



**CURESEARCH**

FOR CHILDREN'S CANCER



2024

# IMPACT REPORT

---

Powered by hope. Fueled by research.



## LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Your support is changing the future of childhood cancer. At CureSearch, we're dedicated to accelerating the search for childhood cancer cures because kids with cancer can't wait. Over the last year, we've invested over \$4.4 million in lifesaving research funding — over \$3.9 million of that supporting pre-clinical research and clinical trials. With the majority of young cancer patients treated in a clinical trial setting, this type of funding is changing the odds for the 42 children diagnosed with cancer each day. Together, our efforts offer new hope to them and their families as they navigate the harsh realities of toxic and outdated childhood cancer treatments. Your support has made all of this possible!

September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, a time when patients, families and advocates unite and raise our collective voice for every childhood cancer patient. It is a time when I reflect on how grateful I am for you. Changing the future of childhood

cancer requires support from many places – academia, industry, advocacy, donors and foundations, to name a few. Supporters like you are vital in making a difference.

In the coming months, CureSearch will continue expanding partnerships, investing in new technologies to achieve a future without childhood cancer, and stretching every dollar to fund the highest quality research projects, both nationally and internationally. Looking ahead, we are more determined than ever to achieve our vision of a world where no child has to face the uncertainty and pain of a cancer diagnosis.

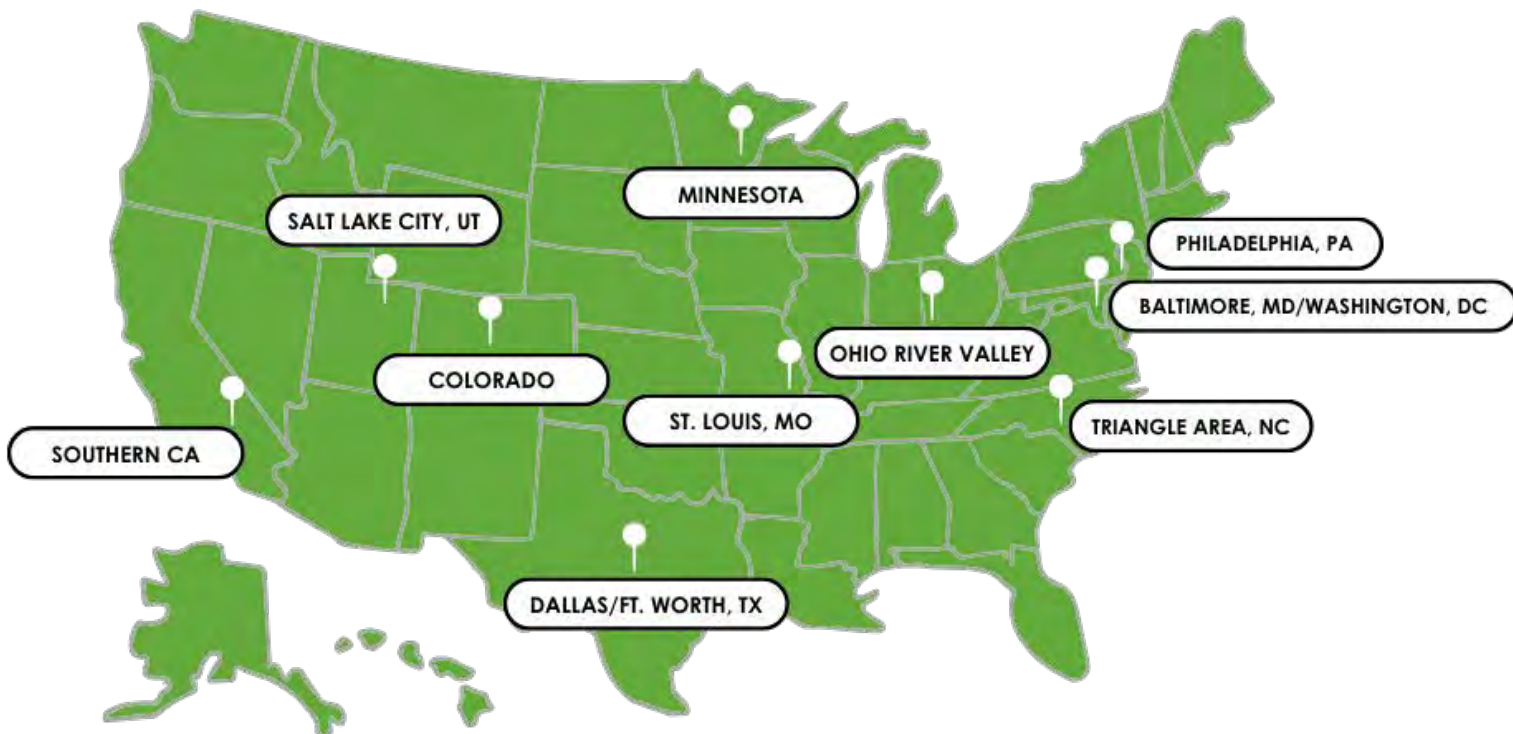
Thank you for your continued commitment to our vision! I look forward to what we will accomplish together in the coming year.

Until there are cures,

Kay Koehler, President & CEO

# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP BOARDS LAUNCH

Our new Community Leadership Boards amplify the CureSearch mission in regions around the country. Board members foster strategic relationships within their communities, driving fundraising, event participation and increased awareness of the need for pediatric cancer research funding.

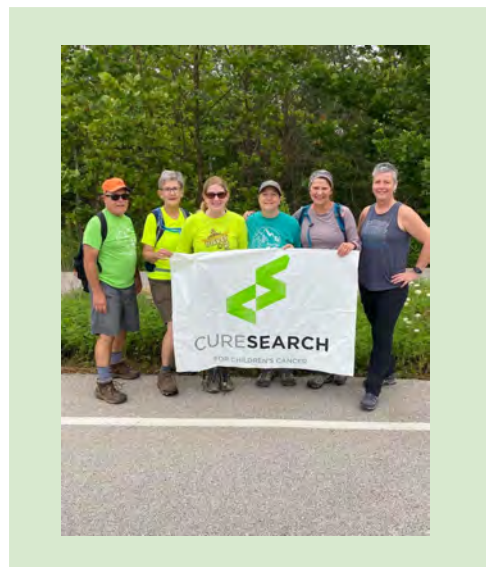


## Our Community Leadership Boards are growing.

If you have an interest in participating, please reach out to [communityengagement@curesearch.org](mailto:communityengagement@curesearch.org) and a local board member or CureSearch staff will be in touch.

You'll contribute your skills and passion to support our mission and help drive our initiatives forward — in your own backyard and beyond!

Learn more at [curesearch.org/community-leadership-board](https://curesearch.org/community-leadership-board)



## YOUR SUPPORT IN NUMBERS

**\$6 MILLION +**

FOR CHILDHOOD CANCER  
RESEARCH SINCE JAN. 2023



Thanks to you, we're funding truly transformational research. This year alone we've awarded over \$4.3 million in childhood cancer research funding.

The size of our awards is unique because each one provides substantial seed funding that accelerates drug development and delivers new treatments directly to children in need. We focus on high-impact, innovative research with commercial potential, ensuring new therapies reach patients quickly, particularly targeting areas of unmet need in childhood cancer.

# YOUR IMPACT SINCE 2012



46

RESEARCH PROJECTS  
FUNDED AT...

---

34

INSTITUTIONS AROUND  
THE WORLD,  
INCLUDING...

---

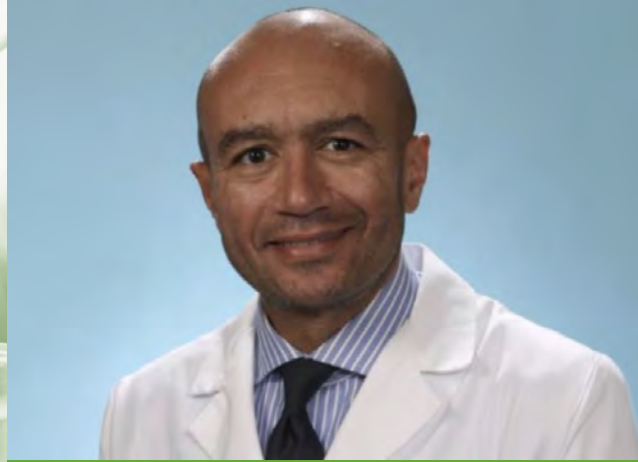
16

PRE-CLINICAL PROJECTS  
AND CLINICAL TRIALS,  
AND...

---

20

SUBTYPES, MANY OF  
THEM HIGH-RISK.



**Dr. Mohamed Shebl Abdelbaki,**  
Washington University School of  
Medicine, St. Louis, Catapult Awardee

## CURESEARCH'S 2024 CATAPULT AWARDEE

### **This Clinical Trial Aims to Find Safer Treatments for Pediatric Brain Tumors**

Despite advances in treatment, outcomes for children with recurrent brain tumors remain poor. Dr. Abdelbaki is leading a trial aimed at finding a more effective, less toxic approach to treatment using Natural Killer (NK) cell therapy, where enhanced NK cells are infused directly into the tumor site after surgery. This approach is designed to help the NK cells target the cancer more effectively by concentrating them at the tumor site. This trial, conducted through the Pacific Pediatric Neuro-Oncology Consortium, will enroll 24 children and young adults at sites across the country beginning this year.

*Read more at [curesearch.org/clinical-trial-funding](https://curesearch.org/clinical-trial-funding)*

---

# SPOTLIGHT: Our Acceleration Initiative Grants Drive New Treatments Into Clinical Trials

# 60%

of pre-clinical research projects funded through our Acceleration Initiative (AI) **advance to clinical trials**, compared to a less than 8% average rate of translation for drugs into clinical cancer trials. Our AI projects are highly innovative, driving translational research to the clinic within three years.



AI Award

**\$1.73 million**

**Dr. Mary Beckerle, Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah**

Project: A novel epigenetic strategy to treat Ewing sarcoma

The CureSearch Acceleration Initiative Award provided crucial funding for researchers to conduct thorough preclinical testing of an LSD1 inhibitor, which led to a clinical trial for Ewing sarcoma that showed promising results, including clinical benefit in some patients.

**IMPACT:** Ewing sarcoma is the second most common bone cancer in children and the disease is typically aggressive and difficult to treat. Though still in development, this drug holds the potential to offer a novel treatment option for children with Ewing sarcoma.



AI Award

**\$1.26 million**

**Dr. Andrew Kung, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center**

Project: Integrative analysis to identify new therapies for pediatric sarcomas

Survival of children with high-risk sarcomas has remained unchanged for the last 20 years.

**IMPACT:** The CureSearch Acceleration Initiative Award provided crucial funding that allowed Dr. Kung's team to establish one of the largest portfolios of patient-derived xenograft models, over half of which are specific to sarcomas. Their preclinical work led to an ongoing clinical trial for children with sarcomas as young as 12 months old.



## SPOTLIGHT: The next generation of cutting-edge research

### Acceleration Initiative Award Ewing sarcoma

**Dr. John Lee**, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Dr. Lee's team is enhancing CAR T-cell therapy by adding Interleukin-18 (IL-18) to boost its effectiveness, aiming to improve outcomes for patients with metastatic cancer.



### Acceleration Initiative Award Pediatric glioma

**Dr. Joshua Breunig**, Cedars-Sinai

Dr. Breunig has developed a new modeling platform and tumor cell lines to test a targeted therapy called ADI-PEG 20. This, combined with standard treatments, may effectively combat aggressive G34R-mutant pediatric glioma.







### Young Investigator Award Acute myeloid leukemia (AML)

**Dr. Babak Moghimi**, Children's Hospital Los Angeles

Dr. Moghimi's team at CHLA has created advanced CAR T-cells to improve patient survival for relapsed/refractory AML, a disease with poor outcomes.



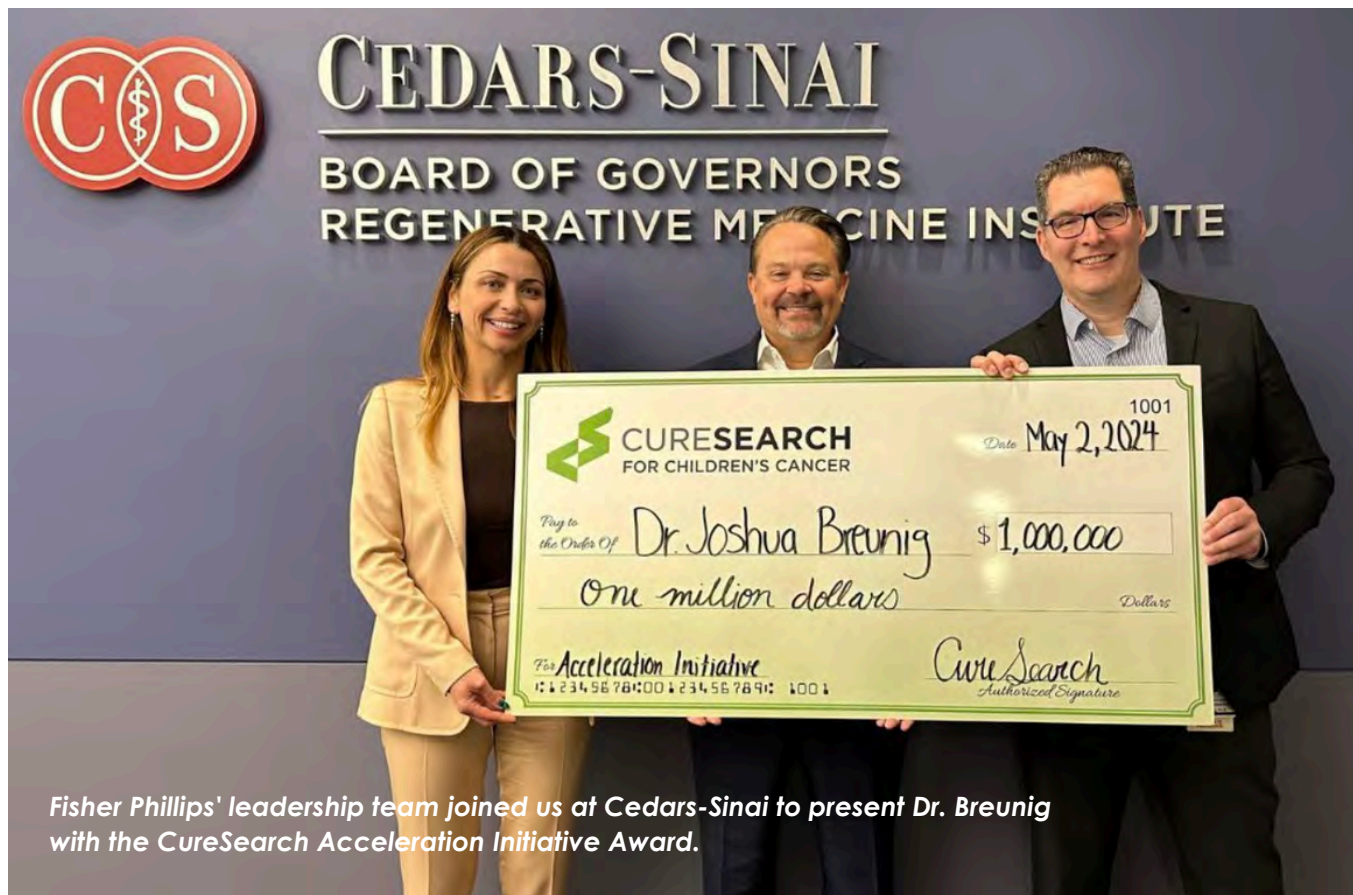
### Young Investigator Award Pediatric neuroblastoma

**Dr. Hunter Jonus**, Emory University School of Medicine

Dr. Hunter Jonus is using gamma delta T cells from healthy donors to target high-risk neuroblastoma and other tumors. Her research supports a clinical trial at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta that combines these cells with chemoimmunotherapy.



# OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS MAKE A BIG IMPACT!



## Fisher Phillips team raises over \$200,000 at annual attorney retreat and staff events



Fisher Phillips added a very impactful element to its 2024 employee retreat — a silent auction benefiting CureSearch that raised \$200,000! Employees also participated in a “Notes of Hope” campaign where they created handwritten letters of encouragement for kids in the hospital, offering a meaningful way to connect directly to the mission.

We invited the Fisher Phillips team to join us at a recent lab tour to see, firsthand, how their support is driving breakthrough research for the next cure. The team helped present Dr. Breunig with a CureSearch Acceleration Initiative Award.

**Consider adding a fundraising element to your next corporate event.**

# 2024 CORPORATE PARTNER SUPPORT IN NUMBERS



**\$1M+**

Raised for lifesaving research by philanthropic corporate partners.

**3,000+**

Brave Barbies distributed to children impacted by cancer, in partnership with Mattel.

**9**

Pimiento Tea Room Supper Clubs featuring exciting menus, all benefiting CureSearch.

**14**

Busy Bee convenience stores raising money for CureSearch at the register.

**7**

Jakefest golf tournaments hosted by Kiewit, remembering Jake Koenigs and his battle with rhabdomyosarcoma.

**24**

Event sponsors making our Ultimate Hike, CureSearch Walk and other fundraising events a success!



# SPOTLIGHT: CURESEARCH LEGACY FUNDS

Families honor their childhood cancer heroes through our Legacy Fund Program

## HONORING STEVEN CROWE'S LEGACY

**Team Steve: The Steven Crowe Legacy Fund keeps Steve's fighting spirit alive, raising more than \$225,000 for critical research funding.**

Funds raised by The Steven Crowe Legacy Fund are supporting CureSearch Young Investigator Dr. Elvin Wagenblast at The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai. Dr. Wagenblast's research focuses on understanding the earliest stages of childhood leukemia initiation. His work aims to develop innovative therapeutic interventions targeting both the preleukemic and leukemic phases, ultimately contributing to the fight against childhood cancer. This support honors Steve's legacy and helps advance critical pediatric cancer research.

“Our family has chosen to partner with CureSearch because of their focus on driving targeted and innovative research to end childhood cancer. Supporting high-potential pediatric cancer research is needed today, as much as it ever has been.”

-Mike Crowe, Steve's Dad



Mike and Ellen Crowe with Dr. Wagenblast

## HONORING SAM SCHNEIDER'S LEGACY

---

**The Sam Schneider Legacy stands as a powerful testament to the resilience and spirit of a community united by a shared mission.**

Established in honor of Sam Schneider, whose brave battle with cancer inspired countless others, this legacy fund is driven by a commitment to advancing research and support for children and adolescents with Ewing sarcoma. Through events like the Sam Schneider Cornhole Toss and SAMDURO bike race in Colorado, the community rallies together to raise funds and awareness. Each event not only celebrates Sam's courageous journey but also contributes to a larger fight against childhood cancer, ensuring that his legacy continues to impact and inspire future generations.

**Honor a loved one and make a lasting impact by creating a Legacy Fund with CureSearch. Your personalized fund supports critical childhood cancer research while celebrating the life and legacy of someone special. Legacy Funds are driving the progress that brings us closer to cures for all children.**

---



The Toss for a Cure event, organized by the Sam Schneider Legacy, is a cornhole tournament dedicated to raising funds for pediatric cancer research. This annual event brings together community members for a day of fun and competition, all while supporting CureSearch's mission to find cures for childhood cancer. The event honors the memory of Sam Schneider and aims to make a significant impact on advancing cancer research and treatments for children.



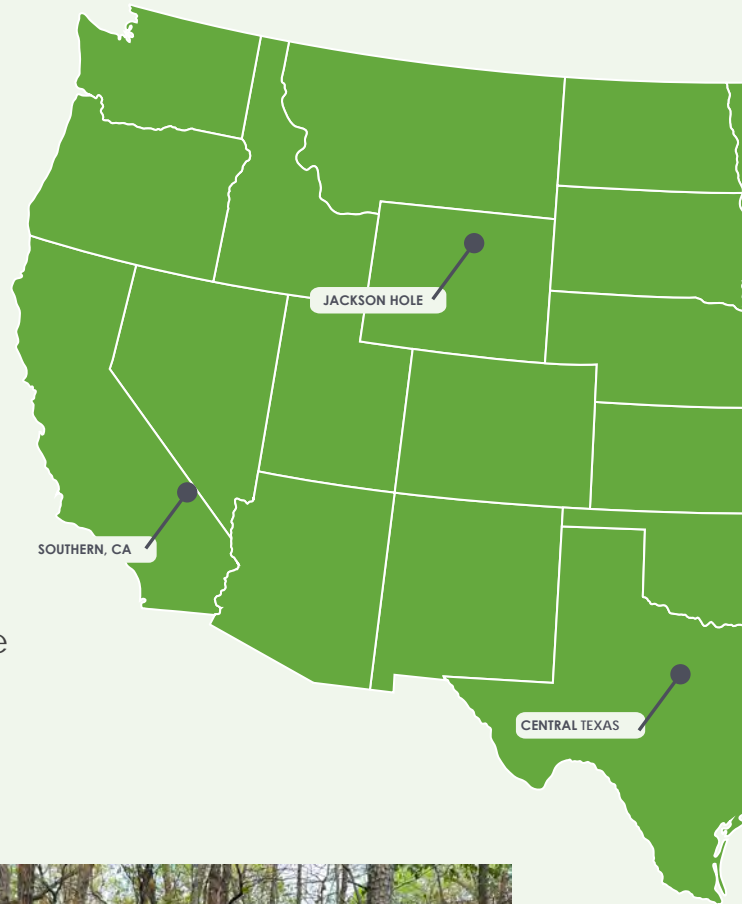
# CURESEARCH

# ULTIMATE HIKE

## The Impact of Ultimate Hike

Ultimate Hike is more than just a challenging trek; it's a life-changing, lifesaving adventure that directly impacts the fight against pediatric cancer. By hiking up to 30 miles in one day, you can help fund critical research aimed at finding cures. Ultimate Hike unites passionate supporters and survivors, all committed to making a tangible difference in the lives of children and their families facing cancer.

**426 hikers** laced up their boots over the past year to hit the trails nationwide! In total, they **hiked over 10,444 miles** and raised nearly **\$1 million for childhood cancer research.**





## Ultimate Hiker Frank Goscia has raised over \$430,000.

“It was easy for me to get involved with CureSearch. In July 2011, a friend handed me a flyer about the Ultimate Hike. I went to a meeting and the rest is history,” Frank shared. Shortly after he got started, the young son of a family friend was diagnosed with cancer. He was just 6 years old. **“I’ve been hiking for Gavin for years. The truth is, I hike for all children with cancer.”**

Learn more at [ultimatehike.org](http://ultimatehike.org)