

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

JACKSON PREP SENIORS DONATE POUNDING THE PAVEMENT RACE PROCEEDS FOR CANCER RESEARCH AT UMMC

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JACKSON, Miss. – The Jackson Preparatory School senior class of 2014 on Thursday donated \$14,360.11 to further research at the University of Mississippi Medical Center Cancer Institute.

Class members raised the money in December with Pounding the Pavement for a Cure, a 5K Race. The run, in its second year, originated in 2012 after two class members lost loved ones to cancer.

Anna Grace Buchanan and Cara Lee Crawford started the race after Buchanan lost her father to pancreatic and liver cancer and Crawford's grandfather was diagnosed with colon and liver cancer. Crawford's grandfather died in January 2013.

The Jackson Prep class of 2014 adopted Pounding the Pavement for a Cure as its senior project and held the race in December 2013 at Liberty Park in Flowood.

"We are very grateful for the actions this class took in hopes of finding a cure for cancer," said Dr. Srinivasan Vijayakumar, CI director. "We'll use this money to enhance the equipment many researchers here use as they search for a cure."

"We have great pride in these two seniors," said Dr. Luke Nealey, Prep's head of high school. "It's all because of their hard work and dedication."

Dr. Richard Summers, UMMC associate vice chancellor for research, praised their effort.

"Mississippi leads the nation in terms of those who arrive with in-stage or late-stage cancer," he said.

Community efforts such as this help researchers and community members find ways to end that cycle.

Crawford also emphasized their community commitment. "We really wanted to give back to our community and it's very important to us that no family has to go through what our families have gone through."

Buchanan said, "We wanted to give to UMC because it is local and in our own community."

Cancer Institute researchers applauded as the check was presented.

The money, combined with the 2012 donation, will be used to purchase a Cyrostat, a machine the researchers use to cut frozen tumor tissue and make histological slides. This one can cut extremely fine slices, down to 4 micrometers.

"This produces very thin slices and you can see details of a cancer specimen under the microscope," said Dr. Kounosuke Watabe, CI deputy director for basic research and professor in the Department of Microbiology and Biochemistry. "The equipment can be used in all areas of cancer research. It is a very powerful all-purpose machine."

Vijayakumar thanked the duo and the senior class.

"They showed compassion and they showed leadership. We work to destroy cancer every day and we are extremely thankful to you for your compassion and leadership."

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Please forward this message to colleagues who might be interested. If you wish to be removed from this list or know of a colleague to add, send an e-mail message to: jmazurak@umc.edu.

The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. UMMC encompasses five health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related professions, dentistry and graduate studies, as well as the site where University of Mississippi pharmacy students do their clinical training. The Medical Center's health-care enterprise includes five hospitals and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. The Medical Center's threefold mission is to educate tomorrow's health-care professionals, conduct innovative research to improve human health, and to provide the highest quality care available to the state's population. A major goal of the Medical Center is the improvement of the health of Mississippians and the elimination of health disparities. For more information, contact the Division of Public Affairs at (601) 984-1100 or umc.edu/publicaffairs