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50 Million STRONG

The Stand Up To Cancer Legacy Endowment CIRCLE keeps critical funding alive for years to come.

By Laura Eckstein Jones

To date, Stand Up To Cancer (standuptocancer.org) has raised more than \$603 million, with every cent of public donations going to scientific research aimed at combatting a disease that claims one person per minute in the U.S. alone. Established in 2008 by a powerhouse group of women—including Sherry Lansing, former chairman and CEO of the Motion Picture Group of Paramount Pictures; Katie Couric; Sue Schwartz and Rusty Robertson—the organization continues to make groundbreaking changes. “There was always the possibility that our first telecast, in 2008, would be a one-off event,” Lansing says. “But with the incredible support of the major TV networks and our founding donor, Major League Baseball, not to mention over \$100 million raised that first year, we saw the potential to create something larger: a movement that could change the culture of cancer research.”

“The brilliant scientists we consulted told us the one thing they needed even more than funding was teamwork,” Robertson says. “By insisting researchers collaborate with each other across disciplines, SU2C helped drive a sea change in the way research is done.” One doctor leading the charge is Nobel Laureate Phillip A. Sharp, PhD, who chairs SU2C’s Scientific Advisory Committee. “We’ve made a number of breakthroughs,” he says. “We were a very early supporter in immunology, where the science of activating the patient’s own immune system against cancer was shown to be effective. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of patients have benefited.” SU2C research has contributed to the FDA approval of five new therapies, including treatments for breast, ovarian and pancreatic cancers, and difficult-to-treat leukemia. In 2016 and 2018, SU2C-supported research led to FDA Breakthrough



From top: Stand Up To Cancer’s fearless leaders (from left) Ellen Ziffren, Rusty Robertson, Lisa Paulsen, Sherry Lansing, Pamela Oas Williams, Sue Schwartz, Kathleen Lobb, Sung Poblete, PhD, RN, and Katie Couric; Céline Dion and Bradley Cooper at the 2016 SU2C telethon, where Dion performed.

Therapy designation status being awarded for combination treatments in colon and prostate cancers. In addition, promising trial results have been submitted to the FDA or are nearing completion for breast, colon, lung and ovarian cancers, and for metastatic melanoma.

To keep the momentum going, and to ensure that the organization’s lifesaving work continues, SU2C recently established the Legacy Endowment CIRCLE. The goal? To raise \$50 million—in \$1 million pledge increments—by the end of 2019. So far, \$8 million has been donated by contributors such as Lewis and Jean Wolf of Los Angeles, Jerry and Martyn Reinsdorf of Chicago, and Sue and Bud Selig of Phoenix and

Milwaukee. Along with Lew Wolff, Bud—who was the ninth commissioner of baseball and is currently the commissioner emeritus of baseball—and his wife, Sue, were founding donors of SU2C and responsible for bringing MLB into the fold. “Ever since [MLB] became the founding donor of SU2C, both Sue and I have pledged to do whatever we could to help fulfill SU2C’s goal of bringing an end to this deadly disease,” Bud says. “The Legacy Endowment CIRCLE was formed to provide greater resources for the dream teams to continue the magnificence of their fight against cancer. When—and I say when, not if—SU2C meets the \$50 million goal, those funds will give the researchers and dream teams a better chance to succeed.”