

Meet Founder H. Lee Moffitt  
*the man behind the mission*

30 YEARS OF COURAGE



MOFFITT CANCER CENTER

MOFFITT  
**MOMENTUM**<sup>®</sup>

PORTRAITS OF HOPE, INNOVATION AND TRIUMPH

**TEAM SCIENCE**

Unlocking cancer's secrets

**A NOBLE QUEST**

Tenacity brings vision to life

**LEAPS OF FAITH**

Preparing for the next 30 years



**Alan F. List, M.D.**  
President & CEO  
Moffitt Cancer Center

**MOFFITT MOMENTUM®**  
VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

As we celebrate 30 years since the cancer center admitted its first patient on October 27, 1986, many words come to mind – vision, dream, tenacity, persistence, hard work – and foremost the word “courage.”

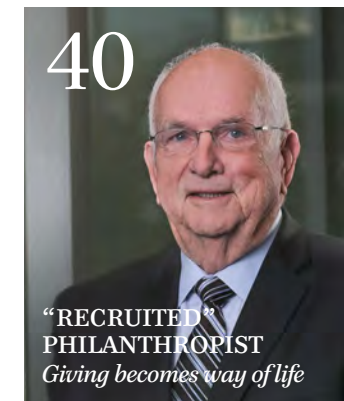
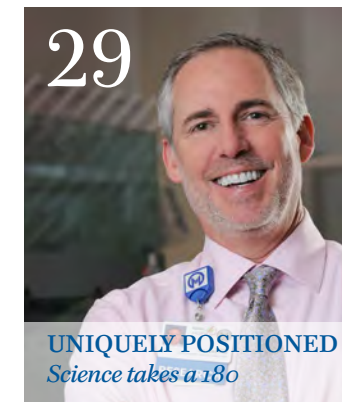
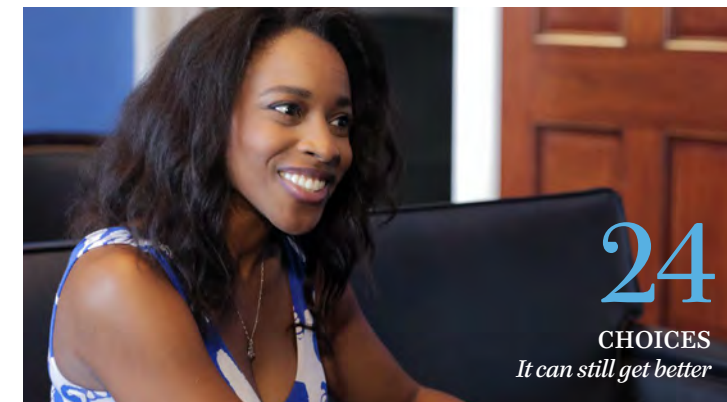
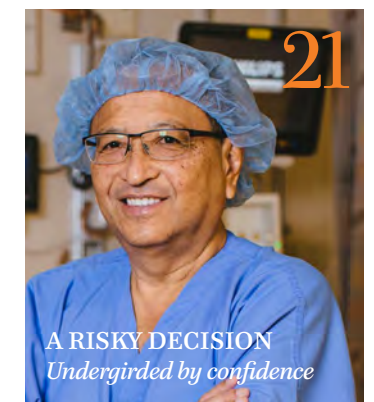
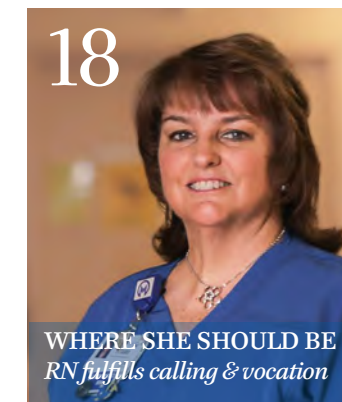
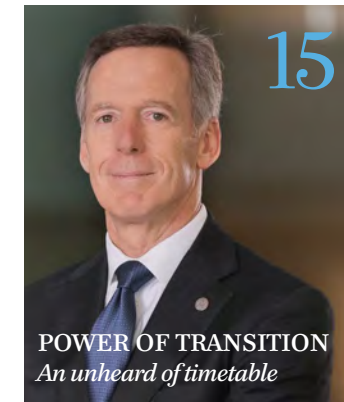
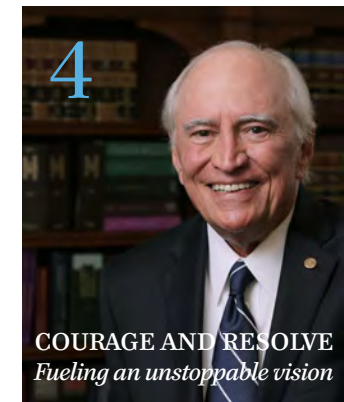
In this issue of Moffitt Momentum magazine, which commemorates the 30-year anniversary of Moffitt Cancer Center, you will read how the center became a reality because of the vision and courage of the institution’s founder, H. Lee Moffitt.

Selected stories provide firsthand accounts of our origins and the continuing dedication of advocates and friends of the cancer center. You will meet Dr. Julie Djeu, Moffitt’s first researcher, Lori Fox, one of Moffitt’s first registered nurses, and surgeon Dr. Julio Pow-Sang, who has been with Moffitt since the early years. Ted Couch, who made the leap of faith establishing our Center’s first endowed research chair, describes his philosophy. Long-time Moffitt Board of Advisors member Gov. Bob Martinez discusses changes that have taken place in Tampa and why having a nationally recognized cancer center plays a key role in growing Tampa Bay.

In just three decades, with an unchanging mission – to contribute to the prevention and cure of cancer – Moffitt has become one of the top cancer centers and research institutes in the nation.

The center has been privileged with so many committed board members, donors, advocates, volunteers, faculty and team members that it would be impossible to include them all. There are numerous people from all walks of life to thank, and it is most appropriate to pause at this anniversary and recognize and thank those who, through their initiative, dedication, expertise, hard work and courage have helped drive the cancer center forward to where we are today.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue. While we have much to celebrate, clearly the future holds great promise, and we have much work to do as we plan for the next 30 years and beyond. Thank you for joining us in this quest.





Photography: Florida Historic Capitol Museum

# 30 Years of Courage

## Resolve Fuels H. Lee Moffitt's Noble Quest

By Ann Miller Baker and Cathy Clark

**“I’m not the one to thank.”**

**Lee Moffitt says he can’t go anywhere without someone asking if he’s THAT Lee Moffitt. Stories tumble out about the loved one, friend or neighbor who needed Moffitt Cancer Center — some still struggling, others cured, all cared for with compassion.**

**“It’s overwhelming. It’s very emotional,” says the center’s founder and namesake. “It gives me credit that I don’t deserve. It’s the caregivers at this institution that deserve the praise.” The doctors, nurses, researchers, each and every person who works to keep the lights on and doors open at Moffitt Cancer Center.**

**But 30 years ago, when the first patients came for care on Oct. 27, 1986, the sign above those doors read H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center for a very good reason.**

The year was 1977.

Florida State Representative Lee Moffitt had a lot on his plate, representing the people of Tampa and beyond in District 66. But his thoughts often turned to three friends: Joseph Lumia,

a prominent accountant and Moffitt’s campaign treasurer; George Edgecomb, an attorney, a fellow Big Brother, and the first African-American judge in Hillsborough County; and Moffitt’s legislative aide, Judy Barnett. All three were battling cancer. All three were forced to look out of state for the specialized care they needed.

“Over the course of that year, all three of them died — all in their early 30s,” Moffitt recalls sadly. “It hit me very hard. I decided that one of the things I wanted to accomplish in the Legislature was to see if we could create a cancer center in Florida that would be as good as any cancer center in the United States so that Floridians would not have to go outside the state. I felt that it would be a noble quest to create what I hoped would ultimately become an NCI [National Cancer Institute] Comprehensive Cancer Center in Florida,” says Moffitt.

“You have to look at Florida back in the ’70s,” he adds. “Florida was one of the fastest growing states in the nation. It also had very high incidence of cancer. We had a void that we needed to fill in this state.”

But to Moffitt’s surprise, his idea to fill that void was not widely embraced. “It was pretty lonely back then,” he says. “When

word got out that I was planning to advocate for the creation of a cancer center, I thought that people would join me. Quite to the contrary, I found almost 99 percent opposition. But back then, I was more of a junior member of the Legislature. I didn’t have a lot of clout.”

### PERSEVERANCE AND COURAGE TO FULFILL A PROMISE

Moffitt hung onto his vision while his influence in the Legislature grew. As the incoming Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, he was able to push through the necessary legislation to establish a cancer center in Tampa. His courage inspired fellow lawmakers to fund the cancer center in a most appropriate way — by diverting a small percentage of state cigarette tax revenue. In 1981, Moffitt’s dream became the first free-standing cancer treatment and research center authorized by the state and the only such institution in the nation directly financed by a tax on tobacco.

That victory was followed by even more planning and more years of hard work. In January 1983, Moffitt celebrated the groundbreaking for the \$70 million, 162-bed facility. Construction continued throughout 1985, with finishing touches completed in early 1986. Following a formal dedication ceremony on Oct. 18, 1986, Moffitt Cancer Center admitted its first patient on Oct. 27, 1986 — 30 years ago.

It was an emotional milestone Moffitt finds hard to put into words.

“I felt like I had fulfilled a promise that I had made to those friends that lost the battle.”

### NEVER A DOUBT

Moffitt says he never doubted that the cancer center would be created — nor that it would succeed. “I always thought, if I could get the resources, we had the potential to make this cancer center one of the great institutions in the world,” he says. “And fortunately over the history of the cancer center, we were able to get the resources to grow and prosper and to hire the extremely talented people that have made us the success that we are today.”

With such an outlook, he was pleased, but certainly not surprised, to see Moffitt Cancer Center named the nation’s No. 6 cancer hospital in 2016 by U.S. News & World Report, which has listed Moffitt as one of the “Best Hospitals” for cancer care since 1999.

Coincidentally 2016 also marks the NCI’s renewal of Moffitt’s Cancer Center Support Grant and its Comprehensive Cancer Center status. “That is a big deal in the cancer world, and I’m proud of those who worked hard on reaccreditation. It’s a testament to the wonderful team that we have here at the cancer center and the fabulous researchers that have worked so hard to get us to the point where we are now,” he says.

“I think the key to success — not just here, but in life — is to

make sure that you surround yourself with talented people who are willing to buy into the same vision that you have. One of the reasons that the cancer center has been so successful is because we’ve had, and I’ve had, the privilege of working with friends and allies that contributed to its success over the years in so many ways. Without their help, we would not be where we are today.”

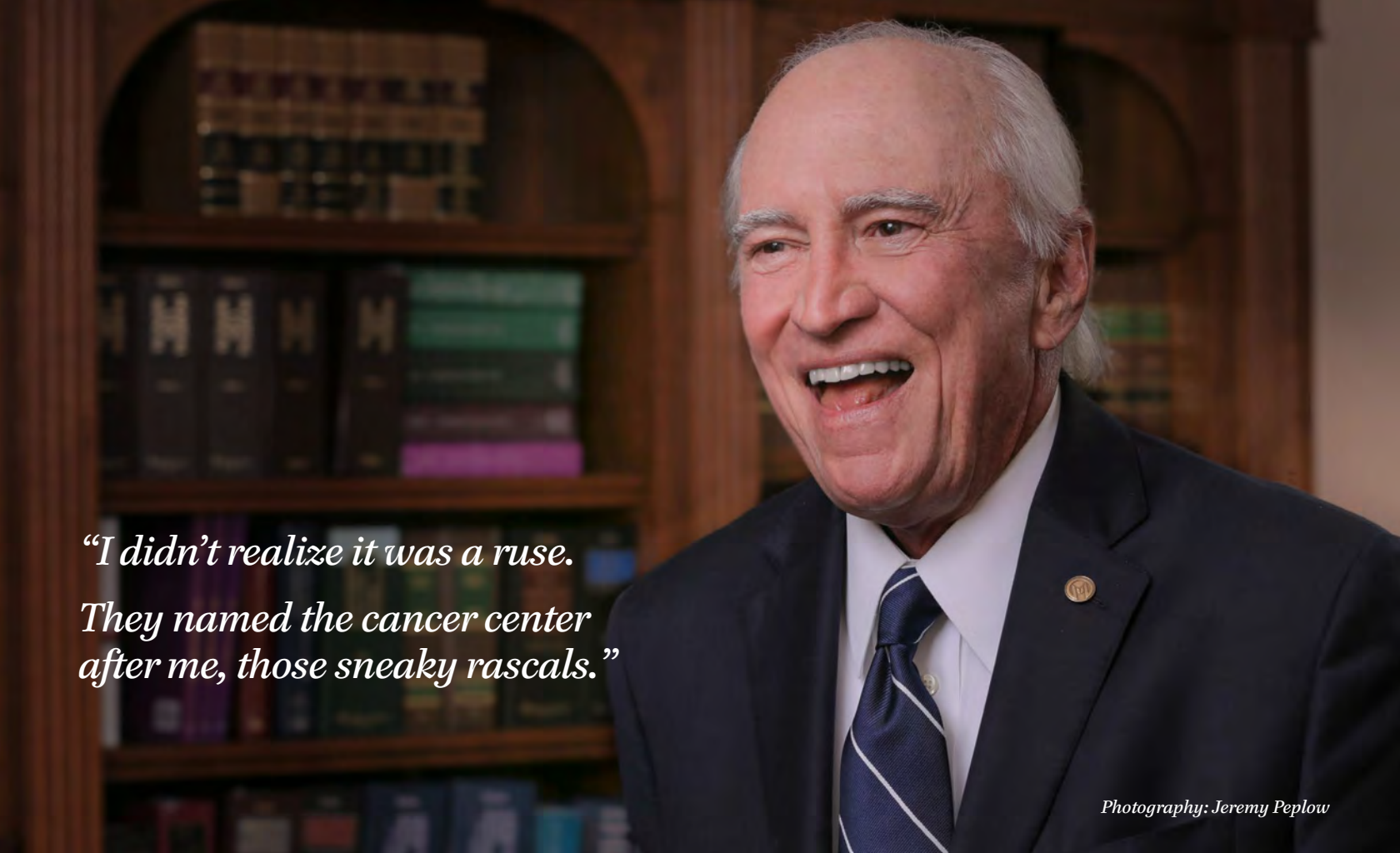
*“I felt like I had fulfilled a promise that I had made to those friends that lost the battle.”*

It would be impossible to list all those friends and allies. But Moffitt notes that the cancer center has been blessed with committed board members and leadership that few other institutions in Florida can match, including former governors, U.S. senators, and leaders with community, corporate and professional sports ties. Over the decades, they have volunteered countless hours for board and committee meetings, fundraisers, trips to meet lawmakers in Tallahassee, speaking engagements, recruiting dinners — in short, a tremendous amount of work “in the trenches,” as Moffitt puts it. Add to this the compassionate and skilled care of the center’s entire clinical team, the brilliant scientists in its research enterprise and the many other team members who support its mission, and Moffitt says it’s plain to see how this cancer center has spread its impact well beyond the immediate Tampa Bay area.

“Our mere presence alone in the state of Florida has elevated, in my opinion, the level of cancer care all over the state,” says Moffitt. “Not only have discoveries that we’ve made trickled down to help doctors in many communities better care for their patients, many of our doctors and the students who’ve trained here have now dispersed throughout the state and the country.



MARGARITA ROMO  
CHAMPION



*“I didn’t realize it was a ruse. They named the cancer center after me, those sneaky rascals.”*

Photography: Jeremy Peplow

You can attribute the training that they received here as another one of the reasons why we’ve had such a positive impact on the fight against cancer.”

**THE NEXT 30 YEARS**

As for tomorrow and the center’s next 30 years, Moffitt foresees an even greater impact on how cancer is treated, not only in Florida but also around the world. He acknowledges it will take renewed courage to face the growing pains ahead, with the need for more patient care and research space. “The challenge is always getting the resources that you need to build. We need bricks and mortar. We need to be able to hire the talented people necessary to round out our team. All of these needs cost money. We’re constantly going to the Legislature and into the community and asking for financial support.

“The Legislature and the community and our friends have been very generous over the years, but I think that they would not be as generous if it had not been for the wonderful reputation and the success that this center has shown over the years.

“It’s too easy to be mediocre. It’s not easy to be exceptional. I think that drives every employee at this center. We have come so far, but we have a long way to go — and we will.” It would be impossible for H. Lee Moffitt to think otherwise.

**HE NEVER WANTED THIS CANCER CENTER TO BEAR HIS NAME.**

As House Speaker, Moffitt ruled his fellow lawmakers out of order when they first attempted to formalize that honor in an amendment back in 1984. It would take some quiet maneuvering

to get Moffitt to surrender the gavel in the closing days of his final legislative session and head to the governor’s office, so that House members could unanimously pass the measure, walk it over to the Senate for equal affirmation and down to the governor’s desk for signature the next day.

“I didn’t realize it was a ruse,” Moffitt recalls with a chuckle. “They named the cancer center after me, those sneaky rascals.”

Along with his name, Moffitt Cancer Center bears one more inscription on its walls — its mission: to contribute to the prevention and cure of cancer.

Ask any Moffitt team member today, and you’ll find equal commitment to both those inscriptions.

Thank you, Mr. Moffitt. 🙏

*“It’s too easy to be mediocre. It’s not easy to be exceptional. I think that drives every employee at this center.”*

# Board Members Share Lee Moffitt’s Singular Focus

Visualize a cadre of enthusiastic, talented community volunteers who dedicate their energy, time, expertise, and – in many cases – their personal financial resources to help make the world a better place.

As this image materializes, what emerges is not an illusion but rather a tangible, vigorous corps of some 75 steadfast Moffitt Cancer Center Board members. Coming from differing backgrounds and walks of the community, they provide advice, counsel and oversight to help guide and grow the cancer center.

Their mission is that of Moffitt Cancer Center: “To contribute to the prevention and cure of cancer.” And their approach lines up with Moffitt’s vision: “To transform cancer care through service, science and partnership.”

The Florida Legislature created Moffitt to address the burden of cancer in Florida, and the Boards play an important role in the development and progress of the center. Since 1994 when Moffitt Cancer Center incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation under Florida Statute, the Board has been led by four chairs who each have played key roles in moving the cancer center forward.

Under Ted Couch’s leadership, the foundation was laid for the growth of Moffitt’s research programs as the Moffitt Research Center opened and the center received its first National Cancer Institute Cancer Center Support Grant. During the years Sen. Connie Mack served as board chair, the campus expanded with the opening of a new outpatient clinic facility named the Muriel Rothman Building and a research facility named the Vincent A. Stabile Research Building. During Robert Rothman’s term, Moffitt’s scientific endeavors matured and new programs, including Integrated Mathematical Oncology and the Physical Sciences-Oncology Center emerged. Having served on the Board for the past 19 years, incoming Board Chair Timothy Adams has observed and been closely involved in Moffitt’s progress and anticipates additional progress as Moffitt Cancer Center is poised for growth into the next 30 years and beyond.

“The boards are critical to the success of the cancer center,” says David de la Parte, executive vice president, General Counsel at Moffitt. “Our boards play a critical role in the strategic direction and governance of the center. Always foremost in their minds is the fact that the cancer center is a public asset, and it is to be deployed in the interest of the public and the citizens of the state of Florida.”

## Board Chairs Reflect On Center’s Triumphs And Future Challenges



*“I would say that the highlight of my term as chairman was when Moffitt earned its National Cancer Institute Cancer Center Support Grant in 1998. And then three years later the NCI bestowed the high honor of naming Moffitt an NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center.*

*It has been and still is a privilege to work with the wonderful set of*

*community leaders who were tuned into the Moffitt mission.”*

-TED COUCH

*“The scientific growth that has taken place at Moffitt has been nothing short of amazing. The importance of bringing the benefits of technology and scientific discoveries closer to the patient was exemplified in the development of a personalized approach to cancer care through Moffitt’s Total Cancer Care program.”*

-ROBERT ROTHMAN



*“It has been exciting to see how the cancer center has grown dramatically over the past years. In the coming years the future of scientific discovery and new treatments will be unrestrained as together we build on our strong foundation and remain committed to our mission.”*

-TIMOTHY J. ADAMS

*“Throughout the time I was privileged to serve as Board Chair, the cancer center faced significant challenges and experienced much physical growth. We were especially encouraged when the Florida Legislature approved much-needed funding for the expansion of Moffitt Cancer Center facilities. Reflecting over Moffitt’s history, it has been moving to see how the Cancer Center has matured and moved to the forefront among its peers.”*

- SENATOR CONNIE MACK



**Doretha Edgecomb's Point Of View:**

# A Friend Is Lost, An Unstoppable Vision Emerges

By Cathy Clark

**Doretha Edgecomb recalls – from her perspective more than 30 years later – the relationship between H. Lee Moffitt and her late husband George Edgecomb, attorney, fellow Big Brother and the first African-American judge in Hillsborough County.**

She describes the two men as much aligned in many ways. They both were driven, committed to service and wanted to make the world a better place - to do something to leave an impact "... not just for themselves but also to make the world a healthier place, provide opportunities for people," says Edgecomb. "And I think when Lee learned about George's illness and eventually his death, I think that was just a motivation for him to do something in order to make it better for anybody who would be in that situation."

When George required sophisticated cancer treatment, the local options were limited. His death at age 33 left Doretha a young widow with a five-year-old daughter. She says the diagnosis changed her world in ways she still cannot find words to describe. Over the subsequent years she raised her daughter and built a career as an educator and advocate for children, having also served on the Hillsborough County School Board.

Doretha says her paths crossed with Moffitt on occasion during the years following her husband's death, and she knew of Moffitt's goal to create the cancer center.



"It took courage," she says. "But I knew if this was a dream of his, it one day would become a reality. I had no doubt that if this was something that he believed in - and for the reasons that he believed in it - not just for him or others he knew closely who had cancer, but for anybody who was stricken with this dreadful disease and needed the best care,



Photography: Jeremy Peplow

it was Lee's goal to make that happen."

Knowing that George is part of the reason Moffitt worked so hard to make the cancer center a reality is special to Doretha. "For him to use George as an impetus for making this happen will always, always resonate for me as something very special. I'm honored by it," said Doretha, who also has a family history of cancer. Her twin sisters and an older sister are cancer survivors.

"He was unstoppable in his dream for this hospital," Doretha says of Moffitt. "Absolutely tenacious." And she believes that the cancer center itself will be unstoppable during the next 30 years.

She says she gets comfort in knowing that so many people have been treated and cured at Moffitt Cancer Center. "It's kind of like throwing one pebble into the ocean and it keeps perpetuating itself. That's the way I think I see George's life."

**Asked if one person like her husband and Moffitt make a difference? "They absolutely can make a difference!"**

# GROWING UP MOFFITT

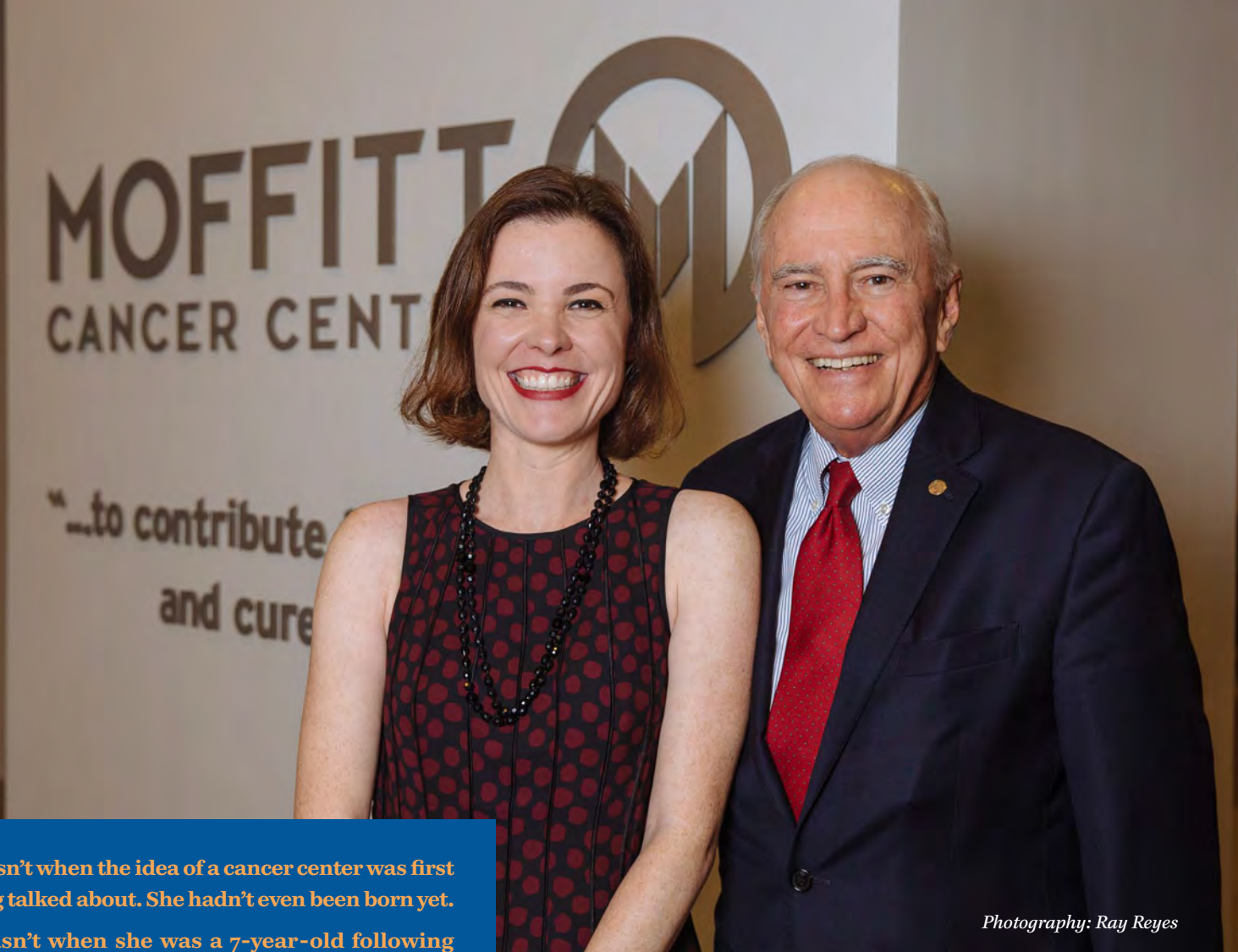
## The Next Generation Is Ready To Further The Mission

By Ann Miller Baker



JENNIFER MOFFITT, Ph.D.

Photography: Ray Reyes



Photography: Ray Reyes

It wasn't when the idea of a cancer center was first being talked about. She hadn't even been born yet.

It wasn't when she was a 7-year-old following along behind her father and grandfather at the construction site, imagining the cancer center taking shape.

It wasn't even on those occasional visits to the hospital's classroom, when she'd sit beside other preteen girls who taught her firsthand about IVs, chemo, leukemia and the sad fact that not everyone survives.

Jennifer Moffitt, daughter of the cancer center's founder and namesake, says she didn't have a true sense of her role in Moffitt's mission until she had been a patient herself.

there with you again first thing in the morning to check your vitals, and the doctor whose well-timed humor alleviates your fears. It was that experience that helped me feel I was ready to contribute further to the cancer center.

"I had been nervous about it. I don't have a background in legal studies, in business, in health care. My background is in literature and art. How would I be able to further the mission? It was getting the perspective of the patient and of the family that helped me realize what my role could be — an advocate for patients and their families."

#### EARNING A SEAT ON THE BOARD

A visiting lecturer at Florida State University where she earned her Ph.D. in Literature, Jennifer Moffitt became a member of the Moffitt Hospital Board in 2015. It's a role her dad hastens to point out was not simply a given. "I don't think it ought to be automatic," says H. Lee Moffitt. "She needs to demonstrate that she's got the right stuff to contribute to the future of the cancer center. I have every confidence that she will be able to do that. I'm blessed to have what I think is the most perfect daughter that was ever born. And I'm very, very proud that the Moffitt family will continue to have a role in the future growth and development of the cancer center."

The pride is mutual. "Walking through the hospital with my father was really when I began to understand the center and its significance for the community. Seeing patients thank my

*"Walking through the hospital with my father was really when I began to understand the center and its significance for the community. Seeing patients thank my father is emotional and humbling."*

father is emotional and humbling. I am so grateful both for the human being that he is," she says, "and for the father that he has always been."

Her memories include days when he'd take time from his role as lawyer and state legislator to pack her lunches or coach her softball team. Or the Sunday morning ritual of going out to breakfast with her father and grandfather, "just the three of us. And then sometimes, the three of us might come out here together during the construction process with the bulldozers and the sandspurs and buildings beginning to go up." She recalls her dad "trying to explain to a very young me what was happening. It was exciting to see his enthusiasm and to realize that his dream was becoming a reality.

"I think most people involved in a project like this would have signed the papers and left afterwards. Not only was he hard-hatting it through the process, being far more involved than anybody probably really wanted him to be in those early stages, he's continued that deep involvement to this day.

"There was a quote some years ago in one of the local newspapers, and they called the cancer center 'Moffitt's Magnificent Obsession.' This is his passion. It's what we talk about at home. It's what we talk about on vacation. The cancer center, cancer treatment and the mission are always at the forefront of his mind. And he wants to do everything he can to help find the cure and to better treat those with cancer."

#### MOVING MOFFITT TOWARD THE FUTURE

With its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this October, the cancer center is celebrating — both its past and its role in the future of cancer research and care. "Thirty years from now," Jennifer Moffitt predicts, "I hope that Vice President Biden's Moonshot Initiative — and our role in that mission — will have radically altered the landscape of cancer treatment and that we will be moving towards treating a chronic illness rather than a life-threatening disease." And she sees the cancer center's role as playing to the strengths that created such a remarkable rise through its first 30 years: "We are where we are today because of the unbounded compassion and curiosity of the Moffitt Team, their courage to experiment and try new things, and their desire to collaborate with other cancer hospitals to share research, benefit patients, and find the cure. I am honored to be joining such a remarkable group of people in this mission."

She's looking forward to being an active participant in the cancer center's future, and is counting on team members, volunteers, patients and families to share their thoughts with her. "My role

will be to listen as much as possible over the next few years as I strive to learn more and more about the cancer center from a variety of perspectives. Then I can use that knowledge to advocate, to fight for the best possible care for everyone who walks through the doors.

"One of the frightening things about cancer is that no one is immune. This is why it's so crucial for us to have a Comprehensive Cancer Center here in our community. Everyone deserves to have access to the treatment and the support system that the Moffitt team provides.

"As everyone knows, my father has argued that one person can make a difference, and he has consistently challenged me to think about the ways that I will give back in my lifetime. But he also always stressed the importance of community and collaboration. I think that the idea of one person making a difference means that one person can ignite a movement. They can inspire others to action. That's what my dad did with the cancer center. He had this dream and the courage and scrappiness to get it going. Most importantly, he was able to inspire others to join in his mission. It was bringing together all the different people that have worked tirelessly for the cancer center over the years that have made it the world-class facility it is today.

"If I've learned anything so far, it's that it doesn't matter who you are or what your background is. If you are willing to give of yourself, you can make a difference in your community and here at Moffitt Cancer Center."

This next generation Moffitt intends to do just that. 🍷



Photography: Jeremy Peplow

# Survivorship Runs in the Family

FOR LES MILLER, CANCER FUNDING IS PERSONAL

By Ann Miller Baker

**LES MILLER WAS ALREADY A CANCER SURVIVOR BEFORE MOFFITT CANCER CENTER OPENED IN 1986. BUT HE STILL NEEDED MOFFITT MORE THAN HE MIGHT HAVE IMAGINED.**

“I’ve been here twice. My daughter’s been here three times, my wife’s been here twice,” the former state legislator and current chair of the Hillsborough County Commission ticks through the list of his family’s Moffitt experiences. “I’ve recommended so many people to Moffitt Cancer Center for treatment of their cancer, and they’re moving on with their lives. That’s the bottom line. It saves lives.”

Miller had plenty to do with keeping Moffitt alive and growing through the 1990s, after founder H. Lee Moffitt left the state Legislature in 1984 to return to practicing law. The two met while Miller was unsuccessfully campaigning for a Florida House seat in 1982, and kept in touch through Moffitt’s epic efforts to establish Florida’s only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. Once Miller claimed a seat in the House in 1992, the fledgling center had a new ally.

“I’d done some funding work with Lee as this hospital continued to grow,” Miller recalls. “I knew what it had to do, what Lee wanted to have here. And having had had my own bouts with cancer, I wanted to make sure that Moffitt got funding after he left the Legislature. So it became my issue. I was on the Health Care Committee. It became my issue to do whatever I could to get funding for this hospital.”

It wasn’t easy. When Republicans gained control of the Legislature in 1996, Miller says partisan politics and priorities threatened to derail momentum for the center named after a former House Speaker and Democrat.

**“SO IT BECAME A BATTLE OF, ‘DO YOU ALL KNOW WHAT’S DOWN THERE? DO YOU HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THEY’RE DOING? DO YOU REALIZE HOW FAR PEOPLE COME TO GET SERVICES AT MOFFITT CANCER CENTER?’**

I invited some of the legislators to visit the hospital. Once they came down, it was an easier task to sell them on funding for the hospital.” That included a measure Miller authored to earmark a small percentage of Florida’s tobacco sales taxes for Moffitt research and patient care. “It was a battle. But we were able to accomplish it.”

## **CANCER CENTER IS AN ECONOMIC BENEFIT AND MORE**

Miller says Tampa and Hillsborough County are better for it. “A lot of people — more than 5,000 — work here. Economically, it’s an engine; employment wise, it’s an engine. Research wise, it keeps dollars coming in. It’s an economic boon for Hillsborough County.”

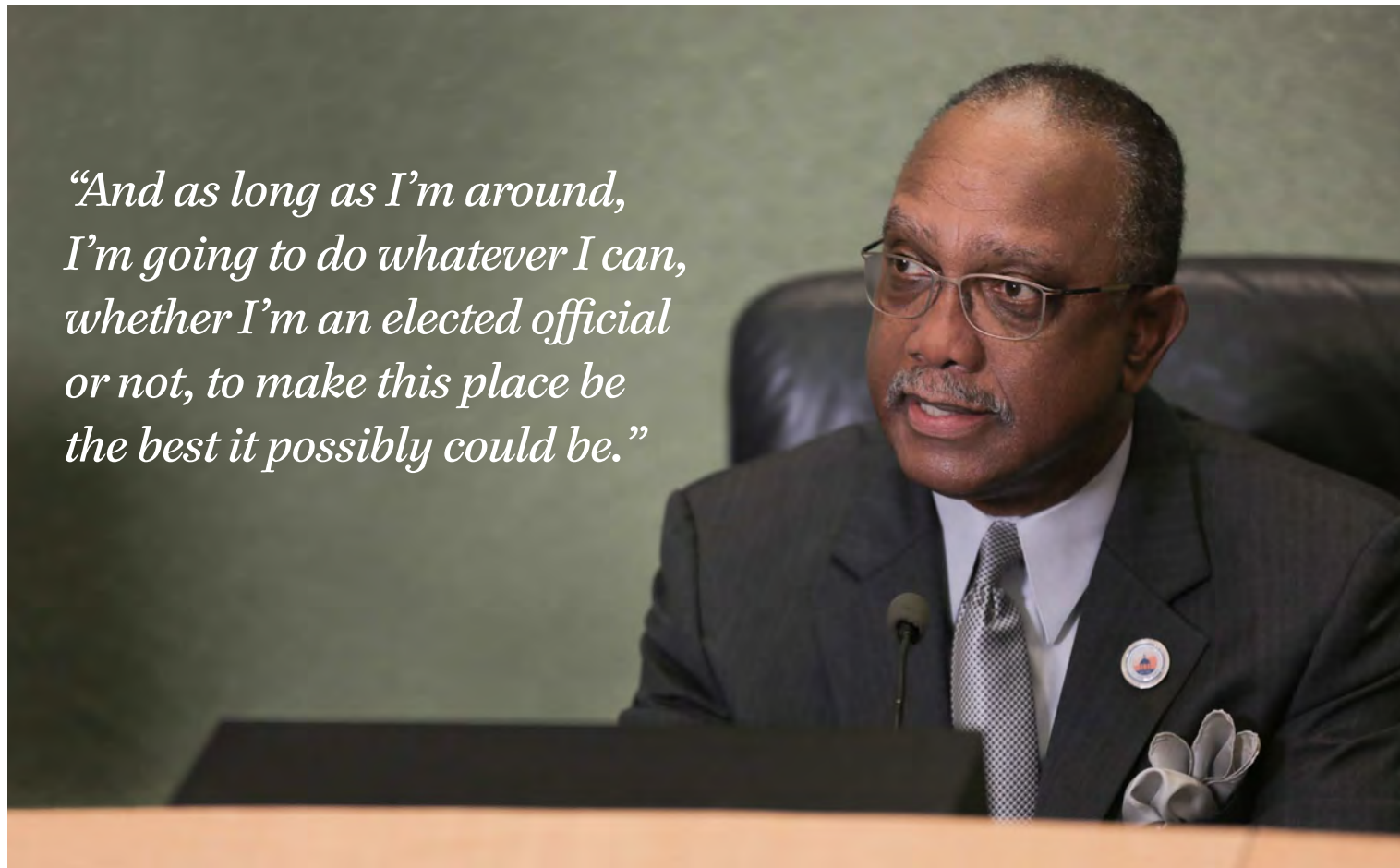
A few years later, in 2001, Miller would get an all-too-personal reminder of Moffitt’s importance. “I was leaving a committee meeting. My phone rang. It was my daughter saying, ‘Daddy, I’ve got cancer.’ ” The memory still shakes Miller. “It was a difficult time. She was 29 years old. Her mother, my first wife, died of breast cancer.”

Between the double mastectomy, chemo and radiation, Miller says, his daughter LeJeane had days when she just wanted to give up. “I told her, ‘You can’t do it. You’re 29 years old. You can overcome this thing.’ And there were many days I would say that, turn around and walk out and cry. But she overcame it and she did well.

“Two years later, my wife came down with breast cancer. No one in her family had ever had breast cancer,” Miller adds, recounting his daughter’s subsequent battle with ovarian cancer and his wife Gwen’s breast cancer recurrence without skipping a beat. “Believe me, from the first time my daughter had breast cancer to the last time my wife had it, astronomical research had gone into the way they did surgeries and treatments. It’s different. So every day, there are clinical trials or research going on at Moffitt that make a difference.”

*“I was leaving a committee meeting. My phone rang. It was my daughter saying, ‘Daddy, I’ve got cancer.’ ”*

LES MILLER  
SURVIVOR + ADVOCATE



*“And as long as I’m around, I’m going to do whatever I can, whether I’m an elected official or not, to make this place be the best it possibly could be.”*

#### MEN’S FORUM OFFERS VALUABLE HELP

Another way Moffitt and Miller make a difference is through the annual Men’s Health Forum. “Men can be dumb,” Miller chuckles, “macho, don’t want to go to the doctor to get yourself checked out. And in some instances in these tough times, they don’t have insurance. They can’t afford to go get a PSA test or get their prostate checked. For Moffitt to have that Men’s Forum so that men can come in regardless of who you are, regardless of how much money you have or what race or religion you may be, you can get information and guidance to resources. That’s important. A lot of communities and people focus on the breast cancer side. We understand that, but men have their issues also.”

For Miller, the issue became kidney cancer. In 2005, he turned to Moffitt surgeon Dr. Julio Pow-Sang for help. After an eight-hour surgery that included removal of a rib to access the diseased kidney, Miller developed ileus, the temporary absence of normal contractile movements of the intestinal wall. It’s an expected consequence of abdominal surgery that usually resolves within two to three days. But for Miller, it persisted for two weeks.

**“I thought I was a goner,” Miller recalls. “And my wife Gwen is a person that a lot of things don’t bother. Even when she went through cancer, she would come to Moffitt for treatment and go right back to chair a Tampa City Council meeting the next day.”**

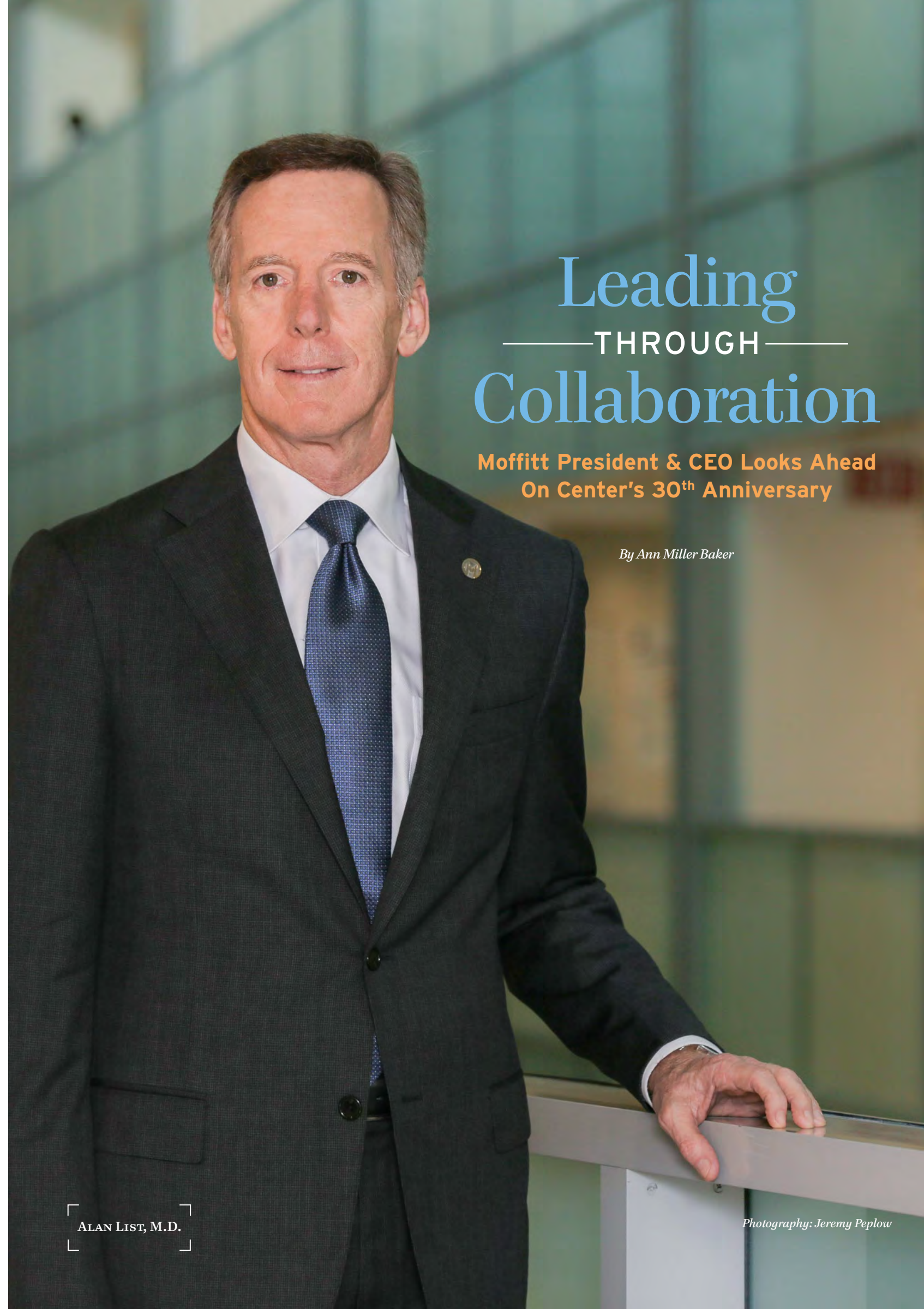
**The look on her face told me I was in deep trouble. But the doctors, the nurses and medical staff did everything they could to take care of me. They worked on me. Thirteen days later, I came out of it and was able to go home. It was tough. But I’m alive today because of Moffitt Cancer Center.”**

“And as long as I’m around, I’m going to do whatever I can, whether I’m an elected official or not, to make this place be the best it possibly could be.”

Clearly, Miller has adopted the philosophy of Moffitt’s founder: one person can make a difference.

“Well, Lee was one person who had an idea. One person took that leap and achieved it and got it done. So anyone, any one person, whether it’s funding, whether it’s volunteering out here, whatever it is, that one person can make a difference to save the lives of thousands. Thousands.

“Thirty years from now, we probably won’t recognize this place. Moffitt will probably have satellite locations, offices throughout the county, maybe outside of Hillsborough County that people can go to. And that’s going to take funding, that’s going to take a lot of hard work. That’s why I hope the Legislature continues to do what they’re doing, the federal government, our members of Congress continue to do what they’re doing, to make sure that one day we get a cure. And Moffitt’s the place to do it.”



# Leading —THROUGH— Collaboration

**Moffitt President & CEO Looks Ahead  
On Center’s 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

*By Ann Miller Baker*

ALAN LIST, M.D.

*Photography: Jeremy Peplow*



**It would be tough for President and CEO Alan List, M.D., to forget the first time Moffitt Cancer Center entered his life. It was in 1996. He and his wife, Kim, were just arriving home from the hospital with their newborn daughter McKenzie.**

“THE PHONE WAS RINGING,” DR. LIST RECALLS WITH A GRIN. “IT WAS BILL DALTON SAYING HE’S GOING TO MOFFITT.”

Dr. List and Bill S. Dalton, Ph.D., M.D., were then colleagues at The University of Arizona Cancer Center, where Dr. List was an associate professor and clinical director of the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit under Dr. Dalton, the BMT program director who was also a tenured professor in hematology/oncology at the University of Arizona College of Medicine.

Dr. Dalton was leaving to become associate center director for Clinical Investigations at Moffitt, a place Dr. List had heard of only from reading its Cancer Control Journal. But Dr. List admits his first reaction wasn’t about where Dr. Dalton was going.

“I thought, ‘Who’s going to get his basketball tickets?’ But the reality struck me as well, ‘we’re losing someone very important,’ an incredibly good friend, scientist and colleague.”

Within a few years, Dr. List was invited to speak at Moffitt. Checking out his colleague’s new home was an eye-opening trip for Dr. List, especially compared to the matrix-model cancer center at Arizona: a university-based hospital with “a cancer center that tries to bring all the different disciplines together to work for parts of days and then return to your home departments. Moffitt was quite different as an institution with a singular mission that was solely focused on cancer and nothing else. On the clinical side, there were multidisciplinary teams that were each focused on a specific disease. And on the research side, it was incredibly collaborative — something that I saw as a great opportunity to accelerate what I was trying to accomplish in the laboratory with our research.”

Dr. List is internationally known for his research involving myelodysplastic syndromes. He wrote the authoritative text on MDS, holds six U.S. patents and led the development of lenalidomide (Revlimid®), which the U.S. Food and Drug Administration fast-tracked for approval for the treatment of MDS and multiple myeloma. He continues to see patients and conduct research to this day in addition to his responsibilities as Moffitt’s president and chief executive officer. He says the qualities that attracted him to Moffitt in 2004 are integral to its ability to continue fueling innovating research that drives change in cancer care.

“We are one of the largest cancer centers in the country, and we accomplished that in just 30 years. Thirty years from now, we

will continue to be one of the leaders not just in volume, but in science — in making those big breakthroughs. And it’s because of our team approach, which positions us well to accelerate discoveries by virtue of the power of a team perspective.”

#### BRIDGING THE BEDSIDE AND THE BENCH

Importantly, Moffitt’s team approach exists not only in clinical care but also in research. It bridges the bench to the bedside, bringing clinical investigators and scientists together.

“If we are to effectively transition a discovery in the laboratory to the clinic,” Dr. List explains, “we must be able to create those trials ourselves. That means the ideas begin with our investigators who are the experts in understanding the disease, its biology and the clinical needs. We may seek pharmaceutical companies to gain access to a specific agent; however, it is our faculty who generate the protocol. We are working together to take that discovery and move it to the clinic as quickly as possible.”

One case in point is a story that Dr. List draws inspiration from to this day. While hosting Florida Gov. Rick Scott for an event focused on his plan to invest in cancer research, Moffitt invited a patient to share her story of battling metastatic melanoma. She was in her early 40s at most. Three years earlier, she had enrolled in a Moffitt investigator-initiated trial testing the effectiveness of a new drug combination to prevent drug resistance in patients with a BRAF gene mutation, a common mutation found in about half of all metastatic melanoma patients. This new approach was based on a discovery made by a scientist, Dr. Keiran Smalley, in Moffitt’s own research labs. Within 3½ years, Moffitt investigators had created and led the clinical trial, got the drugs from pharma companies and took it to the FDA for approval.

“That timetable is just unheard of,” Dr. List says. The best news? “Three years later, this young woman was free of disease and probably had beaten it. And that result came from basic research right here at Moffitt.”

Collaborating with industry may also be a resource Dr. List says Moffitt will need to maintain its momentum in the next 30 years. “We still prioritize the National Institutes of Health for grant funding, however, federal funding has been flat, and without an expectation for a significant increase in the NIH budget anytime soon. So we have worked more closely with pharma and the biotechnology sector. What they have learned over the last five years is that, rather than building their own expensive research teams with the needed breadth and depth for early development, it is cheaper and actually faster for them to work directly with academia. We began that with a close relationship with Celgene. A number of similar relationships have developed since then. That approach, of having sponsored research agreements with pharma and other biotech sectors, has been very helpful for us. It not only brings in dollars for research funding for our investigators, but it also brings a new opportunity for collaboration.”

**“If Moffitt Cancer Center wasn’t here, I cannot imagine the number of lives lost. Last year, we saw more than 56,000 different patients. Hundreds of thousands of patients have come here over the years. To be able to come to a center that can provide the cutting-edge therapy, the expertise that’s necessary, the diagnostic accuracy that we need to make sure that the first treatment is the right treatment — that makes a huge impact.”**

#### ENHANCING REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS MEANS GROWTH AHEAD

On the clinical side, Dr. List sees Moffitt’s future as a tertiary/quaternary care center. “That means we are working closely with our clinical partners throughout the state and throughout the region. They are providing quality care in the community; however, we provide the care for those complicated or tertiary types of care here. We are the resource for the more sophisticated diagnostics, for example, molecular diagnostics, or more complicated surgeries and procedures. To get there, we have to grow our partnerships and that is an immediate priority.”

Even as a regional resource, Dr. List says Moffitt will still need additional space for patient care — and for research, as well. Philanthropy through a comprehensive campaign will be crucial, as will funding from the state.

“We were created in state statute. We have a state mission,” reminds Dr. List. “They invest in us and we hope that they will continue to invest in us to help us to grow. I’d say the state of Florida has realized a big return on its investments in Moffitt in the first 30 years.”

“If Moffitt Cancer Center wasn’t here, I cannot imagine the number of lives lost. Last year, we saw more than 56,000 different patients. Hundreds of thousands of patients have come here over the years. To be able to come to a center that can provide the cutting-edge therapy, the expertise that’s necessary, the diagnostic accuracy that we need to make sure that the first treatment is the right treatment — that makes a huge impact.”

It’s an impact made possible by H. Lee Moffitt. Dr. List credits him for not only the perseverance and courage to establish this cancer center, but also for creating a patient-focused culture that has served us well for 30 years and will guide us toward the future.

“When we think about what we are trying to accomplish, it is simply putting patients first,” Dr. List says. “It’s making a difference for patients, whether through research or clinical care. That’s the motivation that everyone in this organization brings to work each day.”

# 30 Years of NURSING

FOR LORI FOX MOFFITT *is* HOME

By Michelle Bearden

**Lori Fox was just 24, fresh-faced and a young mother, when she made a decision that would change the course of her life.**

Recently transplanted to Tampa from upstate New York and a new graduate of nursing school, Fox applied to several hospitals for her first-ever job in her chosen profession.

One was located in downtown Tampa, and another in Brandon. The third, north of the city's core, hadn't even opened yet. But that was the one that intrigued her.

"I LOVED THE IDEA OF BEING A PART OF A NEW BEGINNING," FOX RECALLS. "HERE WAS THE ONLY CANCER INSTITUTE IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA, BUILT WITH CIGARETTE-TAX MONEY. MOFFITT CANCER CENTER HAD SUCH A PROMISING FUTURE WITH ITS MISSION."

It also had a pediatrics unit with classrooms and a fulltime teacher, brightly painted murals on the walls and the big playroom with toys. Fox had once aspired to be a pediatrician, so she felt this was the best fit for her.

## A NEW BEGINNING

On the day she learned she had passed her boards, she got the job offer from Moffitt.

Fox and another "green" nurse - neither had ever worked in the field yet - joined other recruits in a six-week orientation session prior to Moffitt's opening. It was intensive and at times difficult, but she loved the challenge. Her fellow rookie student dropped out after a few weeks. Not so Fox.

"I wanted to fight through and was eager to learn about oncology," she recalls.

That was 30 years ago. And Fox, one of the center's first nurses, is still with Moffitt though both she and the center have changed through those years. Moffitt has grown from 409 employees to the current 5,200. Fox has worked in three departments, raised two children as a single mom and earned a certification

in oncology. When she was diagnosed with cancer a few years ago, this is where she got treatment.

"You make choices in life and you don't know at the time if they are the right ones," says Fox. "No doubt about it, coming to Moffitt was the right one for me. This is home. This is my second family."

## BORN TO BE A NURSE

Fox's own mother had started on this same path to becoming a nurse, but had to abandon it because of finances and family obligations.

"It was a way to carry on my mom's dream," Fox says. The best part: Her mother, who died five years ago, lived to see her daughter's success in oncology nursing.

Another motivating factor: When Fox was 18, her best friend was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma. Going through that experience with her friend - who is now cancer-free - further convinced Fox that she had a calling. It just felt right.

So did working in the pediatrics unit. Fox worked there from the first day until 1994, when Moffitt transitioned pediatric cancer care to All Children's Hospital (now known as Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg).

Caring for cancer patients, from babies to teens, was everything Fox had dreamed of and more. Some of the most poignant memories in her 30-year career - both happy and sad - come from the days she spent there.

She remembers the 16-year-old cheerleader with a mass on the end of her femur. Her family was gathered around her hospital bed the night before surgery when the doctor broke the news that there was a possibility he would have to remove her leg.

"We all cried, every last one of us," she says. The next day, when the surgeon discovered it was just a benign growth, they shed tears again - of happiness.

And there was 11-year-old Michael in the final stages of leukemia. His mother had crawled in bed with him, cradling her son. Fox was at the nurse's station when Michael's aunt came up to her.

*"You make choices in life and you don't know at the time if they are the right ones. No doubt about it, coming to Moffitt was the right one for me. This is home. This is my second family."*



LORI FOX, R.N.

Photography: Jeremy Peplow



**Fox was at a hematology conference that weekend in January 2012 and couldn't get comfortable.**

"It was like a toothache in my left thigh. This aching, sharp pain that wouldn't go away," she recalls.

By the time she returned home Sunday night, she knew something was wrong. She went to a nearby emergency room. The doctor on duty made a decision that may have saved her life.

"He could have just given me pain medication and sent me home. Instead, he ordered a CT scan to see what was going on," she says.

After reading the report, he came back into the room and broke the news: She had a major mass on her left kidney pressing on a nerve. Fox was shocked at the eventual diagnosis: Renal cell carcinoma, or kidney cancer.

"It's indescribable what goes through your mind," Fox says. But being an oncology nurse gave her strength. For years, she had worked alongside cancer patients and watched their courage. Now she drew upon their example.

Because her tumor was encapsulated, surgeons were able to remove it and not require any extensive treatment. Though she suffered a few complications post-surgery, Fox was able to return to work 12 weeks later.

She couldn't wait to get back.

**SURVIVORSHIP: NAVIGATING ISSUES AND MOVING FORWARD**

"Now I can truly relate to what they're going through," she says. "It's possible to go back to doing all the things you love. It's my turn to be the example."

*"This is my destiny. I'm just where I should be."*

She encourages patients to take advantage of Moffitt's Survivorship Clinic, opened in 2009 to help navigate issues related to life after cancer. And she tells them how she got through her experience by embracing the support of family, her tight-knit circle of colleagues and friends.

What next for her life? Plenty, says Fox, who is now cancer-free.

Her new motto? "If there's an opportunity to go, I'm going," she says. A cruise to Spain, Italy and Greece is planned for this fall.

The rewards for choosing oncology nursing, and in particular, Moffitt, come to her every day. Like the patient who told her, "Thank you for coming to work today. You're keeping me alive." She believes she is one lucky woman.

"This is my destiny," Fox says. "I'm just where I should be." 🍷

"Lori, I think you need to come in," she said, a devastating look in her eyes.

Fox entered the room. Michael had died and his mother was sleeping, still hold him tightly. She touched the mother's shoulder ever so slightly to wake her.

"That's part of this job. The highs, the lows. You have to learn to leave it at the hospital or it will tear you up," Fox says.

**THRIVING THROUGH CHANGE**

As in most professions, Fox has had to learn new technology and embrace continuing education. She's weathered change, too. When the pediatrics unit closed, she took a position with Moffitt's infusion center. Last year, she accepted the clinical lead position in the McKinley Outpatient Center blood draw unit.

"We're the first stop for most patients, so I get to see them as they start their day. It's my opportunity to give them some positivity."

There's no better person for that role, says fellow Moffitt nurse Vicki Dugger. The two women have been friends since meeting at the center more than two decades ago.

"If I was a patient, Lori is the nurse I would want on my team," Dugger says. "She exemplifies what an awesome oncology nurse should be."

Fox's kind nature extends to colleagues as well. When Dugger's daughter died at 31, Fox was right there for her- to give her a hug, a listening ear or whatever the grieving mother needed.

There's a reason Fox is so compassionate. She understands what it's like to be on the other side. Like many of her patients, she's a survivor, too.



JULIO POW-SANG, M.D.

Photography: Ray Reyes

# A COURAGEOUS ENDEAVOR

## From Peru To Mexico To Moffitt

By Michelle Bearden

## GROWING UP IN LIMA, PERU, JULIO POW-SANG, M.D., NEVER WRESTLED WITH HIS CAREER ASPIRATIONS.

From the time he was a youngster, he always knew he would be a urologic oncologist. Just like his father, a man he so admires.

He saw how his dad cared not only for patients, but their families as well. That kind and thoughtful manner was something Dr. Pow-Sang vowed to emulate when he, too, became a physician.

“He’s my hero,” says Dr. Pow-Sang, chair of the Genitourinary Oncology Department at Moffitt Cancer Center. “He’s been my guiding light all my life. Not just in the profession, but how to conduct myself personally.”



Photography: Ray Reyes

Had it all gone according to plan, Dr. Pow-Sang, the oldest of 10 children, would have joined his father’s practice in Lima after completing his medical studies in Mexico and the United States. That would have been the natural progression.

Then came the call in 1988 from a former professor at the University of Miami, where he did his residency.

“He told me about a new cancer center called Moffitt in Tampa. I never heard of it, so I had to look it up,” he recalls. “Back then, the only names you heard of were MD Anderson and Sloan-Kettering.”

### A RISKY DECISION IS BASED ON CONFIDENCE

“It all intrigued me,” Dr. Pow-Sang says. “To be part of something from the beginning, to grow along with it. It was a big idea to think you could start from ground zero and build something so important.”

It took courage for Dr. Pow-Sang to leave his close-knit family behind in South America and establish roots in a new country, far from the life he had once imagined. And coming to a cancer center that was hardly established with no national reputation was risky.

But he had confidence in Moffitt’s mission. Fast-forward nearly three decades, and the trajectory of Dr. Pow-Sang’s career has risen along with the cancer center’s growth.

Moffitt has developed an interdisciplinary approach to medicine, and it has an international program geared toward welcoming foreign patients and providing assistance to those with language and cultural barriers. Most certainly, Moffitt has exceeded Dr. Pow-Sang’s vision as a research institution.

Among his own accomplishments: Getting named chief of surgery and founder of the robotics program, working as a principal investigator for several clinical trials in genitourinary cancer and serving as a member of the prostate cancer guidelines panel for the National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Along the way, he also earned his master’s in business administration from the University of South Florida. And he’s been named one of the Best Doctors in America since 1998.

On a personal level, Dr. Pow-Sang credits the center for finding his soulmate. He says it was “love at first sight” when he met Kathy, a West Virginia native working as a certified urology technician in charge of urodynamics. They married and adopted a baby girl from Peru, now an artsy 19-year-old studying cosmetology.

“A good decision, in so many ways, he says of choosing Moffitt. He can’t really explain it, but a fascination with urology runs in the Pow-Sang family.

There’s him and his father, along with a sister and brother who practice the specialty. Even a brother-in-law left a successful career in insurance to become a urologist.

The biggest challenge Dr. Pow-Sang sees in his field? Getting men to talk about this aspect of their health – and taking action on it by getting information regarding the risk and benefits of screening that could lead to early detection of life-threatening cancers.

Some 20,000 to 30,000 men die each year from prostate cancer. It’s the second-leading cause of death among men. He is seeing more awareness and discussion, but “not enough” among ethnic groups like Hispanics and African-Americans.

That’s why he takes part in Moffitt’s annual Men’s Health Forum at University of South Florida, a bi-lingual event that includes educating men about the risks and benefits of screenings, health-education workshops, fitness demonstrations and more. The more at ease men can be discussing health concerns, “the more lives will be saved. Plain and simple,” Dr. Pow-Sang says.

The good news is that prostate cancer, which is typically slow growing, is easily treatable when indicated if detected early.

“In some situations, the treatment can cause more problems and side effects than the actual cancer,” Dr. Pow-Sang says. “So we look at every case individually. I urge my patients to be aware and educated.”

Tampa restaurateur Richard Gonzmart is an example of that kind of patient.

In 2005, a friend asked Gonzmart to be part of the board of the Advanced Prostate Cancer Collaboration. He agreed. Not only because of the good work it did, but for personal reasons; his grandfather died of prostate cancer at age 70, and his father died of pancreatic cancer at age 72.

Through his meetings on the board, he mentioned to Dr. Pow-Sang that his doctor didn’t believe in having an annual PSA testing. Dr. Pow-Sang said that was wrong, given Gonzmart’s family history. So Gonzmart got a new doctor and began twice yearly checkups. After a slight spike in the level in 2013, Dr. Pow-Sang did a biopsy.

And that’s when Gonzmart learned he had prostate cancer. At first, like anyone else, he was shocked. Dr. Pow-Sang quickly put his fears to rest.

“He gave me such confidence that everything would be ok,” Gonzmart recalls. They spoke in detail about possible procedures. “I just appreciated his sincerity, him being compassionate and comforting to my wife, and letting her know I would be ok.”

Though Dr. Pow-Sang told Gonzmart he had other options

besides Moffitt to pursue treatment, he never considered it.

“I had so much confidence in him that I didn’t even contemplate another facility,” he says.

Today, Gonzmart is cancer-free. He’s become a tireless spokesman for regular screenings and sponsors two annual races that raise funds for APCC and research. He credits early detection and prompt treatment for his full recovery.

Dr. Pow-Sang wants to see a lot more success stories like that.

“New tests are coming out. People like Richard are speaking out. It’s an exciting field to be in, with all the breakthroughs we’re seeing,” he says.

### ZEST FOR LIFE; EVER LEARNING

Dr. Pow-Sang’s passion is not limited to medicine, thanks to his parents instilling a love of education and humanities in their children as well. For the last 10 years, he’s taken online courses in journalism and writing, with dreams of writing science books one day. One of his favorite authors is Siddhartha Mukherjee, an Indian-born American physician and oncologist who wrote “The Emperor of All Maladies” and “The Gene: An Intimate History.”

Dr. Pow-Sang is also fluent in English, Spanish and French, and speaks conversational Spanish and Italian. Knowing other languages gives him a better understanding of different cultures and their perspective in the global picture.

“The world is a big boat and we’re all in this together,” Dr. Pow-Sang says. It’s a lesson he learned at home: His father is of Chinese and Peruvian descent, and his mother is Peruvian and Spanish.

*“I’m like a kid walking into Disneyland when I walk through those doors. This place is magic to me and I’m so happy to be part of it.”*

His hero continues to inspire him. Dr. Pow-Sang’s father, also named Julio, is 89 and shows no signs of slowing down. He cooks, composes music and plays the violin. Now spending much time in the U.S., he still sees the occasional patient when back in Peru.

That zest for life is something Dr. Pow-Sang has obviously inherited.

“Every day I go to work at Moffitt is like a new experience,” he says. “I can’t pick a favorite moment or story because there are so many of them. I’m like a kid walking into Disneyland when I walk through those doors. This place is magic to me and I’m so happy to be part of it.”

JACKIE SMITH  
SURVIVOR + ADVOCATE

# FROM CANCER TO CAPITOL HILL

Survivorship Fosters Passion  
*for Advocacy*

*By Ann Miller Baker*

Photography: Jeremy Peplow

# WHAT GOOD COULD EVER COME FROM A CANCER DIAGNOSIS?

Spend awhile talking with Jackie Smith, and you begin to see what's possible.

Smith sees her future in research and advocacy, making life better for fellow cancer survivors through her participation in events like Vice President Joe Biden's recent Cancer Moonshot Summit and her work as co-chair of the District of Columbia Cancer Action Partnership Survivorship Committee.

She credits Moffitt Cancer Center with not only saving her life, but also shaping its trajectory.

She didn't always dream of making this her life's work. At first, she recalls, "I battled it." An undergraduate senior in child and family studies at Syracuse University, she noticed a lump in her bikini line that wouldn't go away. Repeated trips to a local health center all yielded the same advice: It's nothing to worry about. "And I believed it," she recalls, "because at 21, who wouldn't want to believe that you're healthy?"

Her family physician back home near Orlando sent her to a surgical oncologist with the reassurance that taking a lymph node biopsy was just a precaution. Days later when Smith returned for the pathology report, she could tell from the grave look on his face that the news would be bad.

## IT WAS DEVASTATING — STAGE III (ADVANCED) MELANOMA.

"The first thing that went through my mind," she chuckles, "was I am not a fair-skinned, middle-aged Caucasian woman!" Smith had part of her risk assessment right. Melanoma is over 20 times more common in whites than blacks, according to the American Cancer Society. But surprisingly, it is one of the most common cancers in young adults (ages 20 to 39). The most sobering statistic: In 2002, when Smith was diagnosed, the five-year survival rate for stage III melanoma was 40 percent.

*"All my friends were beginning their lives. It was pretty devastating to think about putting my life on hold, knowing I might never be able to resume it."*

The glimmer of hope at that point, Smith says, was that further scans showed no signs of cancer elsewhere. And that led to choices. "I could either have a rather aggressive surgery and treatment," after which, the surgeon predicted, "you probably



Jackie Smith discusses cancer survivorship issues with Lara Hopkins, deputy chief of staff for Congresswoman Kathy Castor.

will never be able to accomplish any of those goals you have. Or we could just monitor it, since I was otherwise healthy. So we made the choice to just monitor it.

"I went back to my life and I really didn't think about cancer too much. I just moved forward."

Fast-forward to 2006. Smith was back at Syracuse starting a graduate program when "cancer reared its ugly face again," much like the movie "Groundhog Day." Another lump. More misguided reassurance from the local health center. Another surgeon doing another biopsy. Days before winter break, Smith got the pathology report: more melanoma cells. Her anxious mother, Barbara, flew up from Florida to offer support. "I'll never forget the look on her face when I picked her up from the airport — this fear and sadness," she recalls. "I think that hurt even more than knowing that I had to go through this journey."

There would be no avoiding surgery now. Lymph nodes near the groin would have to be removed along with any cancerous tissue, a procedure best handled by a specialist. But which one and where? Smith's search led to a New York specialist with a less drastic surgical approach. "He told me, 'If you were my daughter, I'd take you to Moffitt Cancer Center.'"

## OPEN TO HOPE AT MOFFITT

"I had never heard of Moffitt Cancer Center," says Smith. "No clue what it was, where it was. When I looked it up, somehow I found Dr. Sondak's email."

Vernon Sondak, M.D., leads Moffitt's Cutaneous Oncology Department and is a pioneering melanoma surgeon and clinical researcher.

Dr. Sondak answered Smith's first email, and four more before her initial visit. "I'm surprised he hasn't blocked my email," she smiles. "He's much more than just a doctor to me."

From her first walk through Moffitt's doors, Smith says she felt warmth and caring unlike the academic medical center that delivered her first diagnosis. And Dr. Sondak was honest while leaving the door open to hope.

"I remember my mother asked him, 'Is my daughter going to die?' He said, 'I can't tell you when your daughter will die. But I can tell you if she doesn't have surgery, it's more than likely that cancer will kill her.' And I appreciated that. You don't have to give someone false hope. But you can let people be hopeful."

## THE BEST HOPE, DR. SONDAK RECOMMENDED, MIGHT BE IN A NEW CLINICAL TRIAL.

"When we first saw Jackie," Dr. Sondak recalls, "the only commercially available treatment was high-dose interferon, which routinely interfered with a patient's ability to hold a job or, like Jackie, to go to graduate school." However, researchers in Europe were studying a new modified version of the drug called pegylated interferon, administered once weekly (versus daily or three times a week for standard interferon) with potentially less debilitating side effects. "Moffitt was approached to participate in a U.S. clinical trial that would generate some of the specific blood level data needed for FDA approval. Jackie was probably the third or fourth patient in the country to be part of this trial."

Despite previous misgivings about clinical trials, Smith now considers herself fortunate to have qualified for this one. "I thought the trial was harsh enough. I can't even imagine what other melanoma survivors experienced on the standard course of interferon." Thanks to the courage of trial participants like her, others have a choice. Because of what researchers learned from that and other clinical trials, in 2011 the FDA approved pegylated interferon

as an alternative to the high-dose regimen.

Dr. Sondak says it's important such trials include patients like Smith, who being African-American is an outlier from the stereotypical blue-eyed, light-skinned melanoma patient. "If we don't do trials broadly representative of the people who'll be receiving a drug once it's FDA approved, we are setting up society for problems," Dr. Sondak notes. "Drugs may be metabolized differently in different ethnic groups. For example, we're seeing that people of Japanese heritage may experience more or different side effects than participants in clinical trials done with a largely Caucasian patient population. We need to test these agents in the people who are eventually going to need them."

Moffitt is highly committed to encouraging and studying diversity in clinical trial participation. And Smith wound up sharing her experience in a breakout session of Vice President Biden's Cancer Moonshot Summit at Howard University on June 28, 2016.

"I was surrounded by pharmaceutical executives, all focused on getting more representation in clinical trials. I think that, while there's definitely a lack of representation of people of color, all people have these fears in general. They were very interested

*“I do have a dream that one day we will live in a world where if you receive a diagnosis of cancer, people don’t automatically wonder if you’ve made your final arrangements.”*

to hear what I had to say and excited to know that I’m one of those people that benefited from a trial.”

Through surgery, clinical trial and subsequent radiation treatments, Smith says her Moffitt care team kept her focused on her future. “Everyone knew that I was in graduate school. So they kept saying, ‘We need to make sure you finish what you started.’”

Much like Smith herself, what she’d started has been changed by her cancer journey. “When I went into graduate school, I had no plans of focusing on any health-related issues. I had a criminal justice focus, in mandatory minimum sentencing laws,” she says. But the sociology dissertation she’ll be defending this November is “More Than Pink Ribbons: An Exploration into the Experience of Stage III Melanoma Survivors.” Smith’s new passion for survivorship research and advocacy is a product of relationships built while at Moffitt.

“To see journal articles dealing with health issues in my name, it’s kind of startling at times,” she says with a laugh. “I look in the mirror and I’m like, ‘Who are you?’” Perhaps, she says, a person with an important viewpoint to contribute. “There are all these people doing research, all these policymakers, but none of them really know what cancer survivors need. They haven’t experienced it. It makes my heart flutter a little knowing that I have somewhat of an ‘insider perspective’ on this field.”

While she currently shows no signs of disease, Smith recalls an acquaintance saying, “‘Cancer is the shadow that always follows you.’ And that makes me so angry! But it’s a very valid statement. Anytime there is something wrong, there’s always the chance that the cancer is back.

“You can plan for life, and then life actually begins to happen. That’s one of the things I’ve learned through this journey. If you wake up today, it can still get better.”

Like Moffitt Cancer Center on this 30th anniversary, Smith has high hopes for the future.

**“Thirty years from now, I hope that I’ll have a family. I would hope I’ve played a strong part in shaping the ways we handle cancer survivorship. I’ll be honest; I would like to have had some sort of position at Moffitt because it’s been such a critical part of my life.**

**“If there were no Moffitt, I don’t know that I’d be here today. Because of you, I am here!”**

For now, “here” is Washington, D.C. Visiting the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial just blocks from where a quarter of a million people gathered in August 1963 to hear King’s immortal “I Have a Dream” speech, Smith shares her own courageous new dream.



“I do have a dream that one day we will live in a world where if you receive a diagnosis of cancer, people don’t automatically wonder if you’ve made your final arrangements. That we will begin to know that it’s not a terminal disease anymore. It really is something that’s chronic and that we can manage, or that we even have a cure for.”

That’s a dream both Smith and Moffitt Cancer Center vow to help make a reality. 🌱

# COACHING TEAM SCIENCE

## Cancer Research Aims For The Future

*By Ann Miller Baker*



*Photography: Jeremy Peplow*

TOM SELLERS, PH.D., M.P.H.

*“We take away that fear that somebody is going to steal your ideas because Moffitt recognizes team science. Everybody gets credit for the role that they play.”*



## SO WHERE DOES HE DRAW INSPIRATION FOR MOFFITT'S FUTURE PATH? FROM HOCKEY LEGEND WAYNE GRETZKY, OF COURSE.

### TOM SELLERS IS A MAN OF MANY INTERESTS.

The cancer center's executive vice president and center director is an accomplished investigator with experience that's varied to say the least: undergraduate studies in nutrition, Ph.D. in epidemiology, postdoc training in genetics, a master's in Public Health.

So where does he draw inspiration for Moffitt's future path?

From hockey legend Wayne Gretzky, of course.

“The Great One,” as most hockey fans know him, once told a reporter his success came not from skating to where the puck was — but to where it was going.

“That's what we really need to do in science,” says Thomas A. Sellers, Ph.D., M.P.H. “When you're in the trenches, focused on that experiment or that manuscript or the next grant, it's hard to look at the horizon and see, where is the puck going in science? But that's something that we consciously do here at Moffitt. We try to anticipate, where's the field going? What expertise do we need to bring in?”

Like a coach touting his team's prospects, Dr. Sellers says Moffitt is uniquely positioned to lead cancer research in its next 30 years, thanks in large part to its longstanding commitments to

both a multidisciplinary approach to care and a team science approach to research.

“We're recruiting laboratory investigators, basic scientists, from the very best labs all over the country,” says Dr. Sellers. That's possible because Moffitt offers “an environment where they can work with our surgeons, with our medical oncologists, with the imaging experts. And therefore, the research that they're doing generates results that can be translated for patient benefit. That happens because of a respect and a commitment between scientists and clinicians.” It's something Dr. Sellers says few institutions have fostered as well as Moffitt.

“Our scientists are not interested in doing research solely for the sake of generating publications, knowledge and understanding,” he adds. “They want to do research that has impact. And that's possible because of the culture that we have and our commitment to translating research from the bench to the bedside.”

Creating a culture of cooperation and camaraderie is an essential element of successful team science, according to Dr. Sellers. The team concept will be critical to cancer research moving forward because of the need for expertise in rapidly evolving, disparate fields of study.

### NO “ME” IN TEAM

“It's almost paradoxical. When people go through their scientific training, they're encouraged to focus and be the world's expert in this one little area,” he observes. “But the technologies and the expertise are getting so specialized. The days where one person can be the know all and end all are long gone. So, it requires that we all as team members against cancer learn other languages. From the basic scientist to a clinician or someone who studies imaging, we all have our jargon. We need to start with, ‘All right, let's speak English.’ Don't use the language of your scientific discipline that only 10 other people on the planet understand. That will accelerate the progress.”

Especially, notes Dr. Sellers, because team members now are routinely needed from fields of study not previously associated with cancer research, like mathematical modeling and information technology.

“Who would have thought that you need computer science?” he muses. “And yet we're generating these massive data sets because of the technologies that we have. Now, we're limited only by our ability to interrogate the data that we're generating. That means that you better have different people at the table who can provide technical solutions to understanding the data that are being generated.”

“Recognizing team science is actually in our promotion and tenure guidelines now. We have literally done a 180 from the tradition of science, based on what can you point to as your singular role. We take away that fear that somebody is going to steal your ideas because Moffitt recognizes team science. Everybody gets credit for the role that they play. If you're contributing your expertise in a way that enabled the outcome, it doesn't matter where you fall in the authorship order. And this is not a passing fancy.”

Nor, says Dr. Sellers, is it a new idea at Moffitt.

“It had been in existence almost from day one. When the hospital opened the doors, this concept of providing multidisciplinary care meant that as scientists were hired, they came into this environment where that's the way everybody worked.”

When Moffitt's doors opened back in 1986, Dr. Sellers was at Tulane University, working on his Ph.D. dissertation in epidemiology. Cancer research had never even entered his mind. His diverse interests in nutrition, epidemiology, genetics and public health were a natural progression that led to a research post at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, where he would become the cancer center's deputy director. It was in this post, as part of a review committee for the National Cancer Institute, when Dr. Sellers first crossed paths with Moffitt — “a fledgling cancer center that I had never heard of before.”

“I was on the site visit team for Moffitt's NCI Comprehensive Care Center application review in 2000. And I remember looking around, admiring the tenacity and the spirit. It was a small center,

much smaller than it is now. But you could see the conviction, the determination and that there were some very talented people already here. I remember wondering, is this a place where I might be some day? This is exciting, a center that's on the rise. It would not be a step up from Mayo. But, I thought, Moffitt's going to be better than Mayo someday. I wasn't sure how long it would take. But I was convinced it would happen. I've only been here 13 years, and it's hard to believe the rate of growth and accomplishment in that span of time.”

### HOW DID MOFFITT DO IT?

As Moffitt celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the measures of respect are numerous. Renewed as an NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center with a five-year extension of its core grant, Moffitt also was ranked the No. 6 cancer hospital in the nation based on [U.S. News and World Report](#).

“It's no coincidence that our faculty, our doctors are routinely being recruited to go start or lead cancer centers elsewhere,” notes Dr. Sellers. “Those centers want to learn, how did Moffitt do it?”

Moffitt's alliances with industry in recent years are accelerating the translation of research findings from bench to bedside. Since 2004, Moffitt's Office of Innovation and Industry Alliances is credited with 66 U.S. patents issued and 160 license agreements executed, as well as approximately \$30 million in industry alliances funding for Moffitt in just the past 18 months.

*“We're anxious to make a difference.”*

Industry representatives tell Dr. Sellers that Moffitt is their preferred partner. “They say academic institutions can move slowly. Moffitt's pace is somewhere between academic and industry pace. I think it's our sense of urgency to accomplish our mission — a trait that makes me proud of this organization. We're anxious to make a difference.”

Much, Dr. Sellers says, like our founder H. Lee Moffitt. “He really set the bar in terms of courage and tenacity. If anyone told him it couldn't be done, that just doubled his efforts. He knew that Florida needed a comprehensive cancer center. He went to the NCI and told them that he was going to build one in Florida, and they laughed. They aren't laughing now.”

As for what Moffitt will be in another 30 years, Dr. Sellers likes to imagine it will be “a museum, where people will come to learn about this disease called cancer that they'd read about in textbooks, but we are the place that erased it.”

“Moffitt is a freestanding hospital solely focused on cancer care and research,” Dr. Sellers says. “With support from the state and our community, we have a constellation of resources — an environment, commitment and will — that makes this more than an opportunity. It's our responsibility to do things that other centers simply can't do. So we better get it done.”



# Dr. Julie Djeu, *TRAILBLAZER*

Moffitt's First Basic Research Scientist  
Describes 30 Years Of Progress

By Janan Talafer

Julie Djeu, Ph.D., recalls the day in 1992 that she received a phone calling recruiting her to be the first research scientist at Moffitt Cancer Center.

"I was working at the University of South Florida College of Medicine, where I had been teaching for about eight years," said Dr. Djeu. "I got a call from the chairman of pathology at Moffitt. He told me the cancer center had four labs and I could have all of them.

"It caught me by surprise," said Dr. Djeu. "I had been so busy at USF that I hadn't even realized there was a new cancer center next door. I said, 'No I'm not interested. I don't need four labs in the hospital.'"

Luckily for Moffitt Cancer Center, its incoming director wouldn't take "no" that easily. Dr. Djeu got a personal phone call before he'd even moved into his office. Moffitt was putting together a top-notch team, and she was his first recruit.

## EARLY RESEARCH LAYS GROUNDWORK FOR IMMUNOTHERAPY

A respected immunologist, Dr. Djeu trained at the National Cancer Institute and built the Cytokine Biology Section of the Food and Drug Administration in Bethesda, Md. While there, she had done landmark work in unlocking some of the secrets of the body's immune system, helping lay the foundation for the future growth of immunotherapy as a novel treatment for cancer.



JULIE DJEU, PH.D.

Photography: Ray Reyes

*“When I first arrived, everyone I knew told me it was the most foolish thing to think that we could take a little hospital and build a cancer center out of it.*

*I just smiled and said let us see about that.”*

“I became the first scientist to look at immunomodulators in cancer,” said Dr. Djeu. “I set many of the guidelines at FDA that are still in existence today.” Among her accomplishments: helping identify the role of natural killer (NK) cells in activating the immune system to kill tumor cells. She also did pioneering work with interferon, a class of proteins that also trigger the immune system.

Within a half hour of that initial phone call about the Moffitt position, Dr. Djeu had changed her mind. “I was charmed into joining to build the best cancer center in the country,” said Dr. Djeu. “And we worked really hard to put together the program here.”

Today Moffitt’s research program is highly respected. There are more than 150 research scientists, five research programs, a respected post-doctoral fellowship program, graduate training in cancer biology and cutting-edge work being done in basic, translational, clinical and population science research.

But 30 years ago, that wasn’t the case. A world-class research program at Moffitt was still a far-in-the-future goal.

“When I first arrived, everyone I knew told me it was the most foolish thing to think that we could take a little hospital and build a cancer center out of it,” said Dr. Djeu. “I just smiled and said let us see about that.” A dedicated scientist with a passion for her work, Dr. Djeu’s courage and perseverance in the face of obstacles is evident. “I love a challenge,” she admits.

She realized that Moffitt’s small size might offer an advantage over a larger, better established institution. “I thought there was a real opportunity for us to be able to try something new,” said Dr. Djeu.

She was also impressed with the sense of duty that she saw from the staff. “I felt the people here at Moffitt were very passionate about making it one of the top places in the country. Everyone from the clinicians and the nurses to the housekeepers was dedicated to patient care.”

#### **YOUNGEST CANCER CENTER EARNS NCI COMPREHENSIVE STATUS**

That level of commitment paid off. By 1998, Moffitt had achieved a significant milestone – National Cancer Institute designation. It was an amazing achievement in a short period of time. The moment when she heard the good news is one of the most memorable moments in Dr. Djeu’s 24-year career at Moffitt.

“We were in this big open hall in the former Moffitt Research Building,” says Dr. Djeu. “The center director was waving what we called the pink sheet and saying, ‘Guess what? We’ve done it!’ We were so proud. We still hold the record of establishing NCI designation in the shortest amount of time.”

Just three years later, Moffitt broke another record when the center’s programs in patient care, research and cancer prevention met NCI approval, giving the organization recognition as an NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. Today, 15 years later, Moffitt is still the only comprehensive cancer center based in Florida.

As the former chair of the Immunology Department, Dr. Djeu says her career at Moffitt has been an incredible journey. What sets Moffitt apart, she says, is the cancer center’s focus on integrating clinical, translational, population science and basic science research activities to fast-track discoveries in the lab to the patient’s bedside.

“Right from the start, we knew we wanted to develop a molecularly-based research program that would be immediately translational,” said Dr. Djeu. “We felt that whatever we discovered must go into improving patient care rather than just into a research paper that you never hear about again.”

#### **OPPORTUNE CAREER CHOICE**

Dr. Djeu says the decision to dedicate her life’s work to immunology was really a matter of being in the right place at the right time. “Life is really serendipitous,” she said. “It’s not always what you choose, but what comes to you and I was really good at grabbing everything that came my way and making the best of it.”

While she was a doctoral student at George Washington University, a colleague suggested that she instead apply to the NCI to complete her dissertation. “I sent my CV to the NCI, and a physician-scientist immediately called me,” said Dr. Djeu. “He was a tumor immunologist and within six months of working with him we discovered natural killer cells. The rest is pretty much what I’ve been working on ever since.”

Over the decades, the progress made in immunology research has been nothing short of dramatic. Major breakthroughs in the ability to clone genes, the discovery of T cells and natural killer cells, and a better understanding of how the immune system recognizes cancer cells have led to novel new therapies.



Photography: Ray Reyes

More recently, said Dr. Djeu, new awareness of how cancer cells “blind” the immune system and avoid detection has led to breakthrough drug discoveries with a new class of therapeutic agents called checkpoint inhibitors.

And in August 2016, Moffitt was named one of only five institutions that make up the Production Assistance for Cellular Therapies (PACT) group for the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute within the National Institutes of Health. This exclusive group includes the only NHLBI-approved facilities to produce cell-based therapies for scientific research.

Cell-based therapies are treatment in which living cells are injected into a patient. Immunotherapy using T cells to fight cancer cells is an example of this. As part of the NHLBI PACT group, Moffitt will manufacture human cells that will be used to help develop early-stage clinical trials to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of new therapies.

#### **PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF PHYSICIAN-SCIENTISTS**

As the current associate center director for Education and Training, Dr. Djeu oversees Moffitt’s many programs focused on training the next generation of cancer researchers. That includes a postdoctoral fellowship program, a cancer biology Ph.D. program, and several programs for undergraduate and high school students.

*“We felt that whatever we discovered must go into improving patient care rather than just into a research paper that you never hear about again.”*

Dr. Djeu is proud of the programs’ many success stories. She points to the more than 50 graduates of the cancer biology doctoral program, several of whom are now faculty members at such prestigious organizations as Johns Hopkins University, MD Anderson Cancer Center, and the University of Nebraska, helping spreading Moffitt’s legacy across the country.

The future of cancer research at Moffitt continues to be bright, she says. “Research is not so much changing as it is evolving,” said Dr. Djeu. “As new technologies come to the forefront, we need to embrace them. The next generation of physician-scientists will have amazing tools to work with that will move us ever closer to the cure for many types of cancers.”

# Why? What if? Why not?

## KEY QUESTIONS FORM BASIS FOR INVENTION

By Ann Miller Baker

One of the newest members of the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame, Bill S. Dalton, Ph.D., M.D., says he's honored on more than his own behalf.

“My science is team science, teams of people,” says the founder and CEO of Moffitt’s for-profit subsidiary M2Gen® and director of The DeBartolo Family Personalized Medicine Institute at Moffitt. “While I’m getting this award, I really feel like I’m representing teams, and I’m honored and humbled to do that.”

Dr. Dalton, Moffitt’s former president and CEO, holds 10 U.S. patents and is regarded as a health policy expert in cancer research. The Florida Inventors Hall of Fame celebrates achievements that advance quality of life for Floridians, but Dr. Dalton is recognized for revolutionizing developments in cancer treatment with a global impact: the creation of Total Cancer Care®, a unique protocol, or study, aimed at accelerating cancer research to advance the discovery of new personalized cancer therapies. It is a protocol being used by more than a dozen institutions nationwide.

### INNOVATION REQUIRES RISK

“Moffitt embodies the concept of team science,” says Dr. Dalton. And the scientist in him developed long ago. “Even as a kid, I loved playing with toys that I could take apart and then try to put together again, radios and things like that. My folks tell me my favorite question was ‘Why?’ As a scientist, that’s your primary question. ‘Why is this?’ When you become an inventor, you start thinking, ‘What if?’ And that transition to ‘What if we were to do this?’ also means you have to take a little risk. If you’re going to modify or innovate, then there’s probably some risk to it.”

Trained as a Ph.D. in pharmacology and touched by his medical oncology rotation as an intern, Dr. Dalton has devoted a lifetime of research to drug resistance and cancer. More than a decade ago at Moffitt, he saw the opportunity to move from science to innovation in cancer drug resistance.

“The ‘why’ started with why are some people doing well and others not? What’s going on here? The disease looks the same, but this person did very well and this one didn’t. So what if we were to study patients, learn from each individual — the one that did well and the one that didn’t — and compare them. That’s the core of Total Cancer Care. What is happening between populations that look similar in one respect but clearly aren’t because they’re not responding similarly? If we want everybody in the category of responder, we can’t treat everybody the same way.”

From that “what if?” the Total Cancer Care Protocol was born. Dr. Dalton hastens to add that many contributed to the process, improving upon the initial idea. “This is a complete effort of teamwork and committed individuals, from every person here, every researcher, clinician and frankly even the board.”

### ORIEN AVATAR™ RESEARCH PROGRAM

Thirteen cancer care institutions across the nation are now part of the Oncology Research Information Exchange Network, or ORIEN® which all use the Total Cancer Care Protocol, impacting the lives of over 130,000 patients and creating one of the largest biorepositories and data warehouses in the United States dedicated to the improvement of personalized medicine. “M2Gen essentially is the engine, if you will, behind ORIEN to operationalize this concept of Total Cancer Care throughout the nation.”

It’s also the means of delivering the ORIEN Avatar™ Research Program. As its name implies, Avatar uses a model to develop the ability to predict and shape a cancer patient’s treatment response. In this case, the avatar or model is drawn from the experiences of similar patients. “We look at clinical history. We look at the molecular aspects of the tumor. We can say this patient looks most similar to this group of patients. And this is what’s happening to that group, what’s working and what’s not working.” In this way, Dr. Dalton explains, medicine moves from reactive to anticipatory. “If you’ve been diagnosed with cancer, we don’t want to wait for you to develop a problem. Let’s be proactive. The more we can prevent, the better for the patient.”

“If you’re going to modify or innovate, then there’s probably some risk to it.”

BILL S. DALTON, PH.D., M.D.

Photography: Ray Reyes

“WE HAVE SOMETHING INCREDIBLE TO OFFER, BUT IT NEEDS TO CONTINUOUSLY BE IMPROVED UPON. WE HAVE A SAYING: BE PROUD BUT NOT SATISFIED.”

Patients are Dr. Dalton’s inspiration. They are the heart of what sets Total Cancer Care and ORIEN apart from other similar efforts, “asking patients if we can follow them throughout their lifetime to learn. This requires a patient’s consent to donate their data and their clinical history, as well as tissue, for us to study, and to allow us to re-contact them if we find something of benefit. We stay engaged with these patients throughout their life with the intent of understanding their needs, because the needs of a patient vary depending on their journey in dealing with cancer.”

“I’ve been blessed to be surrounded by brilliant people,” says Dr. Dalton, “people I can learn from. Being at Moffitt is just incredible, with people like H. Lee Moffitt himself, Sen. Connie Mack, Bob Rothman, Ted Couch. These are folks that are extremely successful but totally committed to helping people. And there is an abundance of them at Moffitt. It’s an incredible combination of talent and goodwill. There is a sense of family here. There is a sense that what we do makes a difference. You can see the pride, but you can also see the dedication that we have in serving our patients.”

As Moffitt marks 30 years of caring for patients, Dr. Dalton sees it as an opportunity to look back as well as forward. “The pause and little introspection is valuable for course correction. How do we need to modify things to get where we need to be?”

### ONE MORE “WHAT IF?”

Thirty years from now, Dr. Dalton hopes, “the word cancer will be something in the history books. It’s probably something that will always be with us, because it does occur spontaneously. I’d hope we can identify those patients at risk and modify lifestyle or even use a potential preventive therapy so that cancer is truly in the history books. That’s where I hope we are in 30 years.”

And he has one more “what if,” based on expanding the premise of Total Cancer Care. “What if we take the same approach for Alzheimer’s disease? Autism? Heart disease? There’s no reason we can’t. What we’re learning for cancer in terms of anticipating need and then developing options can be applied throughout the entire health care process. This is as much a sociological experiment as it is a science experiment, because by doing so, you’re changing health care. You’re changing health care policies. This is why it will probably take 30 years.

“We still have a lot of work to do. This is something we’re going to be continuing, in a sense, forever. We have something incredible to offer, but it needs to continuously be improved upon. We have a saying: Be proud but not satisfied.”

Or, as the inventor in Dr. Dalton would put it – “never stop asking, ‘What if?’”

# A HOSPITAL INSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE

## Best Kept Secret In Our Backyard

By Ann Miller Baker

BETH HOUGHTON

Photography: Jeremy Peplow

When Moffitt Cancer Center opened to great fanfare 30 years ago, few other than those who'd midwived its birth understood the challenges that had been overcome and the courage it took to get there.

THIRTY MILES AWAY AT ALL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN ST. PETERSBURG, THEN-CFO AND GENERAL COUNSEL BETH HOUGHTON HAD AN INSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE.

"We at All Children's had heard about this new cancer center that was going to be 'head and shoulders above' anything we'd seen in the state of Florida; that it was going to seek NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center status and would focus on research, teaching and patient care. And we said, 'We get that! We understand!'" Houghton adds with a chuckle, "We might have been the only health care providers who were excited about it."

She says All Children's Hospital, a regional provider devoted to pediatric specialty care, was uniquely positioned to understand the courage it took "because we were fighting some of the same battles, trying to explain to people that in order to have the best, most cost-effective care in a specialty area like pediatrics or cancer, it really makes sense to centralize efforts on a regional basis.

"The folks at local community hospitals were saying, 'We take care of every pediatric patient or every cancer patient in our three ZIP codes. We're fine.' People didn't understand what it means to have an MD Anderson Cancer Center or a Boston Children's Hospital — a specialty hospital that is world-class - in your own backyard."

Fast-forward to 2000, and it's clear why Houghton was tapped to chair Moffitt's Hospital Board. An attorney and certified public accountant with specialty health care experience and understanding of the Tampa/St. Petersburg market, Houghton had developed long-standing relationships with Moffitt's leaders.

"I respected the institution and I wanted to continue to be involved with health care after I left All Children's," she explains, "but I had really high standards. I wanted to be involved with an organization of Moffitt caliber, with the clear vision and commitment to excellence in every aspect of the institution. And they sought me out because they thought I had something to bring to the table, not because I might write a check, but for knowledge and skills."

### KEEPING A PATIENT-CARE FOCUS

In her 16 years as Hospital Board chair, Houghton's role has been to keep the focus on patient care: its safety, quality and satisfaction. A resident of St. Petersburg, she's not the only board member with a commute. Others come from Sarasota and The Villages two hours north of Tampa — a reflection, Houghton says, of Moffitt's standing as a regional asset. Together, these 14 professionals and business leaders bring their particular insights to the table with hospital administration and management, engaging in discussions that continually improve the institution.

Houghton says it's gratifying to see Moffitt's stature grow. "To be now recognized by U.S. News & World Report as the No. 6 cancer center in the country? That's beyond amazing."

But not a surprise, she says, when you've watched Moffitt innovate on the advancing edge of cancer care and research. "In recent years in the general press, we've been hearing more about personalized medicine and genomics," Houghton notes, "why a particular regimen of chemotherapy might work for me but wouldn't work for you for the same disease, and that we can now begin to predict that. Well, Moffitt leadership was talking about that 10 years ago, starting Total Cancer Care® long before you were hearing about it any place else. So there really has been a vision and an entrepreneurial spirit ... and because we're as young as we are, the ability to do things that haven't been done before. That is an evolution that's been amazing to watch."

As to where that evolution will lead in Moffitt's next 30 years, Houghton says she'll leave the predictions to those with greater expertise. "We have some incredible initiatives that show great promise. But it takes money to move them down the road." She says NIH funding and similar competitive grants won't be enough. "The fact is, funds at that level have really stagnated and in some cases gone down over the last five to 10 years. As much as we think we're fighting cancer, we can only hope that

Vice President Biden's 'Moonshot' will change that. These are expensive enterprises to undertake.

"We were initially funded by the state of Florida and continue to receive state funding that supports our research and teaching roles. I think it's important for Florida to double down and increase that funding. We have more than proven that we are good stewards of those funds, that we've used them to make a huge difference in the quality of life for all Floridians."

### PHILANTHROPIC DOLLARS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

As executive director of the St. Petersburg Free Clinic, with its food bank, shelters and health care services for the underserved, Houghton also appreciates the power of philanthropy.

"Moffitt deserves philanthropic support because of the quality of work that it does and the efficiency with which it does it. Those of us who make a choice to be generous philanthropically do so because we want those dollars to be used well and to make a difference in the lives of people we care about and the lives of people we may never know. Moffitt does that. And that's what I want to invest my philanthropic dollars in."

She's also keenly aware of the trust invested in her to keep Moffitt moving forward.

*"I'm gratified by people like Lee Moffitt having faith in me personally, to want me to be one of those people to take the baton and continue the mission. That's humbling to me."*

"He had a vision. He saw something that I doubt but a handful of other people in the state even saw: that opportunity and that need in this very populous state to have a real NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center. What Lee did initially is amazing and how he did it was amazing. But I'm even more amazed that, 30 years later, he is just as energetic, just as passionate."

And just as committed to his philosophy that each and every individual can make a difference. It's a philosophy Houghton shares.

"I think every one of us can make a difference. We have different skills. We have different capabilities. We have different pocketbooks. But every dollar, every word shared makes a difference. There are a lot of best kept secrets in the Tampa Bay area. Moffitt is, to some extent, one of those. And we need to keep telling our story more broadly and more effectively, so that folks know what a difference it makes and that they can invest in that difference right here in their own backyard." 🗣️

# A Gift For Giving And A Leap Of Faith

## The Donor Behind Moffitt's First Endowed Research Chair

By Ann Miller Baker

TED COUCH STILL MOWS THE LAWN AT HIS INVERNESS FARM.

He shares this detail as he wipes the dust from his eyeglasses, dressed in a gray suit and tie for his role as chairman of the M2Gen Board of Directors. They will be meeting shortly to discuss the business of translating Moffitt's cancer research discoveries into marketable treatments.

TED COUCH

Photography: Jeremy Peplow

**And in that moment, you see his philosophy for a successful life — work hard, and love others enough to give of yourself and your talents. Couch has been doing just that for over 30 years. His gift for giving has had a monumental impact on Moffitt Cancer Center and the multitude of people it serves.**

Couch was a 30-something real estate developer in the late 1970s when his business partner, the late George Cortner, introduced him to H. Lee Moffitt. The soon-to-be Speaker of Florida's House of Representatives was looking for someone to chair a new Health Care Authority overseeing state investment in medical facilities, a position Couch readily accepted.

When Moffitt shared his dream of a world-class cancer center to be built in Tampa, he found an ally in Couch, whose sister had been diagnosed with melanoma. "There was no place for her to go for cutting-edge care other than to Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York or to MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston," he says. "I helped her for about three years, going back and forth to Houston. As a result of that, I was highly motivated by Lee's idea."

So motivated, in fact, that Moffitt's next request only briefly fazed Couch.

"I was in my late 30s when Lee asked if I would consider endowing a chair in cancer research. I had no philanthropic experience at that time," Couch chuckles, recalling the amount. "When he told me \$600,000 to be matched \$400,000 by the state, I said, 'Lee, I don't have that kind of money. How am I

going to do this?' He said, 'Oh, don't worry — you can do it on the installment plan.' And by that he meant we had six years to fund it."

With his partner Cortner's blessing, Couch made the leap of faith that would establish Moffitt Cancer Center's first endowed research chair. And — almost magically, he says — business revenue increased each subsequent year to more than cover those "installments."

"You've heard, to give is to receive? Been doing it now for 30 years, and I highly recommend it."

**Couch's contributions to Moffitt Cancer Center have been more than financial. He was a founding member of the Moffitt Board of Directors, named chairman in 1993. The highlight of his term, he says, was the honor of announcing in 1998 that Moffitt had achieved National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation in recognition of scientific leadership and research excellence.**

"What was really remarkable is that we, the people of Moffitt and the researchers that we had assembled, did that in four to five short years. We achieved NCI status over and above institutions and cancer centers around the country that had been trying to accomplish this for 15 to 20 years." And just three years later, Moffitt Cancer Center was awarded the prestigious NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center designation, having demonstrated strengths across all areas of cancer research.

Swiftly building a cadre of top-notch researchers, Couch says, was made possible through attitude. "You have to figure that a researcher has their career on the line. Why would they want to come to a brand new upstart cancer center? It had to be the attitude of the people that were here then that could attract them to Moffitt."

Sharing that attitude of collaboration and mission-driven determination is part of what led Couch to fund another effort at Moffitt in 1999, the Ted Couch Cancer Research Lectureship. It allows Moffitt researchers to suggest a national or international scientific pioneer to present on their area of expertise, right here in the cancer center's Vincent A. Stabile Research Building Auditorium that bears the name of Couch and his wife, Marty.

Among the internationally renowned guest lecturers, there have been stellar talents like the late E. Donnal Thomas, M.D., a Nobel laureate whose pioneering work in bone marrow transplantation changed the world of cancer treatment; Charles L. Sawyers, M.D., co-developer of the drug Gleevec® that revolutionized treatment of chronic myeloid leukemia; the late Judah Folkman, M.D., who founded the field of angiogenesis research and many others.

The lectures not only expose Moffitt researchers to top thought leaders, Couch notes, they also give guest lecturers a taste of Moffitt's facilities and culture. "And who knows? Maybe after being exposed to Moffitt, they would want to come join us."

Guest lecturers also present a second talk to the community "to help the public to understand what's here," Couch explains. "When you listen to how research happens and hear the results

*"You've heard, to give is to receive?  
Been doing it now for  
30 years, and I highly  
recommend it."*

of that research, it helps you understand why the investment dollars are needed in order to continue to promote this research."

And make no mistake, Couch says, research and the resources to support it are what's needed for Moffitt to accomplish its mission of contributing to the prevention and cure of cancer.

"Cancer isn't just one cancer. It's probably 70 different cancers. We're whittling away at them, little by little. But it's going to take probably another 30 years before we really can say that we've successfully beat back cancer. And it takes resources in order to do that. That's how people can join us and help us.

"You obviously are not able to count on government funding consistently ... which is all the more reason why we have to appeal to everyone around us to support what we're doing. Carve out a little of what you have, help us with the research. Research is what's going to get it done."

Looking back over 30 years and remembering the scrub oaks and sand spurs from which this world-class cancer center has risen, Couch says Moffitt has come "light years" since its opening in 1986. To his friend Lee Moffitt, Couch says "thanks" for the tenacity needed to make the center a reality — and for the opportunity to be a part of it.

"To be able to say that this is in Tampa, Florida, a city that I was born in and grew up in — being part of Moffitt Cancer Center has been probably the most rewarding thing that's occurred in my life." 📍

# Native Son WATCHES CENTER GROW

## *Moffitt Plays Vital Role In Metro Tampa's Development*

By Michelle Bearden

**From his Holland & Knight office on the 39th floor of the Regions Bank building in downtown Tampa, former Florida Gov. Bob Martinez can look out the window and take in the milestones of his life.**

There's the house he grew up in on Ivy Street in West Tampa near Raymond James Stadium. There's the University of Tampa campus, where he got his undergraduate degree and where the athletics center bears his name. His south Tampa home where he lives with his wife of 61 years is in a not-too-far distance as well.

And right below him is the city of his youth and adulthood, where he served as mayor from 1979 to 1986, undergoing an urban renaissance.

New housing developments and business structures. The long-awaited Riverwalk. And the beginnings of a street system that will ease traffic and encourage more walking.

"It's really pretty cool, isn't it?" says a relaxed Martinez, now 81 and a senior policy advisor for Holland & Knight. "I feel really privileged to still be a part of Tampa. Its history is my history."

The same could be said for Martinez's role with Moffitt Cancer Center.

He joined the center's Board of Advisors in 2006 just three years after it was formed at the invitation of former Moffitt Board Chairman Sen. Connie Mack. That makes him one of the longest-serving members of a board that plays a critical role in growing Moffitt's reputation and presence on a state and national level, and acts as a sounding board to Moffitt's senior management.

"They're our ambassadors," says Mary Coffeen, chief of staff to the CEO at Moffitt. "They are all busy, very talented people who take the time to spread the word about our mission here. They have a real commitment to helping us beat cancer, and that translates to helping us reach new audiences with our message. Sometimes that means patients, and other times it might be donors or lawmakers.

"Without a question, they play a vital role in our long-term growth."



GOV. BOB MARTINEZ

Martinez is in good company on the Board of Advisors, whose members are appointed and have no specific term limits. Some of his fellow members include: former ABC news commentator Sam Donaldson and his broadcast colleague, political commentator Cokie Roberts, National Football League former coach Don Shula, physician and author Robin Cook, NFL Hall of Famer Bob Griese (who chairs the group), National Hockey League commissioner Gary Bettman, former University of South Florida president Francis Borkowski, singer-actress Olivia Newton-John and retired U.S. Ambassador Mel Sembler.

What Martinez brings to the table is his history with the community and his expertise in government relations, Coffeen says.

"When we need advice or feedback on certain issues, he is quick to provide an answer or help set up a meeting," she says.

Martinez has connections in Tallahassee, where he lived when he served as Florida's first (and only so far) Hispanic governor from 1987 to 1991, and in Washington, D.C., where he served three years under President George H. W. Bush as the "Drug Czar" of the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

And there's another asset that this Tampa native son provides in his longtime role as a Moffitt cheerleader.

"This is my home. This is where I grew up," he says. "And you can say the same for Lee Moffitt. No matter how far our journeys have taken us, this is where our roots are planted."

**HIS GRANDPARENTS WERE SPANISH IMMIGRANTS WHO CAME HERE IN 1908 LURED BY THE PROMISE OF WORK IN THE CIGAR FACTORIES. THOUGH THEY ENDED UP IN DIFFERENT PROFESSIONS, THEY FOUND A VITAL COMMUNITY OF FELLOW TRANSPLANTS.**

Born on Christmas in 1934, he recalls an idyllic and safe childhood. And to make his storybook beginnings even sweeter, he met the love of his life in his homeroom at Thomas Jefferson High. He was just 19 when he married Mary Jane Marino.

Indeed, it's been a bountiful life. Besides all his years of public service, Martinez also has been an educator, a restaurant owner a business labor consultant. While he was mayor of Tampa, the city built one of the country's first waste-to-energy plants, annexed thousands of unincorporated acres of land that would become New Tampa, opened the convention center and the performing arts center and revitalized Lowry Park Zoo.

He made a successful bid as governor after his two mayoral terms. In that capacity, he is most proud of the impact he made on the environment, including Preservation 2000, America's largest environmental land acquisition program, and proposing the Surface Water Improvement Management Act that protects Florida's surface waters. He also helped get Florida's first solid-waste management law passed, advocated laws that protected manatees and dolphins, and implemented Florida's Growth Management Act.

He doesn't hesitate in picking the accomplishment that means the most to him.

"My marriage to Mary Jane," he says. "That's easily at the top of the list." The six-decade union produced a son and daughter, and now five grandchildren. All of the youngsters are on Florida's pre-paid college plan, another initiative championed by Martinez and launched when he was governor.

"My twin granddaughters were Contract One and Contract Two," he says. "To be part of a program from the very beginning and to see so many families benefit from it is just so satisfying."

**THAT ALSO SUMS UP HOW MARTINEZ FEELS ABOUT MOFFITT CANCER CENTER.**

What began as a dream of his colleague H. Lee Moffitt has blossomed into a major asset for the Tampa Bay area and Florida.

"Lee was a visionary. He was courageous," he says. "He used his credibility and pull as Speaker of the House to fight for something that had not been done here before."

Moffitt didn't want just a hospital. He also wanted a research center that would seek cures and offer experimental treatments to patients whose options had run out. Martinez says finding the funding and the support were challenges that might have deterred others. But not Moffitt.

"It could have all gone south, but he was not about to let that happen," Martinez recalls. "He put together a good group of people, stayed on course with the mission he envisioned and wouldn't take no for an answer. Lee is a great example of how one person can make a difference."

Having a nationally recognized cancer institute in an area is "every bit as vital" as a strong university and hospital system, major-league sports teams, a thriving corporate base, a diverse cultural and entertainment center and an international airport. It plays a role in attracting new residents and new businesses – all important components in growing a metropolitan area.

It also is a great equalizer in giving patients who otherwise could not afford to seek treatment in far-off places such as MD Anderson in Houston or Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, Martinez notes.

Martinez doesn't have a personal cancer story to share. An avid walker and tennis player, he's keenly aware that he's been blessed with good health. But he knows the stories of so many patients who turn to Moffitt for a fighting chance to beat cancer. Those are the people who inspire him and give him the impetus to continue in his long-standing role as a Moffitt ambassador.

"We've come a long, long way in 30 years. Now we have a reputation and we have a brand," Martinez says. "You can credit that to a history of performance, from quality care to medical breakthroughs. But there's no letting up. Until we find a cure, we keep moving forward."

# Moffitt Cancer Center Remembers Monsignor Higgins

By Michelle Bearden



AN ICON. A LEGEND.  
A STREET SAINT. A TAMPA TREASURE.  
MONSIGNOR LAURENCE HIGGINS WAS  
ALL THAT AND SO MUCH MORE.

**Born in Magherafelt, Northern Ireland, he seemed destined to be a star athlete, leading the County Derry Gaelic Football Team to the Irish National Championship in 1947.**

But the call to serve God was even stronger. After ordination, the Irish priest was sent to America to win new souls for God. He planted roots in Tampa in 1958, making this his adopted home until he died of heart failure on Aug. 24, 2016. He was just shy of his 88<sup>th</sup> birthday.

What he accomplished in that span of time made a wide-ranging and positive impact on his adopted city.

Higgins founded St. Lawrence Catholic Church on a 20-acre cow pasture off Himes and Hillsborough avenues. Reputed for his quick wit and to-the-point sermons, he grew that parish from a few dozen congregants to more than 2,200 families, and helped start three more churches.

When he retired in 2007 after 49 years of service, he was the longest-serving priest in the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

But his reach extended far beyond his congregation family. Higgins was also a visible community leader; a savvy civic activist who used his connections with the rich and powerful to help the poor and needy.

One of his beneficiaries was Moffitt Cancer Center.

In 1994, Ted Couch, then chair of the cancer center Board of Directors, asked his friend to join the group.

“We were a new and growing institution at the time, and we knew he was a great resource,” Couch says. “He could relate to anyone. It didn’t matter if you were Catholic, atheist, Jewish, Baptist or whatever.”

Couch had long observed Higgins’ “uncanny ability” to get people engaged and involved by using his charm, intelligence and kindness.

“It was his secret weapon,” Couch says. “It was hard to turn him down.”

Higgins served on the Moffitt Board through 2012. Even after he left, he made his services available whenever he was asked.

“That’s the kind of person he was,” says Couch, who still sits on the institute Board and now chairs the board of M2Gen®, Moffitt’s wholly owned for-profit research subsidiary. “He knew so many people in Tampa and could make his case with such passion. And his endorsement of Moffitt’s mission in the community was invaluable. Having him on our team was a big plus.”

Higgins made an indelible mark on the Tampa Bay area through the tens of thousands of lives he touched personally and indirectly. Moffitt Momentum honors this revered spiritual leader with recollections from members of our extended family.

“MONSIGNOR WAS AN ICON IN THIS COMMUNITY AND IN FLORIDA. HIS SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AS WELL AS HIS ADVICE AND COUNSEL WILL BE MISSED. HE WAS A VALUED FRIEND TO ME AND TO THE CANCER CENTER.”

H. Lee Moffitt, founder of Moffitt Cancer Center

“Monsignor was a spiritual pillar for over half a century and had a profound influence on so many of us as individuals and as leaders. At Moffitt Cancer Center, he is remembered and cherished as a very special member of our family, serving on our Institute Board of Directors for more than 18 years.

Monsignor brought his passion and love for people to everything he touched, including his service at Moffitt. We are forever grateful for the many years he spent with us in helping to guide our institution.”

Dr. Alan List, president  
and chief executive officer, Moffitt Cancer Center

“He was exactly how you hoped a priest would be. Accessible, humorous, loving, kind, generous in spirit. A true reflection of Christ.

When you first saw him, you felt like you made his day. He was always so glad to see you. He made you feel special. The joy just spilled over the conversation.

He never took himself seriously. But he took his causes seriously. Monsignor always wanted better for those who were hurting.

He would want us to carry on his legacy. Take care of each other, reach out to others and be sensitive to the indigent, to the mentally ill, to alcoholics, to people living on the edge. Let them know they are not forgotten and that they are loved.”

Celia Ferman, director, Ferman Automotive Group, Tampa Bay  
Lightning Community Hero, Meals on Wheels volunteer and supporter, and Moffitt Institute Board of Directors member

“Monsignor dedicated his life to serving others, particularly those who were hurting and in crisis. During his nearly 20 years as a board member, he made sure we didn’t forget that reducing human suffering is why we are here. Monsignor also made sure we didn’t lose sight of the disproportionate impact cancer has on the most vulnerable in our community, the poor and elderly. Monsignor was our moral compass and the moral compass for the community.”

David de la Parte, executive vice president/  
General Counsel, Moffitt Cancer Center



On behalf of Moffitt’s Institute Board of Directors, Robert Rothman (right) honors Monsignor Laurence Higgins at the group’s 2013 annual meeting. Higgins had served more than 18 years on the Board.

“He was a true disciple of God. If you pick up the Bible and read it passage by passage, you can see how Monsignor Higgins led his life. He was the real thing.

He never turned anyone down for help or advice. And he did it in a way you could understand.

He made me laugh, all the time. I’ve never met anyone like him in my life. The void he’s left will be impossible to fill. I love him dearly.

He’s going to live on forever in my heart and soul. I think we could serve his memory best by taking those lessons he taught us and applying them in our lives.”

*Former Tampa Mayor Dick Greco, who served on the Moffitt Foundation Board from July 1996 to June 2012. He was Higgins’ tennis partner, dinner companion and traveling partner for many years.*

“His heart was so big for all people, especially those who were less fortunate. Because the Tampa Bay community had such incredible respect for Monsignor, if he believed in your cause or organization, people in the community knew it was worthwhile.”

*Tampa philanthropist Susan Sykes, who served with Higgins on the board of the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay. She and her husband, John Sykes, are Moffitt supporters.*

“He was a strong, tough man with the softest heart. And the most unique, most religious and most humane person I’ve ever met.

Nobody knows the countless number of people he helped over his long lifetime. He did it quietly, without seeking attention. Tampa is the luckiest city in the United States to have had someone like him.

It didn’t matter who you were. Monsignor always made you feel like somebody special. He had a way of bringing you closer to God. It was his gift. And now he is in heaven, where he belongs. We just got him on loan here on earth.”

*Former San Francisco Giants owner and shopping mall developer Edward DeBartolo, Jr., who serves on the Institute Board of Directors*

“Monsignor had such longevity in this community. He could relate to generations of families. He had a history with them. He knew the kids, their parents, their grandparents. That’s so rare these days.

But his flock was more than Catholics. He spread his wings over the entire community. I looked at him as an ambassador of religion. He was an example of the good and the positive.

What I will always remember is that he didn’t sit back and wait for things to happen. He took action. He was willing to take

that first step to get the ball rolling. That’s why he was such a good leader.”

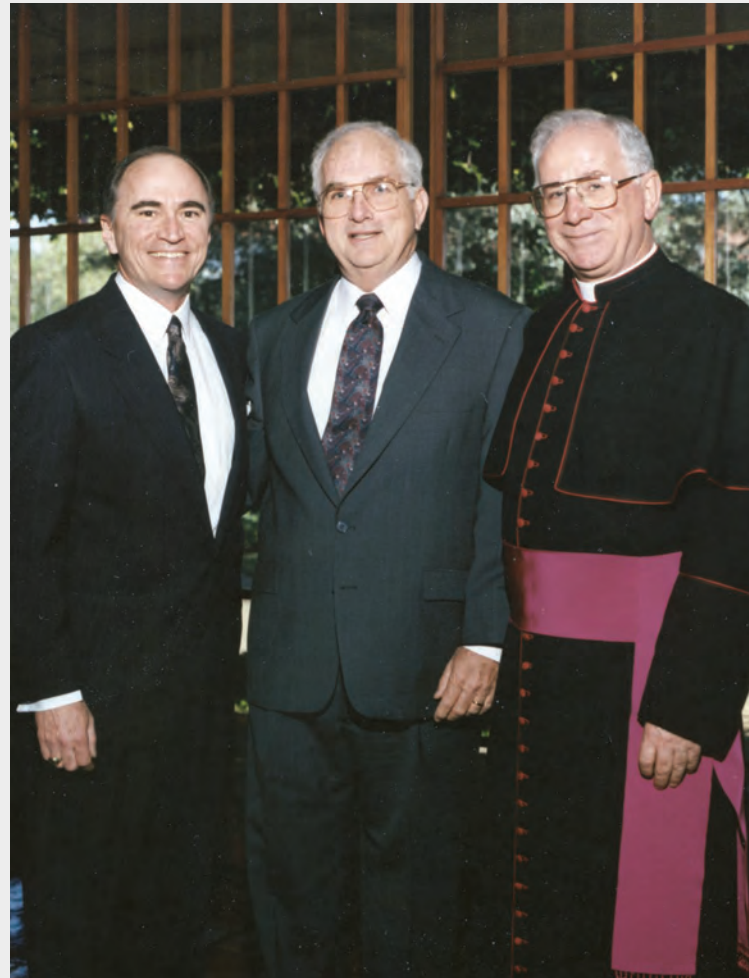
*Former Tampa mayor and Florida Gov. Bob Martinez, on the Moffitt Board of Advisors. He was a eulogist at the funeral.*

“A very mischievous saint. You could just tell by that Irish twinkle in his eyes. He was able to provide spiritual care to all because he was everyman’s man.

He came here when Tampa was so young. And as this city grew, his arms just got wider. He showed us all what it meant to be a true Christian.

Thank you, Monsignor, for all that you gave us. You won’t be forgotten.”

*Valerie Storms, Moffitt’s manager of Chaplaincy Care*



*L-R: H. Lee Moffitt, Ted Couch, Monsignor Laurence Higgins*

## ABOUT MOFFITT CANCER CENTER

Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida, has made a lasting commitment to the prevention and cure of cancer, working tirelessly in the areas of patient care, research and education.

### MISSION

To contribute to the prevention and cure of cancer

### VISION

To transform cancer care through service, science and partnership

#### MEDICAL/SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR

Philippe E. Spiess, M.D.

#### MANAGING EDITOR

Cathy Clark, APR

#### EDITORIAL BOARD

Kim Amtmann-Buettner

Mary Coffeen

L. David de la Parte

B. Lee Green, Ph.D.

Mark Hendrickson

Robert James Keenan, M.D., M.Sc.

Patty Kim

Sean T. Powell, MSW, LCSW, CCM, OSW-C

Jarett Rieger

Thomas Sellers, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Susan Stern

SHARE YOUR  
THOUGHTS



EDITOR@MOFFITT.ORG

H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute, an NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center - Tampa, FL

© 2016 Moffitt Cancer Center. All rights reserved.

Please call 1-800-456-3434, ext. 1403, or email us at [FoundationInfo@Moffitt.org](mailto:FoundationInfo@Moffitt.org), if you wish to have your name removed from the list to receive fundraising requests to support Moffitt Cancer Center in the future. Upon receiving your request, we will use all reasonable efforts to remove you from future mailings.

FLORIDA IS THE OFFICIAL PLACE OF BUSINESS FOR THE MOFFITT CANCER CENTER FOUNDATION. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING 1-800-435-7352 TOLL-FREE WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES REGISTRATION NUMBER CH-4675. NO PERCENTAGE OF CONTRIBUTIONS ARE RETAINED BY A PROFESSIONAL SOLICITOR, 100% OF ALL DONATIONS ARE RECEIVED BY THE FOUNDATION.





# MOFFITT CANCER CENTER NOW

Thirty years later, some significant facts about Moffitt and its growth.

- Only Florida-based NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, one of 47 in the United States
- 2.5 million square feet of facilities on 52 acres, including two satellite locations
- 206 licensed beds
- 351,421 outpatient clinic visits in FY 2016
- Two satellite outpatient centers; Moffitt at International Plaza and Moffitt McKinley Outpatient Center
- 5,200+ team members across all locations
- Trains more students in oncology than all other Florida institutions combined
- Annual budget of more than \$1 billion
- Treats patients from every Florida county, every U.S. state and 130+ countries worldwide
- 333,000 square feet of dedicated research space
- M2Gen®, Moffitt's wholly owned, for-profit subsidiary, focuses on advancing personalized cancer care through the 13-member Oncology Research Information Exchange Network (ORIEN)
- 66 U.S. patents and 160 license agreements since 2004
- Moffitt has an economic impact in the state of \$2.1 billion

# MOFFITT CANCER CENTER THEN

A collection of quick facts about Moffitt in 1986, its opening year.

- Private, not-for-profit
- First free-standing cancer treatment and research center authorized by the state of Florida
- Only institution in the nation directly financed by a tax on tobacco
- Opened debt-free
- 409 employees
- 162 licensed beds, all private rooms
- Initial number of patients exceeded the number of beds
- Managed by Hospital Corporation of America (1984-89)
- 12-member Board of Directors, chaired by the University of South Florida President John Lott Brown
- 380,000-square-foot hospital on 17-acre Magnolia Campus at University of South Florida/Tampa
- Approximately 110,000 exterior blocks of cast stone in 98 sizes, all made on site.

