



2024 Impact Report



LUNG CANCER INITIATIVE
A NETWORK OF HOPE AND ACTION



MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DEAR FRIENDS,



Reflecting on the past year, 2024 was an exciting time of growth and impact for Lung Cancer Initiative. We launched new programs and expanded support across our network. From welcoming Cheryl Lecroy as our new Survivor Liaison to introducing the Screening Saves initiative and hosting a brand new event at Wrightsville Beach, LCI strategically grew its programs and reach.

Throughout the successes and challenges experienced across LCI and our community this past year, what struck me the most were the many people who stepped up to make a difference. Our passionate staff, dedicated Board of Directors, resilient survivors, committed providers, tireless advocates, generous volunteers, and invaluable nonprofit partners all came together to help whenever and wherever possible. Our network of hope and action was there for all those we serve.

Enclosed are highlights from this past year and the collective impact that we have made together. As we look ahead to this year, the lung cancer community will need all of us now more than ever. We look forward to our continued partnership with you. Together, we are more powerful.

PAIGE HUMBLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
LUNG CANCER INITIATIVE



Left to Right: LCI team surveying the White Ribbon Regatta site at Wrightsville Beach; LCI and Atrium Health at 24 Hours of Booty in Charlotte; Paige and Dr. Hiren Mehta at the National Lung Cancer Roundtable Presentation in Atlanta, GA. Pictured above: LCI team building day at Camp La TeDa.

ABOUT US

Our Mission

Our mission is to advance survivorship and provide support to those affected by lung cancer through research, education and access programs.

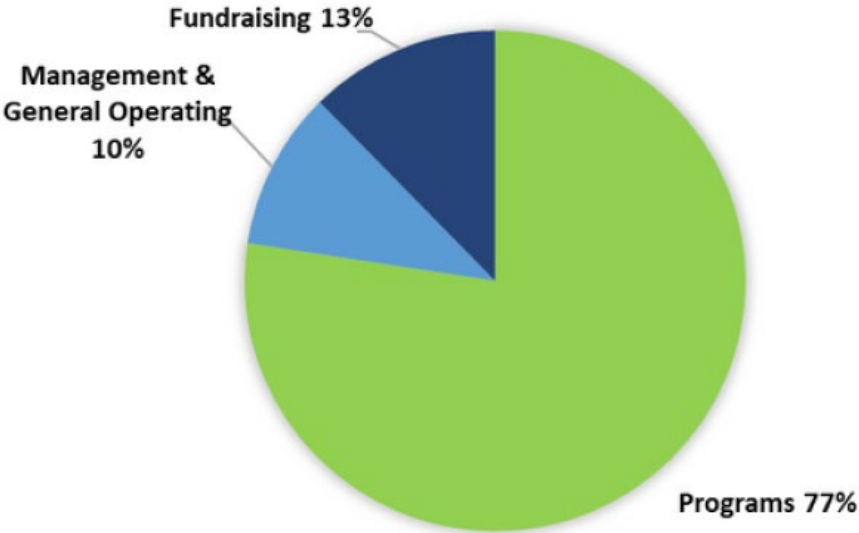
Our Vision

To improve life for everyone affected by lung cancer.

Our Core Values

- Passionate support of survivorship
- Building community
- Compassion
- Empathy
- Transparency
- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Responsible stewardship

Expenses for Fiscal Year 2023*



**2023 Audited Financials*

View our [audited financials](#) and [990](#) online.

RESEARCH

In 2024, LCI funded \$352,000 in lung cancer research through our Research Fellowships, Career Development Award, Vicky Amidon Innovation in Lung Cancer Research Award and our partnerships with LUNgevity Foundation and the Lung Cancer Research Foundation. Since 2008, LCI has funded more than \$3.4 million in lung cancer research with the majority of the funding remaining in North Carolina.

Below are our new researchers who were awarded funding for 2024 and 2025.

Research Fellowship Program

The purpose of the Research Fellowship program is to further the development of local lung cancer care and research programs across the state of North Carolina. Each fellow receives a \$25,000 grant for a one-year project. By funding research activities of fellows, our goal is to help to further their careers and encourage their continued involvement in the field of lung cancer.

2024-25 Research Fellows



Aakriti Arora, MBBS, East Carolina University

Project: "Characterizing Plasma Inflammatory Cytokines Associated with Immune-Related Adverse Events (irAEs)" (Mentor: Li Yang, PhD)



Aaron Chack, University of North Carolina Lineberger Comprehensive Care Center

Project: "Dynamic Ablation of Circular RNAs as a Novel Target in Lung Cancer" (Mentor: Chad Pecot, MD)



Huihua Li, MD, PhD, Duke University

Project: "CXCR2 Expression in Lung Neuroendocrine Neoplasms" (Mentor: Elizabeth Pavlisko, MD)



Gray Magee, MD, Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute

Project: "Molecular Profiling and Clinical Outcomes of Young Adult Patients with Metastatic NSCLC" (Mentor: Kathryn Mileham, MD)

RESEARCH FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

Jacob Stein, MD/MPH Research Fellow, 2021-22, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center

Dr. Jacob Stein conducted a cross-sectional study in North Carolina involving patient navigators, pathologists, and clinicians from both community and academic settings. His study included a survey and interview guide focused on the delivery of precision medicine for advanced lung cancer patients, covering next generation sequencing (NGS), liquid biopsy, and targeted therapies, as well as the barriers and facilitators to their effective delivery.

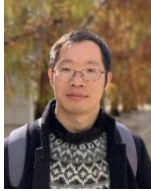
"Support from LCI has been instrumental as an independent researcher, helping me gain the experience and skills to be able to improve care for patients and move the field forward. The opportunity to receive funding from LCI to conduct and complete my own research project has been a formative experience that has helped every aspect of my research career. I am deeply grateful and appreciative to LCI for this generous support!"

Hear Dr. Stein share an overview of his work at LCI's 2024 Annual Meeting by clicking the video below.

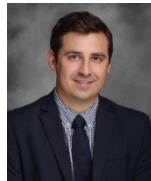


Vicky Amidon Innovation in Lung Cancer Research Award

Through the Vicky Amidon Innovation in Lung Cancer Research Award, LCI aims to recognize and provide research funding for innovative lung cancer projects that will improve the lives of those diagnosed with lung cancer in North Carolina. Annually, LCI awards up to two one-year \$25,000 grants.



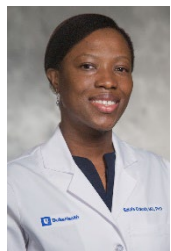
Yuming Jiang, MD, PhD, Wake Forest University Health Sciences “Foundation Model-informed Deep Learning for Predicting Recurrence in Early-Stage Lung Cancer from Histopathology Images”



Robert Meyerhoff, MD, PhD, Duke University “Transcriptome profiling of functional anti-tumor B cells in patients with non-small cell lung cancer for identification of therapeutic antibody candidates”

Career Development Award

Through the \$150,000, two-year Career Development Grant, LCI supports emerging research leaders who plan to continue their career in the field of lung cancer. The researcher’s project must be focused on basic scientific research with the goal of impacting lung cancer care, including lung cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment, or survivorship.



Eziifa Oduah, MD, Duke Cancer Institute “Investigating the impact of intratumoral PCSK9 on antigen presentation in NSCLC”

In this proposal, we will determine whether PCSK9 protein, a crucial regulator of the body’s cholesterol levels, blocks a certain class of cells that are responsible for activating and expanding T cells, dendritic cells, preventing them from doing their jobs.

We will test whether blocking PCSK9 will improve the dendritic cell function and increase T cells in the tumor. The recently published results of our collaborator, Dr Liu’s lab indicated that PCSK9 limited the activation of T cell (Liu et al., Nature, 2020) by exerting an inhibitory effect on MHC class I on the surface of tumor cells. Their results indicated increased tumor cytotoxic T cell infiltration by either genetic or pharmacologic inhibition of PCSK9. Since antigen presenting cells, most importantly, dendritic cells, are responsible for the activation and expansion of T cells, we hypothesized that in addition to MHC1 downregulation, PCSK9 negatively influences dendritic cells function to limit the anti-tumor immune response.

We have preliminary evidence that supports PCSK9’s ability to disrupt the phagocytosis capacity and antigen presenting function of dendritic cells. Consistently, PCSK9 inhibition increased phagocytosis and enhanced IFN-gamma release in tumor cells in co-culture with peripheral blood derived dendritic cells and differentiated T cells respectively. Importantly, in our ongoing phase 2 clinical trial with patients with immune-refractory advanced and metastatic non-small cell lung cancer who had previously progressed on immune checkpoint blockade, the addition of alicumab (a PCSK9 inhibitor) to cemiplimab (an anti-PD1 monoclonal antibody) reversed immunotherapy refractoriness in some patients. We herein propose to investigate PCSK9’s role in disrupting the phagocytosis and antigen cross-presentation of dendritic cells, and the role of CD91 in mediating this effect.

“The future of lung cancer immunotherapy and solving the problem of resistance to it depends on bright young investigators like Dr. Oduah, who possess comprehensive skills, innovative tools, and creative approaches as outlined in this application.” – Scott Antonia, MD, PhD, Project Mentor

RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

To better understand how lung cancer develops in young people, LCI has partnered with **LUNgevity Foundation** to co-fund a research project focusing on the genomics of early-onset lung cancer. **Dr. Jaclyn LoPiccolo** and her team at Dana-Farber are looking into genetic variations that might make someone more likely to get lung cancer early. Identifying these genes could help us spot lung cancer sooner when it's easier to treat. Hear more about Dr. LoPiccolo's work, and meet local lung cancer survivor Gwen Orilio who shares her story in the link at left.



LCI is proud to be supporting in part the work of **Dr. Ann Pendergast**, Vice Chair of Pharmacology and Cancer Biology at Duke University School of Medicine in partnership with the **Lung Cancer Research Foundation** and their 2023 Understanding Resistance research grant. Through her project titled, "Uncovering Novel Vulnerabilities to Treat SCLC Therapy Resistance," Dr. Pendergast's goal is to find new and effective treatments for patients who progress on the current standard of care therapy. Dr. Pendergast is testing if a group of novel drugs can help damage the DNA and the metabolism of small cell lung cancer cells. This approach points to new combination treatment options. Small cell lung cancer is often overlooked in the lung cancer community, and patients are in critical need of new and innovative therapy options.



Scientific Leadership Committee

Neal Ready, MD, PhD, Chair

Ed Kim, MD, MBA

Jeff Clarke, MD

Paul R. Walker, MD, FACP

Amy Cipau, MBA, MA

Kathryn Mileham, MD, FACP

Jared Weiss, MD

Chad Pecot, MD

Jeff Petty, MD

Emily Harrison, PhD

Kathryn Mileham, MD, FACP

Praveen Namireddy, MD

Shetal Patel, MD

Li Yang, PhD

Thomas Lycan, DO, MHS

Elissa Doty, PA

Lilling Warren, PhD

Laura Alder, MD

Christopher Pallas, MD

Misbah Qadir, MD

Scientific Review Committee

Christina Bellinger, MD

Jeff Clarke, MD

Neal Ready, MD, Chair

Patti Pozella, PhD

Daniel Haggstrom, MD

External Scientific Review Committee

Rafeh Naqash, MD

Jacob Kaufman, MD, PhD

Ed Kim, MD, MBA

Laurie McLouth, PhD

ACCESS

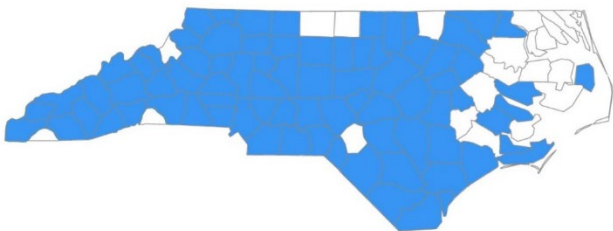
LCI is dedicated to assisting those affected by lung cancer through our access programs, designed to support patients in accessing appropriate education, screening, biomarker testing, treatment and clinical research.

Access to Care Gas Card Program

The Tomma Hargraves Access to Care Gas Card Program supports patients in accessing appropriate care and treatment, including clinical trials. Patients may receive up to three \$50 gas cards annually. In 2024, LCI provided 492 \$50 gas cards to 455 patients in 79 counties in North Carolina.

“Thank you so much for the generous donation of the gas card. Everything plays a significant role when life is faced with so many challenges. Your program is noteworthy of a mission providing support to us cancer patients.” – Gas Card Recipient

LCI Gas Cards by County



Patient Emergency Fund

To support lung cancer patients who were financially impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, LCI established the [Patient Emergency Fund](#) in 2020 to help lung cancer patients stay healthy and to meet their basic needs. Recognizing the continued financial burden of a cancer diagnosis, LCI has continued the program and in 2024, **159 patients across 79 counties each received a \$100 stipend for a total of \$15,900 in funding.**

REACH Community Grant Program

The REACH Community Grant Program annually awards up to three \$10,000 grants to support community-based organizations and non-profit institutions in their collaborative efforts to holistically assist the entire lung cancer community, particularly those who are uninsured, underinsured, and most impacted. Formerly the Access Grant program, this program began in 2016 and has collectively awarded more than \$200,000 to 17 community organizations. The REACH Community Grant Program funds the creation of new programs or expansion of existing programs that reach a community with demonstrated need, promote lung cancer education and awareness, improve access to care, support complementary healthcare, or advance health equity for North Carolinians.

A COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING OTHERS

After losing their beloved husband and father to lung cancer, the Menezes family turned their grief into action. Their story showcases how they transformed their loss into a powerful force for good, dedicating themselves to supporting others affected by this devastating disease. Through their commitment to raising awareness and providing resources for lung cancer patients and their families through the Patient Emergency Fund, this remarkable family demonstrates the strength of hope and community. *Hear their story by clicking the image below.*



In 2024, LCI awarded two \$10,000 grants to the following organizations:

- **The White Ribbon Project**
The White Ribbon Project has been awarded the grant for its program, *“Raising Lung Cancer Awareness Within the American Indian Community of North Carolina Through Existing Community Gatherings.”* Founded by lung cancer survivor Heidi Nafman-Onda and her husband Pierre, the organization has transformed lung cancer awareness into a global movement.
- **Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center**
Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center Foundation, based in Winston-Salem, NC, has been recognized for its initiative, *“Bridging Gaps: Enhancing Social Needs Support for Lung Cancer Patients.”* This program will address critical barriers that lung cancer patients face, including transportation, financial hardships, and food insecurity.

Support for Western North Carolina

In September of 2024, western North Carolina was significantly impacted by Hurricane Helene. In an effort to support the ongoing needs of the lung cancer community and the many patients and families in need, LCI donated \$6,000 to benefit the Williamson Lovelights Fund to support lung cancer patients. This fund supports cancer patients needing assistance with non-medical financial needs through Messino Cancer Center.

Access Committee

Aundrea Oliver, MD, Chair

Kenisha Bethea, MPH

Kimberly Alexander Bratcher, MPH

Tammy Hood

Angela Hopper

Matt Lindsly

Susan Moore, PhD

Aurita Menezes, PhD

Jess O’Malley

Mellisa Wheeler, MHA

Jenni Danai, MPH

Alisha Patel

Paige Humble, MBA

EDUCATION

LCI is dedicated to furthering education about lung cancer through community and provider education initiatives. Throughout 2024, educational opportunities were designed in partnership with experts and organizations from across the state on topics including lung cancer screening, updates in treatment, caregiver support and digital empowerment.

Community Education

LCI partnered on three community education events this year which included “The Caregiver Journey” in collaboration with The Center for Volunteer Caregiving, an update in lung cancer research and treatment in partnership with Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute and “Digital Sherpa – using digital tools to support your advocacy journey” in partnership with the Patient Empowerment Network. Several community education programs were recorded and are available [online](#).



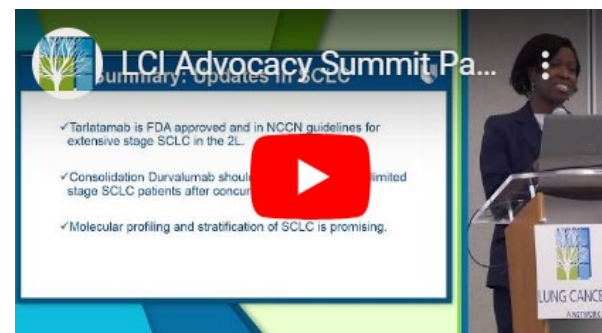
Pictured Above: Sonia Irusta at the LCAM educational event at Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute.

Advocacy Summit: “Bridging Connections”



Sixty-three survivors, advocates, caregivers and providers gathered on August 22 and 23 in Raleigh, NC to discuss how to build connections of support to be more effective advocates. Keynote speaker, Dave Bjork, shared his own experiences in reaching out to other advocates as a part of his journey as a lung cancer survivor and as he founded his podcast, “The Research Evangelist.”

Click on the images below to see speaker presentations from this year’s Summit.



Provider Education Across NC



In June, Christopher Pallas, MD, Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute, led a discussion around **Updates from ASCO** for 15 providers in the greater Charlotte area.

In November, Jared Weiss, MD, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center and Jeffrey Clarke, MD and Neal Ready, MD, Duke Cancer Institute led the **“Battle of the Blues: Thoracic**

Updates from ASCO, World Lung and Beyond” discussion with 17 community providers in the Triangle.

In August, 20 providers came together for a virtual summit all about **“A Comprehensive Approach to Treating Lung Cancer.”** Thought leaders from across North Carolina presented information to community oncologists on topics including lung cancer screening, disparities in lung cancer care, advancements in treatment, surgical treatment of lung cancer and comprehensive biomarker testing. This program is available for viewing [online](#).



Screening Saves

Launched in fall 2023, the Screening Saves initiative seeks to build awareness among primary care clinicians in North Carolina to refer eligible residents for lung cancer screenings. LCI also aims to educate high-risk individuals, motivating them to inquire about and follow through with yearly screenings.



Key Program Components:

Statewide Navigator Network: A collaborative platform that shares best practices among healthcare providers and enhances collaboration to increase lung screening rates.

Community Awareness Campaigns: Partnerships in local communities will educate the public and healthcare providers, initially launching in Eastern NC with plans for statewide expansion.

Key highlights from 2024 included:

Lung Screening Navigator Network: Nearly **150** attendees from **48 healthcare institutions** across NC, SC, and GA in its inaugural year. Presenters included Duke Cancer Institute, Atrium Health, UNC Health Johnston, and Wake Med.

Screening Gas Cards: **60 gas cards** were distributed to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) to assist patients with travel needs in Eastern NC.

Program Awareness: A partnership with ECU Health was launched in 2025 with the goal of driving awareness about the importance of lung cancer screenings. This program was announced at key meetings, including the **Advisory Committee on Cancer Coordination and Control (ACCC) North Carolina Stakeholders** meeting and the **National Lung Cancer Roundtable (NLCRT)** annual meeting.



Left to Right: Dr. Hiren Mehta presented LCI’s Screening Saves program at the National Lung Cancer Roundtable in Atlanta, GA; Dr. Bradley Icard presented an overview of lung cancer at the NC Lung Cancer Stakeholders meeting in Chapel Hill, NC; Mellisa Wheeler and Jenni Danai presented at the NCHA Clinical Conference on Quality and Chronic Disease.

In November, Jenni Danai and Melissa Wheeler, Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute, presented to 180 providers at the **NCHA Clinical Conference on Quality and Chronic Disease** on “Managing Lung Cancer Patients Locally.”

In December, LCI sponsored the annual **North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians Conference** and networked with more than 700 registered participants from across North and South Carolina.

LCI is a partner in the **North Carolina Advisory Committee on Cancer Coordination and Control** where Jenni Danai, Chief Mission Delivery Officer, serves as the co-chair of the early detection subcommittee. LCI continues to partner with ACCCC and ACS in the **Get Screened Coalition Project** that targeted specific geographic areas in western North Carolina for a lung cancer screening awareness campaign.

In addition, LCI is a collaborator on the **Promising Interventions in Lung Cancer** collaboration that includes local health systems, advocacy organizations and industry partners.

Provider Education Committee

Jason Akulian, MD, MPH
Jared Weiss, MD
Lynn Bowlby, MD
Hiren Mehta, MD
BJ Peterson, DNP

Louise M. Henderson, PhD
Jimmy Ruiz, MD
Trey Shelton, MD
Aundrea Oliver, MD
Mellisa Wheeler, MHA

SURVIVORSHIP & CAREGIVER SUPPORT

In 2024, Cheryl Lecroy joined LCI's team as Survivor Liaison offering support and resources to lung cancer survivors at all points throughout their journey. 107 survivors engaged with us through 17 activities throughout the year including our weekly luncheons and annual Survivor's Day Celebration in June.

Survivors Day Celebration

In June, 44 people including lung cancer survivors and their loved ones gathered at Mez in Durham for the "Sunshine and Self Care" Survivors Day Celebration. Dr. Karen Velasquez presented information about summer health and wellness tips for survivors.



Wellness Retreat

LCI offered our seventh annual wellness retreat to provide 7 lung cancer survivors with coping mechanisms proven to enhance quality of life after a lung cancer diagnosis. At the retreat, a professional wellness team provided survivors with evidence-based, integrative techniques to battle stress and tools to monitor their well-being. Most importantly, this retreat connected survivors to a community of others who truly understand what they are going through.



"What a life-enhancing experience!! This retreat allowed us to relax in our common reality of living with lung cancer; sharing quality time with people who completely understand the journey. There were tears of sadness and of joy. There were stories of tragedy and of triumph. It was a unique fun-filled, enriching, activity-packed weekend of loving support and compassionate care, overflowing with stressbusting and relationship-building techniques." – Retreat Participant

Survivor Networking

LCI's **monthly virtual networking luncheon** series is an opportunity for survivors to meet and network with other survivors. The group meets the first Wednesday of every month and includes opportunities to socialize as well as topics of interest to attendees including exercise, nutrition and mindfulness-based stress reduction. In 2024, there were 110 attendees over the course of the 12 monthly luncheons.

Survivors in communities across North Carolina gathered at **in-person networking events** in Raleigh (pictured bottom center), Charlotte (pictured bottom left) and Greensboro (pictured bottom right). Thirty-seven survivors, family members and friends also gathered for LCI's first Family Day in April.



Time of Remembrance and Reflection

LCI partnered with Transitions Lifecare to offer a Time of Remembrance and Reflection in May. Twenty-three individuals gathered for the event and to remember those that we have lost.

Survivor Steering Committee

Paula Adams
Teri Barron
John Eagleton
Angela Hopper
Sonia Irusta

Ginny Kloepfer
Meredith Lundy
Judy Noble
Jane Poole
Emily Walthall

AWARENESS

Through community health fairs, events and partnerships with organizations like FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies, Medical University of South Carolina and the Greensboro Grasshoppers, LCI raised awareness of lung cancer throughout the community.

Community Awareness

LCI partnered across the state to reach more than 5,600 individuals through 22 awareness events in communities including Durham, Raleigh, Butner, Greenville, Wilmington, Charlotte, Greensboro, Winston Salem and Charleston, South Carolina.



Left to Right: Jenni Danai at the MUSC Survivorship and Cancer Outcomes Research Initiative Meeting in Charleston, SC; James Sheegog at the Fins Up Festival in Wrightsville Beach, NC; The Triad LUNGe Forward 5K committee partnered with the Greensboro Grasshoppers to raise awareness at a baseball game.

Lung Cancer Awareness Month



From community and provider education, to supporting Lung Cancer Awareness Month (LCAM) events hosted by partners including UNC Health, MUSC, FUJIFILM and Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist, to myriad special events including the Jodi 5K Run & Walk, All-In to Fight Cancer

Charity Poker Tournament and the Carolina Hurricanes Hockey Fights Cancer event, this year's LCAM was a busy one! Each LCAM, LCI seeks to support partners in their awareness efforts and to provide free awareness and educational resources.

LCAM HIGHLIGHTS



Click the photo above to see highlights from Lung Cancer Awareness Month.

Pictured at Left: Advocates gather at the Hockey Fights Cancer game in November.

Partnering to Make a Difference

In honor of Lung Cancer Awareness Month, the teams at FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies and Johnson & Johnson partnered with LCI for a team building project hosted at FUJIFILM's Holly Springs location. Together they created 200 bags designed for lung cancer patients throughout North Carolina with items including socks, lip balm, snacks and a patient journal. "We wanted patients in our community to know that we are thinking of them, and so we included a special note of encouragement in each one," said Sarah Gaskill, Head of External Relations for North Carolina at FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies. The bags are being distributed by the LCI team to cancer centers and lung cancer survivors throughout the state.



Above Right: Sarah Gaskill, FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies and Paige Humble, Lung Cancer Initiative Bottom Left: The FUJIFILM and Johnson & Johnson teams stuffing 200 bags for lung cancer patients Bottom Right: The LCI team presents gift bags to the lung cancer team at WakeMed cancer center.

Lung Cancer Initiative Events & Celebrations

LUNGe Forward/Jodi 5K Walks & Runs

More than 1,000 supporters stepped out in Charlotte, the Triad, the Triangle and Greenville as a part of the LUNGe Forward series and for the Jodi 5K Run & Walk in Durham. Collectively, these events raised more than \$432,000 to further lung cancer research, education and access programs.

Held in March at the Koka Booth Amphitheatre in Cary, the **Triangle LUNGe Forward 5K Run, Walk & Celebration** presented by Duke Health raised more than \$140,000 and had 491 participants.

Co-presented by Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute and Charlotte Radiology, the **Charlotte LUNGe Forward 5K Run, Walk & Celebration** at McAlpine Creek Park in Charlotte included a timed 5K run, survivorship celebration and activities for the whole family. Three-hundred eighteen registered participants raised almost \$87,000 through the event.

Held in September at Boyd Lee Park, the second annual **Greenville LUNGe Forward 5K Run, Walk & Celebration** had nearly 70 participants and raised almost \$37,000.

In October, 213 participants stepped out and raised almost \$84,000 at the **Triad LUNGe Forward 5K Run, Walk & Celebration** presented by Parks GMC Kernersville. Held at Country Park, this year's event included music, food, a celebration rally and activities for the whole family.

The fourth annual **Jodi 5K Run and Walk at Forest Hills Park** united with 707 participants and raised almost \$85,000 for lung cancer research and education in November. This event is held in memory of Jodi Koviach and led by her many friends and family.

Lung Cancer Initiative Annual Impact Report 2024



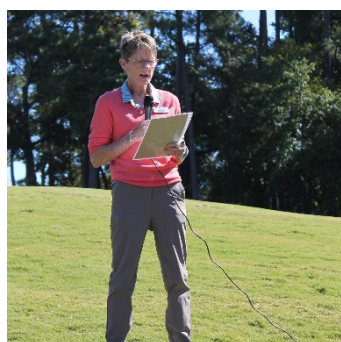
Top Left: Jodi 5K Walk & Run. Top Right: Dr. Aundrea Oliver and Mary Frances White at the Greenville LUNGe Forward 5K. Middle Left: Supporters at the Charlotte LUNGe Forward 5K. Middle Right: Survivors at the Triangle LUNGe Forward 5K. Bottom: Triad LUNGe Forward 5K.

Two Ways to Swing for a Cure



Held in April, the **Lung Cancer Initiative Spring Golf Classic** in memory of **Susan C. Hicks** was a beautiful day on the links at Lonnie Poole Golf Course as we raised funds for lung cancer research and education. More than **\$51,000** was raised at this first annual event. Thank you to our event co-chairs, Elizabeth Hefner and Anderson Garrett.

In October, golfers gathered at MacGregor Downs Country Club for the **Lung Cancer Initiative Golf Classic** in memory of **Ben Hynson**. Supporters raised more than **\$40,000** to support lung cancer research and support programs at LCI. Thank you to our event chair, Liz Hynson.



Top Left: Gary Hicks, Elizabeth Hefner and Anderson Garrett at the Spring Golf Classic. Bottom Left: Liz Hynson at the Fall Golf Classic. Bottom Right: Volunteers at the Spring Golf Classic.

Evening of Hope: Hope Floats

Kicking off Lung Cancer Awareness month at North Ridge Country Club, the Evening of Hope: Hope Floats event presented by AstraZeneca was highlighted by inspiring mission moments, including the powerful [video](#) and words shared by the Menezes family. Their story highlights the profound impact your support has on the lives of those we serve. Thanks to the support of more than 250 participants, we raised over **\$159,000** to fuel lung cancer research and education. Thank you to our event chair, Angela Nicholson.



White Ribbon Regatta

Including a community social and breakfast social and regatta, The White Ribbon Regatta in May at Wrightsville Beach was a unique and inspiring way to raise awareness and support for lung cancer research and education and to build a stronger network in the greater Wilmington community. This event raised more than **\$24,000** toward lung cancer awareness, research and programs. Thank you to our event chair, Jim Sheegog.



All-In to Fight Cancer



LCI was honored to be the beneficiaries of the third annual Raleigh **All-In to Fight Cancer Charity Poker Tournament** in November at the Ritz Raleigh along with another amazing non-profit supporting mothers with cancer, the Helene Foundation. It was an incredibly hopeful and fun celebration, and we met so many wonderful people impacted by cancer.

Collaborations

LCI works closely with other patient advocacy organizations and partners through collaboration and participation in community associations including:

- LungCAN (Lung Cancer Action Network)**
- Health Research Alliance**
- NC Advisory Committee on Cancer Coordination & Control Health Research Alliance**
- National Lung Cancer Roundtable**
- NC Center for Nonprofits**
- Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce**



Top Left: Amy Cipau and Paige Humble meet with Dr. Joan Schiller at the annual LungCAN meeting. Top Right: Patient advocates from across the country gathered for the annual LungCAN meeting in Raleigh, NC. Bottom Left: Amy Cipau, Paige Humble, Dr. Jared Weiss and Alisha Patel at the annual UNC Thomas C. Shea Clinical Cancer Symposium. Bottom Right: Stacey Bowers, Lung Cancer Research Foundation, Paige Humble and Heidi Onda, The White Ribbon Project at the annual IASLC World Lung Conference in San Diego, CA.

GIVING HOPE SOCIETY

The Giving Hope Society recognizes the generosity and impact of individuals and families who are sustaining donors to LCI. Society members contribute a minimum of \$1,000 annually in unrestricted cash gifts to the organization. Donations can be in memory or in honor of a loved one, made toward a LCI event, or a special gift directed toward the Society. The care and kindness of our Society members fuels critical research, education, awareness and access programs across the state.

In September, Giving Hope Society members gathered at the North Carolina Biotechnology Center for the annual Giving Hope Society member reception. Guests enjoyed some great food and beverages and got to hear a wonderful presentation by our event speaker, Dr. Jeffrey Clarke, Medical Oncologist at Duke Cancer Institute. Dr. Clarke spoke about “things that give him hope,” and highlighted some patient success stories that were both moving and inspiring. We also heard from Rob Lindberg, Vice President of Science and Technology Development at North Carolina Biotechnology Center also recognized Ginny and Bill Kloepfer, long-time LCI friends, volunteers, and Giving Hope Society members, for their dedication and support over the years.





Tammy and Darrin Allred
Suzanne and Glenn Andrews
Anonymous
Polly Armsby and James
Morlando
Bob and Pat Barker
Elisabeth Bernhardt
Carla and Don Berryann
Dr. Jeff Blum
Shannon Brady
Hope and Doug Brown
Jim Bulak
Amy and Gabriel Cipau
Dr. Jeffrey and Shannon Clarke
Lee Ellen Coffey
Elizabeth Collins
Jennifer and Steve Colon
Anthony and Brooke Contini
Zev Crawley
Tracy Delahunt
Karen and Phil Divine
Elissa Doty and Matt Hellgeth
Beth and Mathew Dougherty
Beth and John Dyson
John Eagleton
Lucy and Paul Fedorkowicz
Dean Frauenholtz
Samantha Freiberg
Cassidy Fry and Brice Games
Carlo Gagliardo
Audrey Galloway
Anderson and Adam Garrett
Dr. Jennifer Garst
Fred and Cindy Gehrke
Greg Gobar
Melissa Greer
The Hall Foundation
Robert Hargraves
Chris and Kristin Hayduk
Elizabeth Hefner
Elizabeth Hess
Gary and Lynne Hicks
Patricia and Kenneth Holloway

Heather and James Hooper
Katie and Nick Hynson
Liz Hynson
Dr. Bradley and Kimberly Icard
Sonia Irusta
James Jackson
Thaura and John Jeffreys
Dan and Nancy Johns
Martha Jones
John and Cece Kennedy
Tom and Sara Kleinknecht
William and Ginny Kloepfer
Dr. Julia Lawrence
Raychelle Leonard
Jason Long
Meredith and Clyde Lundy
Mack D. Foundation
Kevin Maloney
Chad Mastny
Gurpreet Mathaudasahota
Christopher and Jessica Mauney
Erik and Christine Mazzone
Erika and Tom McArtor
Betsy Gaskins McClaine and
Russell McClaine
Amanda McClure
Amelia McKay
Jaymie and Michael McKay
Thad McLaurin
Dr. Hiren and Dr. Nisha Mehta
Aurita Menezes
Susan Michel
Dr. Kathryn and William
Mileham
Louise Miller
Colleen Mitchell
Mark and Karen Montgomery
Susan Moore
Tom Moser
Catrelia and Eric Moylan
Marc Nevin
Angela and Justin Brian
Nicholson
Katie and Joe Nifong
Judy and Curt Noble
Kevin Nunnery
Dr. Eziafa Oduah
Gwen and Justin Orilio
Dr. Aundrea Oliver and Paul
Perkovich
Raj and Anuradha Pajjur

Debora Parks
Emily Parks
Joellen Parks
Khaki Parks
Stuart Carter Parks
Tracy Parks
Dr. Chad Victor Pecot
Bill and BJ Peterson
Gerald Postema
Nirmala Premakumar
Dr. Sanjay Premakumar
Chris and Susanne Rallis
Dr. Neal Ready and Dr. Lynn
Bowlby
Karl Rectanus and Victoria
Wheeler
Beth and Jeffrey Richek
Bill Roberts
Arthur Rogers
Nicole and Aaron Rose
Graham Self
Mark Selisker
Deborah and Jim Sheegog
Robert Sheegog
Allen Todd Smith and Romi
Farber
George and Michelle Snead
Kyle Soto
Barbara Stapp
Michael Sulick and Veronica
Canete
Franklin Templeton
Jean Townsend
Michelle Turner
Ron Wainwright
Dr. Paul and Kathryn Walker
Pam and Andrew Warren
Dr. Jared Weiss
Roberta Wilder
Phyllis and H. Edward Wright
Tom Wright
Caroline and Glen Wrisley

**Thank you to our 2024
Giving Hope Society
Members!**

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

LCI Annual Awards Update & Celebration

In March, LCI held our Annual Awards Update and Celebration where we looked back at our accomplishments in 2023 and honored the following award recipients for their commitment to LCI and to the lung cancer community.

HONOREES

Volunteer of the Year: This award recognizes the impact, dedication and generosity of someone who gives their time freely to support the mission of the Lung Cancer Initiative. Health fair volunteers, community presenters, grassroots event planners, and other volunteers may be nominated.



Teri Barron

Teri Barron truly embodies a heart of service and is considered a gem in the lung cancer community. Her story as a survivor sparks hope, and she is always willing to share this hope among others. As a host of Lung Cancer Initiative's annual lung cancer wellness retreat, Teri works tirelessly to prepare the property and her home to welcome and support other lung cancer survivors. Teri also invites other fellow survivors to attend luncheons and other LCI events, creating a special reunion and connection for survivors and their families. In 2023, Teri filled an entire table at the annual gala with the retreat participants and their spouses and shared her story and the impact of the retreat as a part of the gala program. Teri continues to stay in touch with retreat participants throughout the year while offering encouragement, engagement, and a warm smile.

Community Partner of the Year: This award recognizes the impact, dedication and generosity of community organizations who give their time freely to support the mission of the Lung Cancer Initiative.



UNC Chapel Hill ALSCI

The UNC Chapel Hill American Lung Cancer Screening Initiative (ALCSI) Chapter is a student-run, self-supported, on-campus volunteer organization that is always seeking ways to raise more awareness around lung cancer and screening efforts. They have supported and advocated for lung cancer awareness through multiple avenues, including exhibits on campus and building events as a part of The White Ribbon Project. To date, they have built more than 50 ribbons and partnered with other organizations to raise awareness. Students have also supported lung cancer survivors at the UNC-Chapel Hill

Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center through in-person visits and white ribbon distribution. In addition, they sought support for a statewide bill for lung cancer screening.

Survivor of the Year: This award recognizes someone who has been diagnosed with lung cancer and who has used their journey to support others as a source of inspiration and hope.



Mary Frances White

Mary Frances White is a survivor living in eastern NC that has made an impactful transformation in the lung cancer community by supporting other patients and survivors throughout their journey and always fostering a positive environment. Throughout her involvement in LCI's programs and events, Mary Frances has played an active role in the planning and implementation of the Inaugural Greenville LUNGe Forward through reaching out to local businesses and elected officials and has been crucial to the event planning process. Mary Frances has also been an important member of LCI's Survivor Steering Committee and offered her perspectives and input on the needs of lung cancer survivors in her community. Pure and lovely in her intentions, Mary Frances embodies all of LCI's core values and truly makes a difference in everything she is involved in.

Caregiver of the Year: This award is given in recognition of the compassion and devotion of someone who takes care of or has taken care of an individual diagnosed with lung cancer.



Matt Hellgeth

Matt Hellgeth is a caring, compassionate, and humble caregiver and husband and has been tremendously supportive throughout his wife's lung cancer diagnosis and treatment. He sacrificed his career as a professor at Western Carolina University to work as her caregiver in order to help her live her best life and give hope to others with lung cancer. Matt accompanied his wife to all her appointments, studies and treatments that would require long hours on the road and at the clinic and additionally wrote handwritten thank you notes to her many supporters that sponsored her on her first walk, providing updates of her progress. He has helped raise money for LCI through joining her on walks in Raleigh and recruiting sponsors for the LCI LUNGe Forward events. He has additionally been an active participant in other LCI programs and accompanied his wife to many LCI functions.

Committee Member of the Year: This award recognizes the time, energy, and support given by a committee member who is exceptionally dedicated to supporting the Lung Cancer Initiative's mission. Volunteers serving on the Evening of Hope Gala committee, Marketing committee, Access Grant committee, or any of the LUNGe Forward 5K committees may be nominated.

Jane Pederson

Jane Pederson is a strong individual who used grief and sadness to help a cause that made a difference for others to survive. She has contributed to the Triangle LUNGe Forward as a critical volunteer for more than 15 years since losing her mother to lung cancer in 2007. Managing the course and recruiting volunteers as needed with a smile and can-do attitude, Jane plays an impactful role in making sure the event runs smoothly each year. She has always involved her family and encouraged many friends to come out and volunteer for the event. From managing the water station, to having her spouse ride in the police car to help participants stay on course, to having her daughter be the trail walker to lead participants, and last but not least, helping with packet pick up – Jane has provided great support in 2023 and has already committed to helping in 2024.

Healthcare Professional of the Year: This award recognizes an oncologist, nurse navigator, or any other healthcare professional who goes above and beyond in an effort to provide supportive and patient centered care to lung cancer survivors. Primary care physicians, oncologists, nurse navigators, clinical social workers, and other healthcare professionals may be nominated.



Dr. Bradley Icard

Dr. Bradley Icard represents a proactive, genuine, passionate and compassionate leader in the lung cancer community through his patient-centered approach to care, advocacy, and education. From providing an exceptional presentation about lung cancer screening and barriers to more than 700 primary care providers, to actively engaging with advocates during the Advocacy Summit, Dr. Icard made a significant impact on LCI's community and provider education events in 2023 connecting more people to lung cancer screening in NC and beyond. Additionally, he has led efforts to increase access to screening

in uninsured and underinsured populations at Cone Health through initiatives to cover screening costs and research to determine how to reach more underserved populations and individuals who are eligible for screening. Dr. Icard continues to support through his active participation in LCI committees.

Other Distinctions

Guidestar 2024 Seal of Transparency

LCI earned a 2024 Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of recognition offered by GuideStar, the world's largest source of nonprofit information. By sharing metrics that highlight progress Lung Cancer Initiative is making toward its mission, the organization is helping donors move beyond simplistic ways of nonprofit evaluation such as overhead ratios.

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