

Fighting for the *Future*

Treatment and Cures for Pediatric Cancers

BY JENNI FRANKENBERG VEAL

“The loss of one child birthed a mission to save thousands of others.”

— FROM THE AUSTIN HATCHER FOUNDATION FOR PEDIATRIC CANCER

While childhood cancer represents less than one percent of all new cancer diagnoses in the United States according to the American Cancer Society, the pain of the diagnosis or loss of a child to the disease is unimaginable and devastating. In Chattanooga, three families who have lost children to childhood cancer are continuing their fight in honor of their children, forming foundations that have raised millions of dollars for medical equipment, research and support services for kids with



The Osborn children

cancer. Additionally, a young boy, whose compassion for pediatric cancer patients, inspired by a book, has joined the effort.

Families Fighting for a Cure

AUSTIN HATCHER FOUNDATION FOR PEDIATRIC CANCER

The Austin Hatcher Foundation for Pediatric Cancer is the dedicated work of Jim and Amy Jo Osborn, who lost their infant

son Austin Hatcher to a rare form of pediatric cancer in October 2006. The foundation provides services to children with cancer as well as their families through Hatch’s House of Hope, a landmark pediatric cancer care center.

“When a child is diagnosed with cancer, the whole family is diagnosed,” says Amy Jo. “Hatch’s House of Hope treats the effects of pediatric cancer on the family. We want families to cope and thrive from the onset of pediatric cancer.”

The Austin Hatcher Foundation for Pediatric Cancer – a national foundation and the official charity of the American Le Mans Series circuit – aims to open a Hatch’s House of Hope at every children’s hospital in the United States, providing a wide range of free services to families affected by pediatric cancer, including marriage and financial counseling, emotional counseling for the entire family, and testing and education programming to help the affected child overcome cognitive and learning deficits that often arise after treatment. The first facility opened at Erlanger Hospital in 2009.

“We continue to add services and tools to help the families cope, reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and help give them a



(left) Lana Beth Webster

(below) Jim and Cindy Webster

feeling of control and hope during this period of chaos,” says Amy Jo.

To receive more information, visit www.hatcherfoundation.org.

LANA’S LOVE FOUNDATION

Lana Beth Webster was diagnosed with stage IV neuroblastoma at age 6 and fought cancer courageously for five years until 2006. Her family, Jim and Cindy Webster and brothers Alan and Cole, established the Lana’s Love Foundation to honor her life and “help kids with cancer and their families have fun.”

“Many people have to make a decision to go to work or to stay at the hospital with their sick child taking chemo,” says Jim. “There is no money left for presents or just to have fun. Lana’s Love was created so those families can have fun.”

Lana’s Love Foundation, established in 2008, provides free services and fun activities and outings for families affected by pediatric cancer. They sponsor fun activities each week at The Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders at Children’s Hospital at Erlanger and host a



special event in Chattanooga for families each month.

“Jim and Cindy’s goal is to give families time together where they do not have to worry about anything other than just enjoying life together smiling, laughing and having fun,” says Holly Shull, director of Lana’s Love Foundation.

To receive more information, visit www.lanaslove.com.

EMILY’S POWER FOR A CURE NEUROBLASTOMA FOUNDATION

Emily’s Power for a Cure Neuroblastoma Foundation is Emily Ransom’s



Amy Jo Osborn with Austin Hatcher



(left) Emily Ransom
(above) Jonathon and Wendy Ransom

Inspired to Help Others

JACK'S CHATTANOOGINS

Jack Skowronnek just celebrated his third year of fundraising for pediatric cancer by raising over \$17,000 and shaving 60 heads at the Chattanooga Market on June 26 – a four-fold increase from previous events. Twelve-year-old Jack and his family were inspired to create the event after reading the book *Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick, a young adult novel about a 13-year-old whose world is turned upside down by his brother's leukemia diagnosis. In past years, funds from the head-shaving event were donated to the national St. Baldrick's Foundation; this year having



(above) Dawn and Bill Skowronnek with daughter Faith and son Jack



(left) Jack shaves his head for Jack's Chattanoogaogins.

continued fight against cancer, says her mom Wendy Ransom. Fondly known as the "Pink Power Ranger Princess," two-year-old Emily fought a four-month battle with stage IV neuroblastoma in 2006.

"Emily's Power for a Cure started the day Emily died," says Wendy. "We wanted to fund brand new research for neuroblastoma, which only has a 55 percent chance of survival – that is just not enough."

The foundation raises funds through two annual events: a country music marathon in Nashville and Pink Bandana Ball in Chattanooga. In 2008, the foundation pledged \$300,000 to The Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders at The Children's Hospital at Erlanger for the purchase of a pediatric CT scanner. In 2010, the foundation granted two \$50,000 research grants to two top researchers in the United States.

"Any time a child dies, you don't want them to be forgotten," Wendy says. "The foundation allows us to continue Emily's fight and help other kids."


For more information, visit www.emilypowerforacure.com.

partnered with Erlanger's Children's Hospital and creating the "Chattanoogaogins" name, the funds will be donated exclusively to The Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders at Children's Hospital at Erlanger.

Jack's story is a testament to the power of empathy. "After I read that book, I told my mom I needed to shave my head because I wanted kids with cancer to know it was OK to be bald," explains Jack.

Jack's mom Dawn Skowronnek says her son has always been empathetic, but this event has helped show him he can make a difference. "This event was Jack's idea," says Dawn, whose daughter Faith, 9, has also assisted with the effort. "It has shown our children that kids can make a difference."

For receive more information, visit www.jackschattanoogaogins.org.

In Chattanooga, children diagnosed with pediatric cancer are cared for at The Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders at The Children's Hospital at Erlanger, part of the national Children's Oncology Group that includes St. Jude, Vanderbilt and Emory hospitals. "The good news is that 80 percent of childhood cancer is curable, which means that the cancer doesn't come back and the children are able to grow into adults and live a full life," says Ashley Williams, child life specialist with The Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders at The Children's Hospital. The ongoing work of families affected by childhood cancer and those inspired by the loss of others, offer hope and promise for the continued advancement of treatments and cures for pediatric cancers. 

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE CHATTANOOGA

At The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, we are guided by a message that is literally chiseled into the bedrock of our campus. "We shall achieve" tells the world what to expect from our campus and our graduates. If you are interested in preparation for a career in healthcare, you can achieve your goal with a degree from UTC.

At UT Chattanooga, we achieve, and so will you.



We Shall Achieve

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Athletic Training | Nutrition |
| Exercise Physiology | Occupational Therapy |
| Exercise Science | Physical Therapy |
| Family Nurse Practitioner | Pre-Dentistry |
| Health Care Informatics | Pre-Medical |
| Health Education | Pre-Pharmacy |
| Nurse Anesthesia | Pre-Veterinary |
| Nurse Education | Rehabilitation Science |
| Nursing | |

Undergraduate Admissions
(423) 425-4662

Graduate School
(423) 425-4666

The University of Tennessee is an equal employment opportunity/affirmative action/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution.

www.UTC.edu