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Impact

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THANKING THOSE WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Levin's \$2 million investment spurs breakthrough discoveries

Fred Levin is a fighter. A lung cancer survivor himself, Levin has been a dedicated and renowned advocate for those struggling with repercussions of smoking and exposure to tobacco carcinogens throughout his life and career.

When he was given only eight months to live following a lung cancer diagnosis in early 2016, Levin left his Pensacola, Fla., home to travel to Boston for the surgery that would save his life.

"When my dad was diagnosed, I knew I wanted to take him to Dana-Farber," said Martin Levin, Fred's son. "My wife was treated here, I have friends here, I live here. I knew that this place is the best."

Four years later, Fred Levin credits the world-class oncology team at Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's Cancer Center for his survival. In tribute to this care, he has made a transformative \$2 million gift to Dana-Farber through the 2019 Pan-Mass Challenge (PMC), inspired by a generous matching challenge that he believed could increase the impact of his gift. Which it certainly did: Levin helped push the PMC's 2019 fundraising to an astounding \$63 million. The gift includes \$1 million to establish the Fredric G. Levin Endowment in Translational Cancer Research, and \$1 million to the Presidential Initiatives Fund, to support high-risk high-reward studies that hold great potential for discovery, providing critical momentum in the Institute's comprehensive campaign, currently in its quiet phase.

"Fred Levin's extraordinary gift furthers his investment in helping those victimized by the tobacco industry," said Laurie H. Glimcher, MD,



From left: Martin Levin, Fred Levin, Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, David Kozono, MD, PhD, and Billy Starr, PMC founder and executive director and Dana-Farber Trustee, celebrate the newly named Yawkey Center for Cancer Care parking valet waiting area, which Levin named in honor of his late wife, Marilyn Kapner Levin.

president and CEO of Dana-Farber. "Every breakthrough begins with discovery, and discovery is fueled by philanthropy."

One initiative that this gift supports is a program under the direction of David Kozono, MD, PhD, to collect, process, store, and annotate patient specimens to identify early indicators of treatment resistance and potential toxicities.

"This generous gift allows me to expand the program so that doctors can change the course of treatment sooner and further personalize lung cancer treatments," said Kozono. "I am incredibly grateful for Mr. Levin's investment in what I believe will have a tremendous impact on patients' lives."

This is the second \$2 million gift that Levin has made in honor of his Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's oncology team. He views his

passion for philanthropy as a family tradition, one that began with his father.

"My father was a Jewish pawn broker in a conservative Florida town, so we weren't accepted in the country clubs," said Levin. "But he stepped up to give what he could at fundraisers. He showed me what an easy thing it is to do to help others."

Honoring that philanthropic legacy drives Levin, and it is a quality he and his late wife, Marilyn Kapner Levin, instilled in their children.

"I'd been given eight months to live, and I'm still alive four years later," said Levin. "It's simple: Give what you can when you can." ■