

The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio



Peggy and Lowry Mays

Mays Family Foundation gives \$5 million to the CTRC

Each year, about 14 million people learn they have cancer and 8 million die from the disease worldwide. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one-third of cancer deaths can be prevented. For some patients, especially those living in low- and middle-income regions, treatment services and technologies are not widely available to help them.



“Everyone deserves access to the utmost cancer treatment and care,” Lowry Mays said.

“Peggy and I felt this was a turning point and an important time in the CTRC’s history to further invest in an already exceptional institution where the focus is on cancers that most affect the citizens of this region. Our community deserves the best.”

Texans Peggy and Lowry Mays know firsthand that cancer does not discriminate. Both have survived a cancer diagnosis.

“Cancer can strike anyone at any age, no matter who you are or where you’re from,” Lowry Mays said. “We need exceptional resources right here in Texas.” That’s why the San Antonio couple has made it their mission to ensure that other Texans have a fighting chance against the disease.

The Mays have been steadfast supporters of the Cancer Therapy & Research Center (CTRC) at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio for decades. In 2015, together with their family, the couple gave \$5 million to establish the *Mays Family Foundation Distinguished University Presidential Chair for the Director of the CTRC*. Ian M. Thompson Jr., M.D., director of the CTRC, is the holder of this prestigious academic chair.

In an age of diminishing funding for scientific research, the Mays Family Foundation endowment will support important programs such as pilot research projects, faculty recruitment and retention, clinical trials, new technology and cancer prevention. The gift also honors the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the CTRC in San Antonio.

Today, the CTRC is this region’s only National Cancer Institute (NCI) designated cancer center, a distinction it has merited since 1991. Only 69 NCI-designated cancer centers exist in the United States, and four of them, including the CTRC, are located in Texas.

“This endowment is an extraordinary gift that will fuel opportunities for scientific breakthroughs and invest in the best and brightest minds in cancer research,” said William L. Henrich, M.D., MACP, president of the UT Health Science Center.

The Mays Gift: Making Lives Better



Samantha Alvarez was only 5 years old when she was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor. Doctors predicted she wouldn’t live to see her sixth birthday. After surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, a bone marrow transplant and the compassionate care of physicians and nurses at the CTRC, the once frail and tiny Alvarez is, today, a typical teenager. Thirteen-year-old Alvarez complains about homework, enjoys gym class and martial arts, and volunteers at her church.

The doctors at the CTRC are in the middle of my heart now, said Alvarez’s mother, Dulce Alvarez. “You can’t pay for that.”

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CTRC Director Dr. Ian M. Thompson Jr. describes Peggy and Lowry Mays as dedicated friends and community leaders who are passionate about eliminating cancer. In 1996, Peggy Mays helped organize and create the CTRC Cabinet, a group of committed donors who contribute \$1,000 or more annually to the CTRC to fund the center’s highest priority needs in cancer research and treatment.

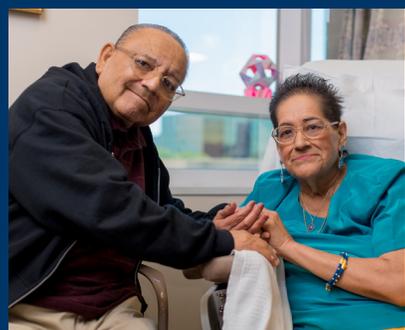
“Peggy and Lowry not only helped guide us from the beginning, they have committed to helping us over the years to reach ever-higher standards of excellence. They planted a seed that has grown into a full tree,” Dr. Thompson said. “Now they are planting again, and thanks to their generosity and leadership, our community will benefit from the excellence we harvest.”

“I have always felt like the CTRC was my ‘baby,’ and I am exceptionally proud of the remarkable progress our talented physicians, scientists, nurses and staff have made over the years,” Peggy Mays said. “Lowry and I and our entire family are delighted to honor the CTRC for its 40 years of life-changing work and to support its aspirations for the future.”

The Mays Family Foundation, formed in 1994, is committed to supporting the community through causes that empower, enrich and educate. As a family, they have contributed over \$55 million to the communities in which the family lives, works or serves.

“It is a remarkable testament to the Mays’ continuing commitment to the community and to the important role the CTRC has played herein.”

The Mays Gift: Making Lives Better



Margarita Duran, 64, beat breast cancer in 2012 and pancreatic cancer two years later. But in October 2014, doctors told her she only had three months to live. CT scans revealed advanced-stage cancer in her stomach. After surgery and

chemotherapy at the CTRC, Duran’s tumor ceased growing and she is feeling much better.

“After my therapies, the CTRC helped pay for my prescriptions and the nurses even gave me bags of groceries to take home. The angels at the CTRC lifted me up when I was down; when I needed help the most. I’m here today because of my faith and people who really care about me—my husband and my CTRC family.”

Greg Aune never thought he would be an oncologist. But as a childhood cancer survivor who suffered through 10 months of chemotherapy, losing 80 pounds and a year of school, he understands more about the disease, the children it affects and the long-term side effects that haunt patients for years after their treatment ends. Today, Greg Aune, M.D., Ph.D., is a pediatric oncologist in the School of Medicine at the UT Health Science Center.



He is studying the cardiac problems that can plague cancer survivors and is establishing a laboratory that approaches chemotherapy-induced heart problems from two perspectives: that of a pediatric oncologist and laboratory cancer scientist.