SUMMER 2012

ACGT® Sequence

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALLIANCE FOR CANCER GENE THERAPY

OUR 6TH ANNUAL Swim Raises Over $400,000 for Research

204 participants enjoyed a warm summer day and cool waters for the 6th annual Swim Across America Greenwich-Stamford Swim for ACGT in June. A perfect time and place for a morning swim. The event also paid tribute to ACGT Co-founder Edward Netter. The net result: over $400,000 towards cancer research.

Swimmers spread out this year to several locations: the balmy waters of Long Island Sound on the Greenwich-Stamford border; backyard pools; and swim clubs. They swam a short course of half a mile and a longer one of 1.5 miles, and others took on the 3-mile or 5-mile challenge. 16 teams swam together, among them Team Cureators, the CHEMhoes [former and current Greenwich High School Swim Team Members] and the Stompers.

Most swimmers were survivors or friends of cancer patients, while others volunteered to help make the event bigger, better and more celebratory than ever. In addition to many land volunteers, 60 traveled in boats or kayaks. Bill Evans, meteorologist for the NY affiliate of WABC-TV Channel 7 News, a Greenwich resident, emceed the event and cheered swimmers on.

Swim Across America, founded in 1987 by Jeff Keith and Matt Vossler, has raised over $40 million for cancer philanthropies throughout the country and we are so grateful to be the area recipient. In the past six years, the Greenwich-Stamford event has raised over $1.6 million to support ACGT.

Special thanks to our event founders and chairs, John and Cindy Sites, and their honorary co-chairs: Donna deVarona and John Pinto, Mary Ann Henry and Howard Rubin, Arlene and Reuben Mark, and Anne-Marie and Paul Queally.

"Today I swim for my mother and for all those struggling with this awful disease."
– Bobby Pruett

"Why am I swimming? To help people suffering, to remember loved ones, to hopefully make a brighter future for those who'll be diagnosed with cancer."
– Darren Cosgrave

"I swim because both my wife and I are cancer survivors and we feel extremely lucky to be alive."
– Scott Johnson



Photos provided by Swim Across America



Kellen and Peter Carlson, Team: Peter's Defeaters.

Every participant is a winner, but the first to complete the short course was Luke Lorefice of Old Greenwich for the half-mile course, Stephen Holmquist of Wilton for the 1.5-mile course, Ridgefield's Tim Inall for 3 miles and Fairfield's Gregory Sargent for 5 miles.

The top team fundraisers were Team Kicking Cancer for Karen, Chris and Friends, the CHEMhoes, and Peter's Defeaters.

"Ed epitomized the innovative thinker and problems solver and he felt it important to examine the status quo. He had the perseverance to pursue a better way. He was a key figure in accelerating research and bringing us to this point."

– Barbara Netter, Co-Founder, Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy



NEW *Frontiers* IN CANCER CELL AND GENE THERAPY

04.19.2012

A Celebration of Innovation & Dedication

HONORING EDWARD NETTER



Photo by E. Urbina

Dr. Savio Woo and Barbara Netter with science journalist Robert Bazell.

"How far we have come! Together we have traveled from the new wellspring of an idea to the edge of new frontiers. We have transformed early experimentation in cell and gene therapies to the point that the science is now saving lives."

– Jeffrey Keil, Chair,
Executive Committee,
ACGT Board of Directors

"I can't believe it has been 10 years. Having spent almost 30 years in academia, two terms on the NIH RAC and working with the FDA overseeing all clinical and translational efforts for the past many years, I now find myself leading the research and development programs of a company hoping to commercialize some of this exciting gene therapy technology. I will forever be indebted to ACGT and the Netters.

– Jeffrey Bartlett, PhD,
Vice President, Research & Development,
Calimmune, Inc.,
ACGT Research Fellow

10TH ANNIVERSARY

Our 10th anniversary event, co-chaired by Barbara Netter and Sharon Phillips and honoring Edward Netter, raised $1.4 million for research and shed light on the science of cell and gene therapies. All proceeds will directly fund research as event expenses were underwritten. The highlight of the evening was a video tribute to Mr. Netter and presentation of a special award to co-founder Barbara Netter.

Fascinating keynote speeches were delivered by Robert Bazell, Chief Science and Health Correspondent, NBC News, and Dr. Dennis O. Clegg, Professor, University of California, Santa Barbara. Both focused on scientific promise and the potential for targeted therapies.

The afternoon of the event, 30 ACGT cell and gene therapy scientists gathered to share research results and reflect on the future of targeted therapies. Representing many prestigious research institutions, including Harvard Medical School, St. Jude's Children's Hospital, Duke University, The Salk Institute, University of Pennsylvania, University of California, Memorial Sloan-Kettering, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and the University of Chicago, among others, this was a rare opportunity for some of the best minds in the field to share knowledge and stimulate further innovation. Facilitated by Dr. Savio Woo, Chair of ACGT's Scientific Advisory Council, and Professor and founding Chair of the Department of Gene and Cell Medicine at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, NY, members of the Council and Research Fellows focused on ways to bridge the gap between laboratory research and medical application, with an emphasis on accelerating research to human trials and subsequently forging collaborations with pharmaceutical companies to bring innovative treatments to the marketplace.

To accomplish great things we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe.

– Edward Netter, ACGT Co-Founder

AWARDS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



Grant Awarded For Clinical Translation Of Gene Therapy For Pancreatic Cancer

Herbert J. Zeh, III, MD, FACS, has been named the 2012 ACGT Investigator. The $500,000 grant will support 2 – 3 years of research into gene therapy for pancreatic cancer that culminates in a human clinical trial. Dr. Zeh's team is focused on immunotherapy techniques using viruses to stimulate the immune system to do battle against cancer. Pancreatic cancer, one of the "silent cancers," is often diagnosed after metastasis to other organs, making it among the most deadly with only a 6% survival rate. Dr. Zeh's novel gene therapy approach has proven extremely successful in laboratory research. Going forward, he plans to modify a vaccinia virus [similar to the virus used in small pox immunizations] to produce hormones that attract a tumor-fighting T-cell that not only kills cancer but continues to stand guard against potential recurrence. The combined approach, which treats the cancer systemically, has proven extremely toxic to cancer cells and has greater potential for long-term survival. Dr. Zeh's collaborators have reported early success with a similar technique for patients with brain tumors, demonstrating once again the broad application potential for gene therapies.

Dr. Zeh received a BS from the University of Notre Dame and earned an MD at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He practiced at Johns Hopkins Hospital and with the NIH before returning to the University of Pittsburgh as Chief of the GI Surgical Oncology Division, where he also serves as a Director at the UPMC Pancreatic Cancer Center. He is a winner of the center's award for excellence in clinical trial development and is currently the principle investigator on four trials for pancreatic cancer, as well as overseeing a translation research lab study. Congratulations to Dr. Zeh, recipient of ACGT's 39th research grant award.



Dr. Dusty Miller, Dr. Michael T. Lotze, Barbara Netter, Dr. Carl H. June.

Long-Standing SAC Member Steps Down

The ACGT Board of Directors would like to express our utmost admiration and appreciation for the contributions of Dr. Dusty Miller, a long-standing member of our Scientific Advisory Council. A member of the Divisions of Human Biology and Basic Sciences at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and Affiliate Professor, Department of Pathology at the University of Washington in Seattle, Dr. Miller has evaluated research proposals and recommended scientific inquiry for funding, and also championed the establishment of a comprehensive set of policies governing the Council's activities. He has helped direct the funding of over $23 million in grants for 39 projects at 28 major research institutions, and personally mentored many ACGT Research Fellows who have benefited from his counsel and innovative thinking. We thank Dr. Miller for his dedication to the science of gene therapy and your seven years of service to ACGT.

ASGCT Elects New President



Scientific Advisory Council member, Xandra O. Breakefield, PhD, Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts General Hospital, has assumed the mantle of President of the American Society of Gene and Cell Therapy, and announced two major forthcoming events. ASGCT will host its first international training in conjunction with the European Society of Gene & Cell Therapy on October 25 in Versailles, France, and in early 2013, ASGCT will host a conference on commercialization challenges, including product development and health care reimbursement issues for gene and cell therapies.

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BARBARA NETTER CELEBRATED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

ACGT Co-Founder and Board President, Barbara Netter, has been named a recipient of the YWCA Spirit of Greenwich Award celebrating women and their contributions to the community. Established in 1994, the award honors volunteers whose vision, devotion, accomplishments and in-depth service over a period of years has enriched the lives of many in the community. Mrs. Netter will be joined by seven other recipients at an awards ceremony September 12th and proceeds will benefit victims of domestic violence, provide scholarships for children and women's leadership seminars, fund advocacy for racial justice, and subsidize special programs at the Greenwich YWCA.



ACGT President and Co-founder Barbara Netter with Board Member Sharon Phillips, Co-Chairs of the 10th Anniversary Event.

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THE MISSION OF ACGT is to support the extraordinary potential offered by cell and gene-based therapies to accelerate effective and safe treatment of all types of cancer. **100% OF DONATIONS** go directly to research. Separate funding is provided to cover all administrative and fundraising expenses.

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