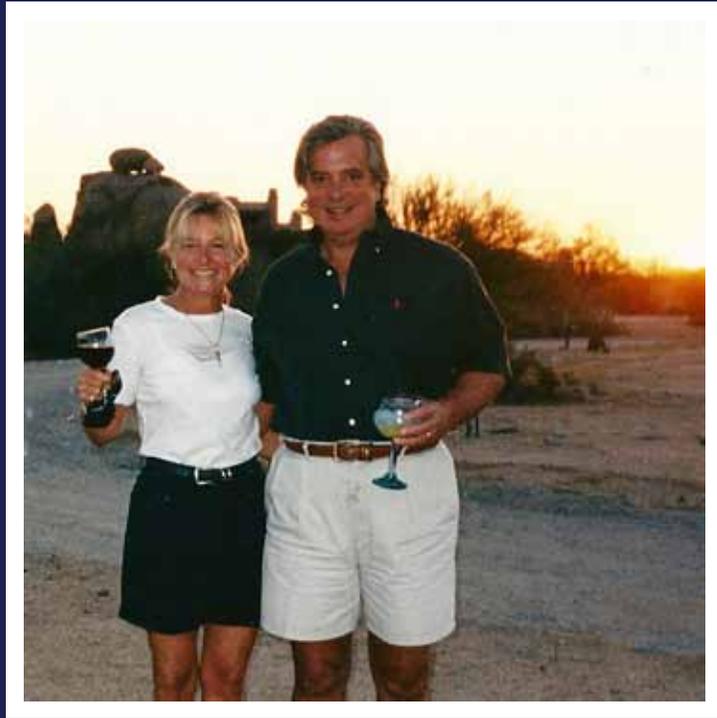


The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program

# PERSONALIZED cancer medicine



The Princess Margaret



This newsletter is dedicated to the

heroes



THE ROBERT & MAGGIE  
**BRAS**  
AND FAMILY  
NEW DRUG DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM

To the doctors and researchers who fight cancer every day. To the donors who make new research possible. To the patients who fight this devastating disease and to the breakthroughs still to be made. Most importantly, to celebrate every life that has been saved and every life that will be saved.

Here's to our heroes.



The Princess Margaret



## I Believe In Personalized Cancer Medicine

Welcome to our seventh edition of the Helping Hand Newsletter. With this edition, we hope to inspire you and to celebrate with you the discoveries being made in cancer care. We will share with you new programs that are leading the way in Personalized Cancer Medicine; contract renewals; fundraising efforts; staff profiles; inspirational stories of patients who are living with cancer as well as greetings from our Honorary Chair, Mayor Hazel McCallion.

Please join me in thanking our donors who make research possible. To the patients who fight this devastating disease, we applaud your courage and to the doctors who fight right along beside them with clinical trials and new therapies, we thank you for your tireless dedication. To the breakthroughs in research that bring to us Personalized Cancer Medicine; to our Fellows, our nurses, clinicians, pharmacologists, oncologists and technicians, who bring us up-to-date cancer therapies at The Princess Margaret, please join me in thanking the amazing team that makes up The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program, which is now over 100 strong!

In closing, I would like to dedicate this issue of the Helping Hand to my husband Robert, who was a dad of 6 and grandfather of 12. It has been ten years since Robert lost his battle with cancer, and it is appropriate that on this 10th anniversary, we are celebrating the victories being made in cancer care, and the amazing fast-paced research that has our doctors saying, "We are almost there!"

Believe It!



This is for you Robert.

Maggie Bras  
President of The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program at The Princess Margaret  
[www.brasfamily.com](http://www.brasfamily.com)  
[www.pmf.ca](http://www.pmf.ca)



## Greetings from Paul Alofs

Believe It. We chose this strong statement for our Billion Dollar Challenge for Personalized Cancer Medicine because we want everyone else to believe as strongly as we do, that cancer can be conquered in our lifetime.

We live in the Golden Age of cancer research. We are at a “tipping point.” Recent advances in genetics – including the ability to decode cancer genes – are enabling a more customized approach, combining a better understanding of each patient’s type of cancer and how that patient is likely to respond to particular therapies. In other words, finding the right treatment for the right patient at the right time. This is Personalized Cancer Medicine – a field in which Canada is poised to lead the world!

Most of you reading this newsletter have played an important role by supporting the Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program at The Princess Margaret. Your support of this exceptional program has helped to make it one of the best anywhere, and a critical part of personalized cancer medicine.

We would not have been able to build our world class research program at The Princess Margaret without the support of the Bras family and you. Thanks to your commitment, the doctors and scientists at The Princess Margaret are able to do amazing work that has a tremendous impact on patients here and around the world.

Once again, thank you.

Paul Alofs  
President & CEO  
The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation



## Greetings from the Mayor of Mississauga

At any moment of any given day, medical research in one form or another is being conducted somewhere around the world, and I can think of few more important fields of research than cancer research. All of us know someone who has cancer or whose life has been touched by a friend or family member suffering from the disease. Research, such as the type being done by The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program and Princess Margaret Hospital, not only brings us closer to finding a cure but in the interim, provides much needed hope. Clinical research is an integral part of medical advancement and when, not if, a cure for cancer is found, it will most certainly happen as a result of the thousands of hours of research being done by hard working and committed professionals like those working for The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program and Princess Margaret Hospital.

As Honorary Chair of the Program, I am most proud of the wonderful work that has been done to date and the exciting new initiatives being planned for the future. The value and importance of medical research cannot be underestimated, and I am reminded of the adage, "The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit," which I feel speaks to the importance of research and conquering cancer, not just for those presently suffering from cancer, but for future generations.

On this, the tenth anniversary of Robert Bras' passing, I know he would have been proud of the advancements that have been made by the program and of the new Princess Margaret Hospital's "Believe It" campaign, whose goal is to raise one billion dollars for Personalized Cancer Medicine within a five-year mandate. Recognizing that every patient is unique and that each form of cancer is unique, individualized treatment will go a long way to change the paradigm of cancer research, which will enable us to know as much as possible about the causes, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the disease and which will hopefully lead to fewer Canadians facing cancer and more Canadians surviving the disease.

I believe we will conquer cancer and the impressive work being done by The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program and Princess Margaret Hospital will go a long way in helping to make this a reality that much sooner.

Mayor Hazel McCallion, C.M. LL.D.



## Greetings from Dr. Robert Bell

THE ROBERT & MAGGIE BRAS NEW DRUG DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

INSPIRES PERSONALIZED CANCER MEDICINE

In April of this year, Princess Margaret launched an audacious campaign to raise \$1B for Personalized Cancer Medicine at PMH. This campaign is focused on the slogan “Believe It” to represent our commitment that we will conquer cancer through Personalized Medicine. This campaign has its origins in the excellent work accomplished in the Bras New Drug Program.

Dr. Ben Neel, the PMH scientist who serves as Director of our Ontario Cancer Institute and the Campbell Family Institute for Cancer research, says that we have learned more about the origins of cancer in the past five years than in all the previous years of cancer research! Ben emphasizes that the speed and accuracy of gene sequencing has now progressed to the point that we can make a genetic diagnosis of cancer and in many cases direct treatment based on the previously unrecognized genetic changes present in the cancer.

Bras New Drug leaders Drs. Malcolm Moore, Lillian Siu, Amit Oza, Eric Chen and Phillippe Bedard, have been amongst the leaders of genomic diagnosis and treatment for some time. They focus on detecting previously undetected “druggable” targets in the tumour, by identifying molecular changes that may render the cancer susceptible to drugs which may more effectively sharpshoot such changes. Drs. Bedard and Siu have already initiated studies at PMH that rely on genomic profiling to help doctors select drugs to match molecular changes for patients!

The Campaign for Personalized Cancer Medicine, commits that every patient treated at PMH will have Personalized Cancer Diagnosis and Prescription by Canada’s sesquicentennial – (2017)! The Campaign will focus on Cancer Detection, Diagnosis, Targeting and Support. We expect that cancer screening, pathology diagnosis, surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and psychosocial oncology will all be substantially changed by this campaign and a personalized approach to treatment. In addition to supporting research designed to detect the genetic causes of cancer, the Campaign will also support gene sequencing to enhance diagnosis and select all forms of therapy.

This Campaign will fundamentally change the way that we diagnose and treat cancer. This focused approach has developed from the initial work on molecular diagnosis started in the Bras Center. We expect that the Bras Center will be one of the primary beneficiaries of the science supported by the “Believe It” Campaign and the opportunities for our patients are extremely exciting to contemplate.

Robert S. Bell, MDCM, MSc, FACS, FRCS(C),  
President and Chief Executive Officer,  
University Health Network  
R. Fraser Elliott Bldg, 1S-417  
Toronto, ON M5G 2C4

“We are a caring, creative and accountable academic hospital, transforming healthcare for our patients, our community and the world.”



## Greetings from Chairman John Bowey

I am very proud of my association with The Princess Margaret because of the vision and impact of the work that is done to benefit people in Toronto and around the world.

The impact of The Bras Family New Drug Development Team not only provides hope to cancer patients, it also provides confidence to all nurses and physicians at The Princess Margaret who can provide the most targeted, minimally-invasive cancer treatments.

The vision of more personalized treatment is carried out by the important work being done by Dr. Malcolm Moore and his team in drug development. The investment in people and funding generated from this gift continues to provide innovative discoveries. The program accelerates the development of drugs that target specific cancers, rather than being a generic solution. This is the foundation of Personalized Cancer Medicine: ensuring the right patient gets the right treatment at the right time.

On behalf of the Foundation, staff of The Princess Margaret and all the patients who benefit from the Bras Family's commitment everyday, thank you!

John Bowey  
Chairman  
The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation



## Personalized Cancer Medicine

The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program is actively involved in Personalized Cancer Medicine at Princess Margaret Hospital. Personalized Cancer Medicine aims to provide the most appropriate treatment for each individual patient, based on the microscopic, genetic and other information that can be gathered from a patient and from his/her cancer. For example, we know that cancer develops because normal cells transform to cancer cells when changes occur in the cells' DNA. These changes result in malignant and uncontrolled growth, survival and spread of cells leading to cancers. Doctors and scientists are interested to identify the genes that have undergone changes in the cancer cells. Some of these changes are so-called 'driver' mutations that can be targeted using specific anticancer drugs. Potentially, if a cancer is highly dependent on a driver mutation, and a drug effectively blocks this mutation, then the patient's tumour can be effectively controlled for a period of time.

At The Princess Margaret, doctors in The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program have been instrumental in building the team and developing the infrastructure to make Personalized Cancer Medicine a reality in the clinic. For example, in March 2012, Dr. Philippe Bedard and Dr. Lillian Siu launched the IMPACT study (Integrated Molecular Profiling in Advanced Cancers Trials), which will analyze, in its first year, the tumour samples of 500 patients with advanced lung, breast, ovarian and colorectal cancers, as well as patients eligible for Phase I clinical trials. This trial provides the molecular profiling information about important genetic changes in the tumours of patients which may help their doctors at The Princess Margaret make treatment decisions. As The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program conducts many clinical trials of new anticancer drugs, it will play a very important role in personalized cancer medicine, by providing clinical trial opportunities for patients whose cancers are found to contain genetic changes that can be blocked by specific drugs.

Dr. Malcolm Moore

Head, Department of Medical Oncology & Hematology

Director, The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program

## Congratulations to Dr. Malcolm Moore

At the Annual Meeting in September, Dr Malcolm Moore, Head of Medical Oncology and Hematology at UHN, will assume the office the the President-Elect of the International Society of Gastrointestinal Oncology (ISGIO). This is a tremendous honour for Dr. Moore and the recognition of his international stature. He is the first Canadian to have been so honoured by this international organization and the only Canadian on the Board of ISGIO.

The International Society of Gastrointestinal Oncology (ISGIO) is the only society dedicated to the multidisciplinary management of GI cancer. The mission of ISGIO is to establish the authoritative forum for communicating cutting edge research and practice issues in gastrointestinal oncology.

Congratulations to Dr Moore for bringing acclaim to Princess Margaret and UHN!

Dr. Mary Gospodarowicz, MD, FRCP(C)

Regional Vice President, CCO & PMH



## Staff Profile

Dr. Philippe Bedard

Philippe Bedard received his medical degree from the University of Toronto, where he was awarded the Cody Academic Silver Medal. He also completed his Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology specialty training at the University of Toronto. He received additional training in breast cancer clinical and translational research at The Breast International Group (BIG) in Belgium. Philippe joined The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program as an attending physician in January of 2010. He was appointed as the Fellowship Program Director in 2012. In addition to his clinical practice that involves the treatment of patients with breast and testicular cancers, he is actively involved as a principal investigator in many ongoing phase I/II clinical trials. He was recently awarded a 2012 Career Development Award by The American Society of Clinical Oncology.

"It is a privilege to be a member of the Drug Development Program. We have a wonderful team of physicians, fellows, nurses, data coordinators and administrative staff who are committed to providing patients with the best possible care that requires access to the most promising new cancer treatments."

Dr. Philippe Bedard, MD FRCP (C)  
Staff Medical Oncologist, Princess Margaret Hospital  
Bras New Drug Development Program  
Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto

## Clinical Research Fellow, Dr. Aaron Hansen



Aaron Hansen is our newest addition at The Bras Centre. Coming from Australia, he has been with us now for 6 months. Aaron received his degree in Medicine and Surgery in 2004 from the University of Queensland and after completion of his advanced training in medical oncology was admitted to the Royal Australian College of Physicians in 2011. A number of Aaron's mentors in Brisbane trained at Princess Margaret Hospital over the last 30 years and they highly recommended a fellowship at PMH. "I was told that the infrastructure and support was second to none at PMH, and this enables you to perform high quality clinical research," he states. "A number of past fellows, who have since returned to Australia, have told me that it is a dynamic place to work. It is always exciting being here, as it is at the cutting edge of oncology developments."

It was Dr. Lillian Siu, Co-Director of The Bras Centre, who plucked Aaron away from Australia and who is now his mentor. "I was surprised when she offered me a job, I felt very lucky," says Aaron. "The main focus of my training had been clinical care – for example, looking after patients. I did not have many opportunities for clinical research!" In speaking with Aaron in The Bras Centre on a warm spring day in May, I was struck by how very young he was. In addition to this, was the sparkle in his eyes and his excitement when speaking of the project he was working on. "I am now heavily involved with two genomics profiling studies -- IMPACT and MATCH. IMPACT stands for Integrated Molecular Profiling in Advanced Cancer Trials, and MATCH is a Feasibility Study of Genomic Profiling Methods and Timing of Sample Collection to Evaluate Clonal Evolution and Tumor Heterogeneity. So the theme for my Fellowship will be both drug development and genomics."

Aaron continues his story: "I am working with three great mentors. Drs. Malcolm Moore and Lillian Siu, who are my co-supervisors, and I am working very closely with Dr. Philippe Bedard." Dr. Bedard is the 5th medical oncologist at The Bras New Drug Development Centre and is very involved in Personalized Cancer Medicine and is leading IMPACT. When I asked Aaron how he liked doing clinical research, he answered: "Clinical research? It is daunting! There are occasions when I feel completely out of my depth. I am on a steep learning curve but it is good."

Aaron goes on to explain his exciting work: "The hot topics are tumour heterogeneity and clonal evolution, which are not new concepts. Let me elaborate. A patient's cancer is generally not made up of only one cancer cell type. It is a collection of a number of different cancer cells, each with different mutations. We refer to this as tumour heterogeneity. We call these sub-populations of cells clones. These clones change over time and this is clonal evolution. Cancer is smart and it can get smarter over time. Dr. Ben Neel, a great researcher at The Campbell Family Institute at PMH once said that there are smart cancers and dumb cancers. The smart cancers are the ones that work out how to beat the treatment! We need personalized precision medicine. We need the whole picture; not part of the picture. That is what MATCH is about – it is about determining a way to know everything about a person's cancer on a molecular level so we can better treat them throughout the course of their disease. We will start with breast, ovary and colon cancers and take tissue samples at different time points in a patient's disease to look at the evolution of a patient's tumour. We will also look at what treatments work at different stages of the cancer's evolution. We need a new paradigm to fight cancer!"

Aaron made the move to Toronto in January of 2012, with his young family following him in March. Aaron is with us for two years as per his Fellowship contract and when I asked if he would like to stay here he said, "I have made no promises to anyone at home. I have come to broaden my horizon – the sky's the limit and who knows what opportunities from around the world may open up from here?"

Yes, for Aaron, the sky is the limit and I can see it in the sparkle in his eyes when speaking of the IMPACT and MATCH projects that he is working on, and I can see it when I asked how he likes working here and how his face lights up with excitement. Yes, Aaron is on a steep learning curve and a good addition to The Bras New Drug Development Centre at The Princess Margaret in Toronto.

Aaron has the last word:

"It is a privilege to be working here."

Maggie Bras

## Thank You to Those Who Participated in The Toronto Marathon to Raise Funds for The Robert & Maggie Bras And Family New Drug Development Program



Walking Hand in Hand Team.

This past Sunday morning, May 6th, over 600 participants gathered for a single goal – to conquer Cancer in Our Lifetime. The Run or Walk to Conquer Cancer was once again a huge success. Participants collectively raised over \$400,000! Together, the Run or Walk family has raised over \$8.5 million to date for cancer research at The Princess Margaret!

On behalf of the Bras Family and the Bras New Drug Development Program, I am pleased to report that we raised \$10,612 and with the incredible Wolf Pack headed by Wendi Wolf, who raised \$3,650, our grand total is \$14,262! In the five years since we have participated in this event, we have raised \$82,871!

The Bras New Drug Development Program team also received two awards on the Sunday -- one for being in the top 10 of funds raised for this event, and the other award for raising a total of \$82,871 in the 5 years we have participated.

On behalf of The Bras New Drug Development Program we thank you for your support and for supporting Wendi's Wolf Pack!

Leah Lambrakis Bras  
and Maggie Bras

**THEY'RE IN. ARE YOU?  
ENTER YOUR TEAM NOW!**

**ROAD HOCKEY TO CONQUER CANCER  
HONORARY CHAIR ALL-STARS  
ONTARIO 2012**

**BACK ROW (FROM L TO R):** Bert Clark – Managing Director, Head of U.S. & Canada, Global Infrastructure Finance, Scotiabank; Barry Colaneri – President & CEO, President's Choice Financial; Jason Brass – Franchisee, Boston Pizza Square One & Orangeville; Barry Lorenzetti – President & CEO, BPS Canada; Stewart Johnston – President of TSM, Steve Taitakalis – Owner & Principal, Toronto Prep School; Dr. Tony Pivell – Surgical Oncologist, The Princess Margaret; Bruce MacKay – Global Director of Systems & Process Control, Hatch; Dr. Greg Wells – Scientist & Exercise Human Physiologist, University of Toronto.

**FRONT ROW (FROM L TO R):** Ken Norris – Managing Director, Toronto Region, Colliers International; Dale Leebman – Partner, Goodman LLP; Noble Chumbar – Partner, Cassels Brock; Joey Lango – COO, Lango's; Rosanna Lango – Chair, Lango's Family Charitable Foundation; David Scardifile – President, W Clearington Investments Inc; Patrick Keeley – Vice President of Risk Management, Glaxi Staff + Associates; Chris Armstrong – Vice President, Management & Director of Wasserman Media Group; Canada; Sean St. John – Co-Head & Managing Director, Fixed Income and Head of Debt Capital Markets, National Bank Financial.

**Call 1.877.541.TM IN (4646) or visit [teamuptoconquercancer.ca](http://teamuptoconquercancer.ca)**

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## Road Hockey to Conquer Cancer

Road Hockey To Conquer Cancer, an ambitious fundraising event for The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation and Canadian Cancer Society, made its debut on Saturday, October 1st, 2011 and was an astounding success in its inaugural year. It was a hockey festival in many ways, with the 1,571 players enjoying a dawn-to-dusk day of fun, celebrity interaction, live music, good food and refreshments while raising more than \$2.5 million for cancer research at The Princess Margaret and Canadian Cancer Society. Year Two promises to be bigger, bolder and provide even more funding for the creation and implementation of Personalized Cancer Medicine at The Princess Margaret and the continued outstanding work of the Canadian Cancer Society. The event has now also been introduced into Vancouver and Edmonton, both of whom will stage Road Hockey to Conquer Cancer events later this year. In Toronto, the second annual Road Hockey to Conquer Cancer event will take place on Saturday, September 29th at Ontario Place.

Each team of 10 – 12 players must raise \$10,000 in order to participate. Some raise the funds through good, old-fashioned requests of friends and family, but others use more creative methods to raise the money. My son, Jason Brass, owns two Boston Pizza franchises and he introduced a program called 'Pucks 4 Bucks.' For a \$2 donation, patrons get a Road Hockey Hero puck to sign and put up on the wall at the restaurant. For a \$5 donation, they get the same puck to sign and display, as well as a Boston Pizza coupon. All the proceeds go to sponsoring their Road Hockey to Conquer Cancer team. Recently, Jason was profiled in The Globe and Mail as one of the top fundraisers for the event.

Road hockey is something we all played as kids, and the memories still resonate. All you need is a stick and a pair of running shoes. If you're interested in getting together some friends and registering a team, or, if you'd simply like to donate to a player, visit:

[www.teamuptoconquercancer.ca](http://www.teamuptoconquercancer.ca)  
or call 1-877-541-4646.

Maggie Bras

Personal Stories  
of Courage,  
Strength and  
Hope...

## Robert and Sandra Kidd

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It is a warm spring day and I am sitting across from Sandra and Robert Kidd in our cozy boardroom at The Princess Margaret in Toronto. I have asked Robert if I may interview him and Sandra for my upcoming Helping Hand Newsletter. They graciously agreed and so on Monday, he and Sandra shared their story with me at The Princess Margaret. Let us begin.

In early December of 2010, Robert was growing concerned as his appetite was unusually poor and he had lost 12 – 15 lbs. A PET scan in a clinic in Mississauga showed that Robert had cancer in his pancreas which had already spread to his liver and his spine! The news was devastating.

Robert and Sandra are in their sixties with two grown daughters - one in the Guelph area and one in Kentucky - and four lovely grandchildren. They are an active couple who enjoy outdoor living and, of course, their growing family. At the time of Robert's diagnosis, they were living near North Bay and while they were receiving good care at their local hospital, there appeared to be little hope. His cancer diagnosis was grim. Robert hoped that there would be a better treatment than the usual recipe that he was being offered. There had to be a cancer hospital somewhere in Ontario, in Canada or the U.S. that could offer him hope of survival. There was.

Robert and Sandra told their family the devastating news and within days, a medical sales representative in the U.S. and an oncologist at a major hospital in Toronto, along with the Mississauga clinic, all told Robert that given his condition, there was only one place to be and that was with Dr. Malcolm Moore at The Princess Margaret in Toronto! The advice could not be ignored and now, armed with a renewed sense of hope, Robert's wife Sandra called Princess Margaret Hospital and asked for an appointment with Dr. Moore! Within a week, they had their appointment and were on their way to Toronto to see Dr. Moore and his team at The Princess Margaret, one of the top 5 cancer research centres in the world.

Robert and Sandra now felt optimistic and hopeful because of the huge vote of confidence given by The Princess Margaret and Dr. Moore. They were on their way.

Their initial visit on December 15, 2010 was with Dr. Bailey, a radiation oncologist who is part of Dr Moore's team. Robert said, "Dr. Bailey was very generous with his time and was very positive. At no time did we feel that there was no recourse for me." Radiation, however, was ruled out as an option for Robert.

"On December 22, 2010 we met with dear Dr. Moore who immediately prescribed some additional tests which

revealed that I had Neuroendocrine Cancer (NET), an unusual cancer developing from cells in the endocrine system, often slow- growing and found most commonly in the lung or gastrointestinal system. This important new information meant my treatment would now be different from the original diagnosis of metastasized pancreatic cancer. Our next stop was a visit with Dr. Stephen Gallinger, a surgical oncologist on the team. Dr. Gallinger was optimistic that he could surgically remove my tumours. Unfortunately, after reviewing my second CT scan, Dr. Gallinger told us my tumours were faster growing than the typical NET and one had grown into the portal vein of my liver. He made the difficult call to tell us that surgery was out of the question at this time, but still left us with a sense of hope that something could be done."

After radiation and surgery were ruled out, Dr. Moore put Robert on 3 cycles of conventional chemo drugs over a period of 3 months. Unfortunately, Robert did not respond or tolerate the treatment he was receiving and watched in disbelief as his cancer grew 5%.

"When we received this devastating news from Dr. Moore, we were given a few moments to digest this setback and, of course, shed a few tears, as we began to wonder if I had run out of options. After a short period of time, Dr. Moore came back into room and said that he had some promising news. There was a clinical trial where they were getting good results, and he thought that I might be a candidate for this trial!" Fortunately, Robert was accepted into the clinical trial and a new journey began for Robert and Sandra.

Now it is my time to jump into this story. I will take a few paragraphs out of an email I sent to Robert on April the 30th.

To Robert: "My name is Maggie Bras and I am not sure if you will remember meeting me at the Billion Dollar 'Believe It' campaign a few weeks back at Princess Margaret Hospital, but we did shake hands and I got a wee bit emotional. Let me explain why. Dr. Malcolm Moore told me all about you a while back (without naming names, of course), but in watching you and Malcolm in the video at the campaign, and then listening to you speak in person, that was the end and the beginning of a journey for me and our family. My husband Robert passed away 10 years ago this coming September and it was both his and my dream to find a way for those facing cancer to have hope. Robert did have hope, lots of it, but he knew there was so much more that could be done. There had to be more. Robert's oncologist was Dr. Malcolm Moore – the same one and only amazing Dr. Malcolm Moore



Sandra and Robert Kidd and family.

who you are very familiar with, as he is your oncologist as well! We then asked The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation where we could make a difference in cancer care at The Princess Margaret. Where in this great research institution could we be most helpful? The answer was in new drug development under the directorship of Dr. Malcolm Moore! So this is how it all began. We made an endowment to PMH in January of 2001 and the new drug development team was created and called – The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program. Dr. Moore's team is comprised of equally talented Drs. Amit Oza, Lillian Siu, Eric Chen and our newest member, Dr. Philippe Bedard. We now have over 100 members on the team!

"Today, I am witness to the incredible progress being made in new drug development. Along with new drug trials, targeted therapy and Personalized Cancer Medicine, folks like you Robert, have HOPE like no other time in cancer history! You are an example of the progress being made to date and along with Malcolm, Amit, Lillian, Eric and Philippe and all those working so hard at The Princess Margaret to slay this beast we call cancer, we are well on our way to 'Conquering Cancer in Our Lifetime'!

"The end and beginning of this journey for me is that ten years after my husband Robert's death, you, Robert, are standing in the hospital today where Robert would have been if the progress that we have witnessed was available then. It is appropriate that your name is Robert and that I was witness to your great story. Thank you for sharing. The beginning is the excitement that I am feeling today and the hope I have, that the next ten years will bring to us what we have been looking for. Hope that we will find a way for all those living with cancer to

live a normal life, or even, in fact, being cured! You are proof of that."

Let us now pick up Robert and Sandra Kidd's journey of hope.

Robert still had hope. "I entered the clinical trial, which presented an alternative approach to my cancer - a treatment that matched my genetic profile to a particular chemo. I tolerated my treatment extremely well and have had great success! By March of 2012, my tumours had shrunk by 47% and I had my lifestyle back. It was remarkable! I had HOPE and the staff had HOPE. They are a team and their mission is to fight cancer." During Robert's treatment, he and Sandra attended a series of courses developed by Dr. Alastair Cunningham at The Princess Margaret called 'The Healing Journey.' "As I see it, this program helps cancer patients learn to relax, and to focus their emotional, spiritual and physical defences to fight the cancer in their body. There are 7 levels and we are currently re-taking the 3rd session. We are taught how to be at peace with life in the present, how to show everyday grace and to forgive others as well as ourselves. I got to the point where I learned not to hold in resentment, which, for me, was really significant to learn. This course re-directs you and gives you tools to be the very best you can be. The learning is augmented by the other patients and caregivers involved, as we give each other support. That is when you realize you are not alone. You learn how they have dealt with cancer and it gives you hope. Dr. Claire Edmonds, our course guide, teacher and mentor supreme, won't let us fall too low and is always there to pick us up. Cancer or no cancer, all of us would benefit from taking this course.

"Everyone in this institution believes in what they are doing. You can see it and feel it...from our first contact with Laura Lancaster, Dr. Moore's Administrative Assistant, who heard the desperation in our voices during our initial phone call to PMH, to Jennifer Petronis, our Clinical Trials Nurse Co-ordinator, who has cared for us every step of the way (and answers her cell phone day or night!), to Manuel (Manny) Martinez, our weekly chemo nurse who keeps us laughing, to the PMH Spiritual Care Dept. who know how to listen well, to Yvonne Ta, Medical Reimbursement Specialist, who is there to help patients find a way to pay for drugs. We feel surrounded and sustained by these compassionate people."

Today, Robert and Sandra have moved closer to Toronto and one of their daughters and are now within easy driving distance to The Princess Margaret. Robert's side effects are minimal. A touch of high blood pressure, one slightly swollen foot, but he has his weight back and tons of energy. He is planning his future and will be taking a ski trip in December with his family. Robert has not skied for a long time, but this is what he wishes to do and he is able to do so! Four months after Robert started the clinical trial, he and a next door neighbour broke up a

large area of cement with a jackhammer, removed the cement and replaced it with 3 tons of river rock! "While I was tired at the end of the day, it was a good tired," says Robert proudly!

As we sat across from each other on this day in the boardroom at Princess Margaret Hospital, and as our conversation came to a close, Robert had a few more things to share with me and with a twinkle in his eyes and a smile on his face, said, "I found out good news today. My cancer has now shrunk another 3% to 50% and I feel GREAT! I feel great at the end of each day. I am living a normal life in one year since entering the new drug trial. That is how quick it was! I have been given my life back and the gift has been enormous."

Sandra's wish is that "they share with other people so they can take strength from us – hopefully!"

Maggie Bras

To view Robert and Malcolm's video, please go to: [www.brasfamily.com](http://www.brasfamily.com)

## Colleen O'Neill

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Her energy bounded through the boardroom door before she did, and when I was introduced to Colleen, I saw a petite gal with a huge smile on her face and a sparkle in her blue eyes. Colleen was introduced to me by Val Bowering, her Clinical Research Coordinator at The Princess Margaret during one of Colleen's weekly visits to the hospital. I was meeting Colleen for the first time in order to hear her story and then to share it with you, the reader. Let Colleen's story begin:

Colleen was diagnosed with advanced ovarian cancer in October of 2005 at the age of 45 and given not more than 6 months to live. "It came as a complete shock," said Colleen. "How can this happen to me? I take good care of myself. I have never smoked. I've had regular gynecological checkups. Unfortunately, I probably had cancer for at least a year or more.

"Yes, I had symptoms," Colleen stated when I asked the question, "but I thought I was starting early menopause! Soon after my diagnosis, my sister passed away from lung cancer!"

It was a tough time in Colleen's life and in the life of her family. "I was diagnosed at a Toronto hospital where, unfortunately, I was told there was nothing they could do for me as my cancer had advanced."

In April of 2006, Colleen moved over to Princess Marga-

ret Hospital and met with Dr. Amit Oza. "Amazingly, the doctor of my choice, and he was willing to take me on," said Colleen. "Thankfully I got here and Dr. Oza felt there was hope. If Dr. Dodge did the surgery, Dr. Oza felt they could do things and they did! I had surgery in May of 2006 and then started my chemo protocols with tremendous success. Post-surgery, I was stable for two years! It was very encouraging. "Then, unfortunately, my cancer returned in April of 2008 and I was put into one of my first clinical trials, but that didn't work. Then in August of 2008, this clinical trial came along and this has been the one!"

Colleen continues: "My life has changed significantly over the past 7 years and not a day goes by where I am not grateful for the hard work of researchers like Dr. Amit Oza for keeping me alive! I have been on three different clinical trials over the past 7 years with Dr. Oza, and on this trial for four years this coming August! This trial has been the most successful.

"Yes, I am living with cancer! You can you know. Some days are better than others, but by and large, I am living well. Maggie, you do know that at this hospital in dealing with cancer on an on-going basis, that they treat cancer as a chronic illness. It is a blessing to be here and it has been a very positive experience. Amazing, here I am after all of these years! I continue to work



Colleen O'Neill with her Clinical Research Team..  
Judy Quintos, Valerie Bowering, Colleen O'Neill, Gerry Prendergast, Anna Haley.

full-time and I help in my husband's greenhouse business in Orangeville on the weekend. I believe you must keep moving forward. I have the benefit of this fantastic hospital; the doctors, clinicians, Val, people that are helping me through this journey. They are doing everything they can to help me, so my job is to engage in a lifestyle that meets what they are trying to help me do! When people ask me how I manage to come down here every week, I say it is not an option. I will adjust my life. I would do it three times a week if I had to! Yes, it is quite the journey, but the option is not an option!"

Colleen spoke about how she is more patient and less easily frustrated. She values more aspects of her life than she may have before. Colleen continues her story: "If Princess Margaret Hospital did not focus on specialized individual care programs, I would not be here to enjoy my life with my husband, two stepchildren, my siblings and their spouses, nieces, nephews and friends...quite a large and crazy Irish family."

The Princess Margaret has become a large part of Colleen's life and she has a lot to say! "When you are in this hospital and receiving good care and expertise, you are lucky to be here. The people behind the desk in chemo daycare; the chemo nurses; clinical trial nurses, are doing everything they can to make your life better. They are doing their very best to help you. Sure, I have to wait an hour-and-a-half for chemo, but everyone is doing their best. The technicians drawing your blood and the nurses in chemo daycare always have a smile on their face. They are amazing. We need to exercise more tolerance for the

people working here, as they are doing everything they can to make this journey of ours the best it can be. They work at this hospital because they care and they want to help eradicate this disease. I wish more patients and their families showed the same kind of respect and kindness these folks show to patients. I am so lucky that this hospital exists!"

Our interview is coming to a close and I ask what has surprised Colleen most about her cancer journey. "I continue to have HOPE thanks to the team I work with at The Princess Margaret. This has surprised me. You have to have HOPE and BELIEVE your doctor can help you live with the disease.

"I feel clinical trials are the future in dealing with cancer. As long as there continues to be funding available to conduct research and find answers on a patient-by-patient basis, people will be able to live with cancer. This may be the HOPE we are all looking for!

"I would like to thank Dr. Amit Oza and the fantastic nursing team led by Valerie Bowering and Val's nursing colleagues.

"After all these years, we are still good to go! I owe a lot to this hospital, to clinical trials, to personalized care. I don't know where I'd be..." Colleen's voice trails off. "Well, I would not be here! I am so gratified that this program is here for me. You want to be here if you have cancer!"

Maggie Bras

## Elana Waldman

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It was a beautiful warm day in June and I was making my way to The Princess Margaret to interview one of Dr. Amit Oza's patients in order to share her story with you, the reader. I met up with Elana in the lobby of The Bras New Drug Development Centre and was pleasantly surprised to see that she had brought along her Mom, Elaine. Let me share with you Elana's story:

Elana is a well-composed young woman with a ready smile and an easy laugh, and dark eyes that dance! She was very much at ease and ready to share her cancer journey. Her mom, Elaine, is also striking and an equally composed woman who, until the end of the interview, sat quietly beside her daughter.

I asked Elana to begin by telling me about her journey and her first sentence was: "It has been a long journey! I was diagnosed with stage 3C Ovarian cancer on August 19th, 2005. I had been going through fertility treatments – my husband and I were trying for our second child. During the course of the treatments, the doctor found some suspicious results, and two days later, I was at The Princess Margaret seeing Dr. Barry Rosen in the GYN/Oncology Unit. We started with surgery in September and a chemo regimen in October, where I was the first person in Canada to receive intra-peritoneal chemotherapy, which is where they deliver the chemo through a catheter directly into the abdominal cavity. That was hell! It was a very harsh regimen and in all, I received 8 treatments until April of '06. In the spring of '07, I entered a clinical trial where I was administered an anti-angiogenic drug, which prevents blood flow to the tumour, in effect starving the cancer cells of oxygen. My side-effects from the trial drug were not tolerable, so much so that I was not able to leave my house for a long time. Having said that, if it worked, you learn to live with things! But it didn't work."

In interviewing Elana, I noted, that even though she said she had not given a lot of thought to the sequence of events in her cancer journey, she did manage to remember all the dates and small details. I found out why. Elana is a lawyer and used to practise family law, which she unfortunately had to give up because of her illness. Elana's attention to detail was incredible, so much so, I was not finding out who this delightful gal really was underneath the detail. Yet!

Elana continued. "I was diagnosed in August and my daughter, Sydney, had just turned 2 the month before." I asked how she managed going through cancer treatments with a young daughter. She answered; "My mother, who lives in Montreal, would come in for each of my treatments, even though she was still working full-

time, and would take time off work to stay with me for the four or five days when the side effects of the chemo were at their worst. At that time of my initial diagnosis, I also had a nanny because I was working full-time. The nanny would come in to help care for Sydney.

"I had my first surgery on September 23rd of '05, which was called a debulking, where they try to get out all of the disease they see. That surgery resulted in a complete hysterectomy. My husband, Mark, wanted to see if they could save at least one ovary, but I said take out whatever you need to take out. Don't worry about family planning! They discovered I had spots on my liver, my spleen, my diaphragm, and pelvic floor. Dr. Rosen scraped everything that he could see and then I started chemo. I started a second line of chemo in July of 2007. I did four of 9 rounds when I had a second surgery on November 22, 2007, in the middle of the line of chemo. Dr. Rosen scheduled a splenectomy. He removed my spleen, and then, he went to remove some spots from the back of my liver. When he went to move the liver, it just shattered. They could not control the bleeding and after receiving 45 units of blood, I woke up December 2nd! Did you know that the human body only carries 9 units of blood?" asked Elana.

I stopped the story and directed a question to Elana's Mom. "You must have been scared." Her answer: "We don't talk about it. We just watched Dr. Jason Dodge going back and forth on the surgical floor carrying coolers packed with blood!"

Elana continues the story: "Dr. Ian McGilvray is a liver transplant surgeon at Toronto General Hospital where the surgery took place, so they brought him in to do a liver resection. It was a very long recovery and that was very hard on my daughter. I had told her I was going in to the hospital for a few days and they were going to cut the "sick" out of my tummy and she thought I would be home after four days. It was two weeks before I even spoke to her."

Elana continues her story to tell me that after completing her next round of chemo, which brings us to 2008, there was 'no evidence of disease' for about 6 months. Then the numbers started to rise again, and this is when we started to look at clinical trials and I was moved into the care Dr. Amit Oza in New Drug Development. I was going to be entered into a clinical trial, but at the 11th hour, I found out that because of a previous treatment consisting of an anti-angiogenic, I could not enter this trial!" In listening to Elana tell this part of her story and watching her body language, I began to see some emotion. This period in her journey was becoming more difficult for



Valerie Bowering, Elana Waldman and Dr. Amit Oza.

her and a little more difficult to tell, but she carries on without a beat. “After a third line of six treatments, which brought me up to the year 2010, my numbers got lower and the disease stabilized, but never to the point of ‘no evidence of disease’ or NED.”

I asked Elana how she was feeling at this juncture in the story, and she said, “When I’m not on chemo, other than the fatigue, I’m okay. There are days when I cannot get out of bed in the morning, but that is okay. There is no physical pain; it is just fatigue, so I’ve learned to manage my lifestyle! I am lucky in a sense that because I receive disability payments, I don’t have to go into work.

“In 2010, I wasn’t NED, but I was stable. This was in late spring and Dr. Oza said, ‘You are good for a couple of months, so we are going to give you a break.’ So, two-and-a-half weeks later, my husband, my daughter, my mom and I were on a plane to Israel!”

Elana’s face lights up and a big smile stretches from ear to ear as she is sharing with me this part of the story. The excitement is showing and she continues. “It was very important to me that I be the one to take my daughter to Israel for her first trip. It was AWESOME! It was really, really incredible. Sydney still remembers it. She still talks about it. We celebrated her birthday while we were there. It was amazing! It was really, really good.

“In January of 2011 I started a clinical trial, but I only did it for a couple of months as I didn’t respond. Then, in June of 2011, I was entered into a new clinical trial and was on it until December. However, during this time, in May I developed a plural effusion that got progressively worse. It is fluid in the lungs. Dr. Oza believed it was a reaction to coming off the previous clinical trial. This was a really

bad summer. This was the first time in this whole process that I got scared because I couldn’t breathe. It was the first time I felt sick, because up until that point, the only time I ever felt unwell was because of the chemo or because of surgeries, it wasn’t because of cancer!

“So this takes me through the summer at which point I am on this clinical trial that I started in June and I stayed on it until December. And I responded REALLY well. It shrunk my tumours INCREDIBLY! I was on a combination of low-dose chemo called cyclophosphamide and a PARP inhibitor and then, in December, my numbers started to go up even though I was still on the trial!”

What a battle Elana was in!

“I got kicked off that trial because of the tumour growth. Psychologically, this was very difficult because I had been doing so well. I’d been handling it well, I had been exercising so I was feeling better, feeling strong. I didn’t handle being kicked off of that trial very well. I then hibernated through most of that winter and started my fourth line of chemo.

“Today, I just finished my last treatment.”

I asked Elana how she handles her frustration. Her response is, “I try to channel it elsewhere with positive energy. I have a video blog on Chatelaine.com and my blog is called ‘Time to Shout.’ The reason my blog is called a ‘Time to Shout’ is because Ovarian Cancer is known as the ‘cancer that whispers.’ Because the symptoms are vague, they are diffuse and they are often misdiagnosed. I also have a website that is called [www.itstimetoshout.com](http://www.itstimetoshout.com). In the past, I have done significant fundraising for the hospital raising over \$500,000 for PMH in the last

four years!"

This gal is incredible. She is waging a battle for her life, and raising money for Ovarian Cancer- early detection. What an amazing gal!

"Did you know," asks Elana, as she goes back to 'the cancer that whispers,'"If there was a cancer tool -- if ovarian cancer is diagnosed in Stage One -- there is a 90% cure rate? Not survival, but CURE! If it is diagnosed in Stage 3, where I was diagnosed, it is a 5-year, 30% survival rate. That is a HUGE discrepancy. So you know, if we could have something equivalent to the Pap smear for cervical cancer, we could have a 90% cure rate! If we can get an early detection tool -- it is not going to help me -- but it is going to help lots of others! So that has been my focus and where I direct my fundraising efforts!"

In speaking of fundraising, Elana commented on the brilliant campaign that The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation was undertaking. Her comment was, "No two cancers are alike, which is why this campaign at the hospital makes perfect sense!"

Believe It!

In closing, we spoke of attitude. We also spoke of changes to one's life.

Elaine, Elana's Mom, said how very brave Elana is, and Elana said she does not have a choice! Her Mom said, "Oh, but you do. We sit in the waiting room and listen to people complain!" So I asked Elana if she sits and complains. "Here is my theory" says Elana. "I am a very positive person and I have always been generally happy and I have good coping skills. You have a choice - you can be

beaten down by whatever is afflicting you, whether it is medical or financial or whatever it is, or you can shrivel up in a corner and cry, and then what kind of life are you leading? Or you can get out there and live what life you have while you have it! For example I just purchased a baby blue VESPA!" Elana laughed out loud. In speaking about changes to her life, Elana answered, "I don't wait for big things anymore. For example: the trip to Israel or the Vespa. These are things I really wanted, and I am not going to put them off. I may get hit by a bus tomorrow so I try to enjoy the time that I have -- regardless of how long that is. Cancer is a real kick in the ass, pardon my French, so I try to take advantage of the time I have. I think for the little things, you do still get caught up in life, the day-to-day normal life. What has changed is that I have seized on the bigger opportunities that, had I not had cancer, I may not have taken. Outside of my control are the other things that have changed. I am not working and that is a huge change. My family life has been severely impacted in that my plan was to have three or four kids, not one. I am also a bit more impatient. I am impatient with stupidity.

I asked if she had one last comment to the reader.

"The only thing I want to say is when you meet somebody on the street who has cancer, don't treat them differently. We are not different. I have cancer. I am not sick. Deal with it! I am."

Maggie Bras

Edited due to size! To view the unedited article, please go to: [www.brasfamily.com](http://www.brasfamily.com)

## Wendi Wolf

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Wendi Wolf is not your average 51-year-old.

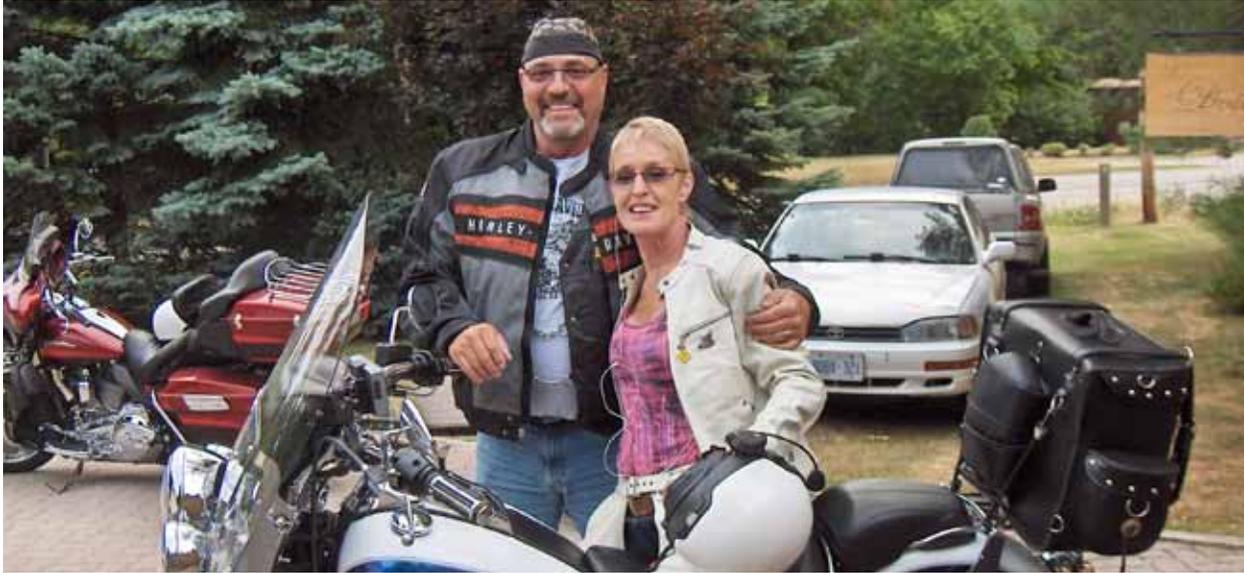
It is a gray January morning and she is sitting on a pew inside Norval United Church, a small cozy sanctuary in the Norval valley about an hour west of Toronto.

Unlike many 51-year-olds, Wendi does not go to work in an office. Instead, she gets down and dirty working as a dog groomer out of her home. She wears vibrant blue eye shadow that makes her green eyes pop. And her favourite food? "I like beer," she says with a laugh. Indeed, the youthfulness exemplified in Wendi's fashion sense and lifestyle makes her deviate from what is common of most women her age. But more than her evident love of animals and 'beer o'clock', there is something else that separates Wendi from the average.

Wendi has survived lung cancer!

Her journey began in September 2010 when she and her new husband Frank were about to embark on their 10-day romantic honeymoon in Tuscany. "Before we left for Tuscany, I was concerned because I was coughing a lot," explains Wendi. "So I had some tests done at Georgetown Hospital in Georgetown where we used to live." Her CT scan revealed either a blood clot, which meant traveling was out of the question, or there was the possibility that she had lung cancer. Wendi knew without question that she needed to head to the best cancer research institution in Canada -- Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto -- for a second opinion. Cardiothoracic surgeon, Dr. Gail Darling, told Wendi that travel would be possible and that tests would commence upon Wendi and Frank's return from Tuscany. So the honeymoon was a go!

Wendi had a gut feeling that traveling to Italy was not a



Frank and Wendi Wolf.

good thing, but she couldn't even imagine how bad it would be. Instead of a romantic honeymoon in Tuscany, the day after their arrival, Wendi was rushed to hospital and underwent emergency surgery for Diverticulitis – a ruptured bowel. She was in serious condition and on October 23rd, after a ten-day stay in hospital, Wendi and Frank were able to return home.

On November 18, 2010 at Princess Margaret Hospital, Wendi was diagnosed with Stage 3A lung cancer!

Dr. Gail Darling told Wendi that with conventional treatment, her chances of living until she was 56 years of age were slim. But, recalling the day she first learned she had cancer, in Wendi's words, "Dr. Darling was so amazing. She just came in the room very upbeat, sat down, looked at both Frank and me and said, 'Have I got a plan for you!'"

So the battle began.

After extensive x-rays and a CT scans, Wendi was entered into a clinical trial to determine what combination of anti-drugs and possibly radiation worked best for her particular cancer without damaging her healthy cells. This process is 'targeted cancer therapy' or 'personalized cancer therapy.'

"Clinical trials are basically very detailed tests whereby we take groups of patients who have a certain type of cancer and a certain stage of cancer and give them the option to be randomized or given treatments that are non-standard," said Wendi's radiation oncologist, Dr. Andrew Hope. "So, experimental therapies or new therapies that we think may be better than the current therapy."

Wendi was relieved, hopeful and thankful that she was given this opportunity to participate in a clinical trial and

she noted, "While involved in this study, I met a gentleman 20 years my senior and he was receiving the same experimental drug as I was. At first, I really did not think he was going to make it when we visited them at Christmas this year, but when we visited him two-and-a-half months later, it was like he had never been ill! Amazing!"

Wendi was no stranger to cancer, as her first husband, Al, had passed away from esophageal cancer in 2007. Now, three years later, Wendi was the one in the patient's chair facing down her own mortality. Wendi says being on the opposite end of the cancer treatment was quite an experience. "I kind of had an idea of what I was up against going through it all with Al, but it sure is way different when you are actually the one on the receiving end of chemotherapy and radiation."

For the next two-and-a-half months, each and every day, Wendi and Frank made the drive to downtown Toronto for her daily round of radiation.

Wendi says radiation was the hardest part, not because it hurt physically, but because it was psychologically challenging. "They shut that big steel door and then you feel really alone and then you hear that 'zap zap.'"

Dr. Andrew Hope explains that radiation is more of a process than a one-time fix like surgery. Each time the treatment is administered, a little bit more toxicity is added to the patient's body. What is more, Wendi was going through chemotherapy at the same time – a fierce combination that made fatigue and sickness a part of Wendi's daily life.

This didn't stop Wendi's fight against cancer. She just kept going with Frank's incredible support, her son Ryan's

support and the support of her amazing friends. "Frank was my rock," says Wendi. "I don't know how I would have done it without him. And when I looked at people receiving their treatment at Princess Margaret Hospital without anyone there beside them to give them support, I thought, 'Oh my God, how do you do this?' I had Frank the whole way, so it was good. We made it a kind of adventure."

Being in the hospital every day for more than two months, Wendi and Frank began to develop relationships with the doctors and nurses whom they saw on a daily basis. Dr. Hope is one example. It was bit of a funny start when Wendi and Frank, along with son Ryan, first met him. "He looks like a 6 foot 3 Doogie Howser hippie," says Wendi of Dr. Hope's big bowtie and long ringlets. "He looked to be the age of my young adult son Ryan, and when I first met him, I was kind of like, 'Oh my God, I could have given birth to you! Do you really know what you are doing?'"

As it turned out, Dr. Hope knew exactly what he was doing. He took the time to explain to Wendi and her family in plain English, very much like the other doctors on Wendi's new drug development study team at Princess Margaret Hospital. He also took the time to actually get to know Wendi as a person rather than just a disease, as well as breaking down the doctor-patient hierarchy. "He was just like a friend coming in to the treatment room," says Wendi. Dr. Hope says he and his colleagues make it a priority to focus on more than just the cancer affecting the people they are treating.

"Being able to focus on the whole person and try to make sure that they have all of their concerns met, either by being listened to or, ideally, looked after if possible, is a really important part of making sure people get through the cancer therapy and are able to move forward with their daily lives and do the things they want to do," says Dr. Hope.

Wendi responded well in the study and on March 28th, 2011, Wendi rang the bell in the Chemo Centre indicating the end of her chemo treatment! It was an extremely emotional day for Wendi and for her new husband Frank. It was a celebration and a day to remember.

In July of 2011, a mere 3 months after ringing the bell at Princess Margaret Hospital signaling Wendi's remission, Wendi and Frank hopped onto their 750 lb Harley Davidson motorcycles (Wendi is a petite 140 lbs) and headed to the East Coast of the U.S. where they traveled up to ten hours each day for two weeks!

If you speak to Wendi, she will tell you that it was the strong foundation of doctors and nurses at Princess

Margaret Hospital and her family and friends that helped her get to the finish line.

Dr. Hope says that he has never learned more about the importance of family and friends than he has while working as an oncologist. According to him, it is witnessing someone like Wendi going through a hardship – much like a fight against cancer, and how they deal with it – which illustrates how he wishes to act in his own life. "I think Wendi is an exemplary example of how to do that," he said of Wendi. "There are very few people who would have gone into the circumstances that she has gone into with the same attitude."

But it goes further. Wendi is an extraordinary individual. Despite the cancer screaming from inside her telling her it was pointless to keep going, Wendi refused to listen... or to give up. Instead, she grounded herself in an unwavering faith that she would get better.

"When it comes down to it, it is belief. It is here," she says as she touches the pew beneath her. "I think my belief started here, at this church in Norval, which it did. I know that's what has done it."

Wendi goes back to Princess Margaret Hospital every three months for check-ups, but gradually, these visits will become less frequent. A person is in full remission after five years of being cancer-free and Wendi is not about to give up now!

Wendi and Frank's next destination bike trip will be to the Finger Lakes in the U.S. in July of this year. And of course, the trip will be made on their Harleys!

There is a fire within Wendi Wolf. It is something that you cannot help but admire. It is beautiful and blazing. You can see it in those green eyes sparkling under her blue eye shadow. You can hear it in her laugh as it echoes throughout the empty sanctuary. You can feel it in her spirit; that powerful, magnetic energy that vibrates off of her as she speaks. It's a fire that will continue to fuel adventure in Wendi's life. It is a fire that cancer will never be able to extinguish!

Kimberly Ivany  
Fourth year - Ryerson University

Update: Sunday morning, May 6th, Wendi and her team of Wolf Packs, participated in the Toronto Marathon, with Wendi and her team walking the 5k for The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug development Program. Wendi's Team raised \$3,650 and with other team monies raised, the grand total was \$14,262. Wendi was in great shape and we celebrate her victory and thank her team for their generosity and support.

# impact

## Leading the Way to Personalized Cancer Care

The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program is excited to announce the recent opening of the Integrated Molecular Profiling in Advanced Cancers Trial (IMPACT) at Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH). Launched on March 1st, 2012, IMPACT is the first Canadian comprehensive molecular cancer screening program that seeks to provide doctors with specific cancer gene information so that each patient's treatment can be tailored to his/her specific form of the disease.

Cancer was once thought of as a single disease that affected many different parts of the body, but researchers now know that each patient's cancer is different, even if cancers from the same part of the body may look the same under the microscope. Changes in the cancer's genes can cause each cancer to have a unique behaviour. IMPACT will provide molecular information beyond that offered by the microscope, so that doctors can make treatment recommendations that are tailored to the unique behaviour of each cancer. This is an important advance for Personalized Cancer Medicine, which strives to give the right treatment to the right patient at the right time.

Supported by a Cancer Care Ontario Applied Clinical Research Unit grant and The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation, IMPACT is led by Drs. Philippe Bedard and Lillian Siu. The first stage of IMPACT enrolls patients who are being treated at PMH for advanced breast cancer, colorectal cancer, ovarian cancer and non-small cell lung cancer, as well as those referred for early phase (Phase I) clinical trials. Each patient enrolled in this study will have their cancer specimens (which were previously obtained for diagnosis) tested for specific cancer biomarkers, and it is the hope that this information will enable doctors at PMH to prescribe treatments for patients that target their tumours more effectively.

Molecular testing for IMPACT is performed in the University Health Network (UHN) Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory, directed by Dr. Suzanne Kamel-Reid, and results from the molecular testing are included in the patient's electronic health record. Each patient's genetic results are then discussed at multi-disciplinary IMPACT Tumour Board Meetings, where doctors and researchers gather to provide input from their different specialities and propose a personalized treatment plan that is tailored to each patient. In the two months in which this study has been open, over 200 patients have already been enrolled!

As a joint collaboration between the Ontario Cancer Institute, the PMH Division of Medical Oncology and Hematology, and the UHN Department of Pathology, IMPACT has garnered the support of leading PMH doctors and researchers. IMPACT is a key trial supported by the PMH Foundation's Billion Dollar "Believe It" campaign that has the potential to change the way cancer is diagnosed and treated at the hospital.

For more information on this exciting initiative, please contact the lead investigators, Dr. Philippe Bedard ([philippe.bedard@uhn.ca](mailto:philippe.bedard@uhn.ca)) and Dr. Lillian Siu ([lillian.siu@uhn.ca](mailto:lillian.siu@uhn.ca)), or the IMPACT Project Manager, Celeste Yu ([celeste.yu@uhn.ca](mailto:celeste.yu@uhn.ca)). A telephone hotline has also been set up for IMPACT: (416) 946-2993.

Celeste Yu, MSC, CCRP, PMP  
Project Manager  
Bras New Drug Development, Princess Margaret Hospital



### IMPACT Team 2012

Front Row (left to right): Dr. Lillian Siu, Dr. Philippe Bedard,  
Dr. Suzanne Kamel-Reid, Celeste Yu

Back Row (left to right): Tracy Lamch, Dianne Chadwick, Branden Deschambault,  
Anne Eisenhauer, Dr. Aaron Hansen, Nadia Amin, Tong Zhang



## Greetings from Dr. Amit Oza

It is always a pleasure to provide an update on the activities of the Drug Development Program for Helping Hands. 2011/2012 has been another busy and productive year for our group and the hospital. Many of the stories related to patients on clinical trials, their courage and the trust they place in participating in clinical trials are featured in this magazine. These stories are humbling and make the research teams strive to do better. This year, we have had many significant achievements in our program, and some of the key ones are summarized here.

Our current Drug Development Program consists of Phase I and Phase II groups. We run clinical trials at Princess Margaret Hospital and also conduct these through a consortium network, which has 9 sites across Canada and in the U.S. Many studies have had national and international impact and some may change standard treatment. There are striking examples of cases where the treatment works really well as well as others where the treatment either doesn't work or causes side effects. Our approach is to try and understand cancer biology, and with the help of scientists and clinicians at PMH, improve the design and development of research studies. Our program is increasingly partnering with basic research scientists to improve drug development and also understand why treatments work or why they may fail. These partnerships are extremely important in bringing innovation to treatment. In terms of education and training, we continue to have excellent fellows from all over the world who come and spend a year or two in Toronto, and these smart, young research doctors bring fresh ideas, enthusiasm and energy to the program.

Specific achievements:

### **PMH Awarded Third NCI Contract.**

We were successful in renewing a Drug Development Contract (N01 with the U.S. National Cancer Institute in 2011, for a further 5 years. This is a highly prized and competitive award, which enables our program to access novel anti-cancer agents and develop early phase clinical trials that can be run across the PMH Consortium. There were only seven awards for N01 contracts for this competition, with PMH being the only non-U.S. site. This award is external confirmation of the depth and scope of our Drug Development Program and validation of the innovation and quality of the clinical trials we run. This is the third successful N01 contract renewal for the PMHC to design, develop and conduct early phase clinical trials of NCI CTEP sponsored agents with translational emphasis in an innovative and efficient manner.

A contract holder since 2001, PMHC has accrued more than 1,400 patients on early phase clinical trials and includes participating sites in British Columbia (1), Alberta (2) and Ontario (6). The new five-year contract will allow PMHC to continue to evaluate the biologic effects of CTEP agents on their molecular targets, for biomarker discovery and validation, with standardization and implementation of standardized operating procedures. The group has launched over 80 Phase I/II clinical trials, continues to meet target accruals and draw upon disease-site expertise.

The Scientific Board of Advisors for the N01 Drug Development Program includes Drs. Benjamin Neel, Tom Hudson, Janet Dancey, Mary Gospodarowicz, John Dick, Nicole Onetto and Tak Mak. In addition, it includes Dr. Elizabeth Eisenhauer in her role as Consortium Executive member. Consortium sites across Canada are an intrinsic part of the award

and include British Columbia Cancer Agency Vancouver (Kim Chi), Tom Baker Cancer Centre (Patricia Tang), Cross Cancer Centre (Quincy Chu), Juravinski Cancer Centre (Hal Hirte), Ottawa Regional Cancer Centre (Glenwood Goss), London Regional Cancer Centre (Stephen Welch), Kingston Regional Cancer Centre (Tara Baetz), Cancer Centre South Eastern Ontario (Tara Baetz), and Credit Valley Hospital (Elizabeth Strevel)

#### **Cancer Care Ontario Applied Cancer Research Unit Award**

Awarded to improve quality assurance and operations of our clinical trials across Ontario sites.

The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation, through The Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer, has provided funding to facilitate clinical trials and translational research studies at Princess Margaret Hospital, Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, British Columbia Cancer Agency and Alberta Cancer Agency.

#### **Translational Team Award**

Ontario Institute of Cancer Research provided this award for core research studies to be conducted in a complementary fashion to clinical trials.

#### **U.S. Department of Defense Grant**

We have been given this grant so that we can use computational analysis to sift through thousands of pieces of information and piece them together in the design of clinical trials -- initially in ovarian cancer, which can then be run through our current trials network as well as in additional international sites in Cambridge, Melbourne, Vancouver and Boston.

All these activities have kept the program active and busy. The program has grown and matured into a leading place for drug development research nationally and internationally. The international collaboration has also recently been recognized by PMH Consortium by being granted membership of the Gynecologic Cancer Inter Group, an international clinical trials coordinating group which has member groups from Europe, North America, Australia and Asia. This membership will allow us to participate directly on clinical trial design and development in conjunction with international collaborators.

However, first and foremost, the focus will remain the patients we care for.

Dr. Amit Oza  
Co-Director, Robert & Maggie Bras and Family Drug Development Program  
Professor of Medicine, Princess Margaret Hospital, University of Toronto



## Greetings from Dr. Ben Neel

As one of the top 5 cancer research centres in the world, The Princess Margaret has a demonstrated impact on cancer. From this strength, we have committed to the Billion Dollar Challenge for Personalized Cancer Medicine. This is a focus on a more customized approach, combining a better understanding of each patient's type of cancer and how that patient is likely to respond to particular therapies. Drug development is one of the strongest examples of this approach at work.

The Princess Margaret is an internationally recognized leader in cancer research and our clinical research program is of utmost importance. We are proud to host such an outstanding group of clinicians and scientists who have launched over 80 Phase II clinical trials, as well as being the only non-U.S. site funded by National Institutes of Health to design, to develop and conduct early phase clinical trials.

Thanks to the work of The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program, we are world-leading. Major advances in cancer biology have been translated into new methods of treating the disease. These new drugs are targeted at specific areas of cancer, are generally less toxic to healthy tissue and cause fewer side effects.

The next five years are both important and exciting as the Billion Dollar Challenge for Personalized Cancer Medicine brings new energy and focus to our work.

Thank you to all the physicians, staff and donors who are committed to the success of the Bras Family New Drug Development Program. Cancer patients and their loved ones have a new hope as a result of your dedicated efforts.

Dr. Benjamin Neel  
Director  
Ontario Cancer Institute



## Greetings from Greg Lichti

The Bras family's generosity and commitment to new drug development has helped pave the way to more personalized cancer treatment, which is the focus of the The Princess Margaret's Billion Dollar Challenge for Personalized Cancer Medicine.

Because of The Bras Program, there have been great strides made in the development of better drug therapies which will have tremendous impact on the future of this disease.

To all the supporters of The Bras Family Drug Development Program, thank you! Your generous contributions directly support and benefit thousands of patients who are treated at the The Princess Margaret Cancer Centre each year. In addition to improving our standards of patient care and treatment, your donations also help to give hope to those living with cancer.

I also want to thank Maggie for her continued commitment and support. We are thankful and appreciative of the generosity you have extended to us. Because of such support, there are many uplifting examples of success in our research and clinical programs. Every day, we continue working toward realizing our vision of Personalized Cancer Medicine. Believe It.

Greg Lichti  
Vice President, Development  
The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation

# congratulations!

## U.S. National Institute of Health Awards The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program 2012

Princess Margaret Hospital's Senior Management is excited to announce the successful renewal of The Princess Margaret Hospital Phase II Consortium (PMHC) contract through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) led by Dr. Amit Oza. The only non-U.S. site funded, this is the third successful NO1 contract renewal for the PMHC to design, to develop and conduct early phase clinical trials of NCI CTEP sponsored agents with translational emphasis in an innovative and efficient manner.

The third contract renewal, with upwards of \$9.1M in new funds, will allow our consortium to continue to conduct innovative clinical trials, with promising combination therapies, that are pivotal for new drug development. Importantly, these funds will allow our clinical trials program to provide oncology patients with rapid access to novel anti-cancer therapies.

A contract holder since 2001, PMHC has accrued more than 1,400 patients on early phase clinical trials and includes participating sites in British Columbia (1), Alberta (2) and Ontario (6). The new five-year contract will allow PMHC to continue to evaluate the biologic effects of CTEP agents on their molecular targets, for biomarker discovery and validation, with standardization and implementation of standardized operating procedures.

The Princess Margaret is an internationally recognized leader in cancer research and our clinical research program is of utmost importance. PMH is proud to host such an outstanding group of clinicians and scientists who have launched over 80 Phase II clinical trials, continue to meet target accruals and draw upon disease-site expertise. This new contract and our clinical group's strong track record of success will ensure our clinical trials enterprise continues to flourish, and to maintain Princess Margaret Hospital's position as a global leader in the fight against cancer.

Maggie Bras



Dr. Amit Oza  
Co-Director of The Bras New Drug Development Program

# thank you

## **We Would Like to Acknowledge These Exceptional Supporters of The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program...**

Abraxis BioScience, Inc.

Anonymous Donors

Anonymous donor in support of Pancreas Cancer Rapid Diagnosis & Research

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The National Colorectal Campaign

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Exciting breakthroughs in the understanding of cancer biology continue to identify new approaches to cancer therapy. The goal of *The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program* at Princess Margaret Hospital is to identify new approaches to cancer therapy, for the treatment, management and eradication of this disease.

## **ESTABLISHMENT**

The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation (The "Foundation") hereby agrees to establish The Robert & Maggie Bras and Family New Drug Development Program Fund (the fund)

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Fund would be to aid in the creation of a collaborative resource environment devoted to research in new drug development.

August 29, 2002



# Advisory

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Head, Department of Medical Oncology & Haematology  
KY Ho Chair in Prostate Cancer Research  
Director, Robert & Maggie Bras and Family  
New Drug Development Program, PMH  
Senior Scientist, Division of Experimental Therapeutics, OCI  
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Senior Staff Physician, Department of Medical Oncology & Haematology  
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Chief, Radiation Medicine Program, PMH

**Dr. Philippe Bedard, MD FRCP (C)**

Staff Medical Oncologist, Princess Margaret Hospital  
Bras New Drug Development Program  
Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto

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Honorary Chair, Robert & Maggie Bras and Family  
New Drug Development Program  
Advisory Committee

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**Sherri Freedman**

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**Greg Lichti**

Director, Major Gifts  
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**Charles G. Hanna**

President & CEO  
The Brains II Group of Companies

brasfamily.com

*Donations may be made through The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation*

*Charitable Organization Number 88900 75797 RR0001*

*Contact Ms. Christina Lebesis, Associate Director, Major Gifts at (416) 946-2138 or [christina.lebesis@pmhf.ca](mailto:christina.lebesis@pmhf.ca)  
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Believe It.

WE WILL CONQUER CANCER  
IN OUR LIFETIME



The Princess Margaret