Welcome to the spring edition of Act Against Cancer, our publication that focuses on the University of Arizona Cancer Center’s many efforts to prevent and cure cancer.

Since establishing itself as a Division of The University of Arizona’s College of Medicine in 1976, the UACC has positioned itself at the forefront of cancer research, personalized clinical care and education.

G. Timothy Bowden, PhD, is among the handful of individuals to have had an undeniable impact on all three areas. His generous gift to establish The Tim and Diane Bowden Cancer Biology Graduate Interdisciplinary Program ensures that the next generation of physician scientists will continue to benefit from his tireless dedication to cancer research.

Meanwhile, Joanne Jeter, MD, is among the UACC members advancing the idea of precision medicine by delving into the genetic factors that may lead to increased cancer risk.

Thank you for your continued support of the University of Arizona Cancer Center.
This year, Tim and Diane Bowden announced that they will be making a planned multi-million dollar estate gift to the University of Arizona for the Tim and Diane Bowden Cancer Biology Graduate Interdisciplinary Program at the UA Cancer Center. Their gift will also support Parkinson’s disease research being conducted by Associate Professor Scott Sherman, MD, PhD, of the Neurology Department in the UA College of Medicine.

“We want to see the Cancer Biology program flourish. This gift will have a tremendous impact on the prevention of cancer and the diagnosis and treatment for people with cancer,” Dr. Bowden said. “Our belief is that a graduate education in cancer biology will prepare future cancer researchers to take on the challenges of preventing and curing cancer.”

Dr. Bowden is a professor emeritus of cellular and molecular medicine and cellular biology, pharmacology and toxicology and radiation oncology at the University of Arizona. He has been a member of the UA Cancer Center since 1978. In 1988, Dr. Bowden and two other faculty members established the program. Dr. Bowden served as the program’s director from 1992 to 2010.

“Dr. Bowden is one of the most influential and nationally renowned cancer biology researchers, and he will be involved in the process of selecting the most meritorious students for our program,” said Jesse D. Martinez, PhD, UACC Chief Scientific Officer and chair of the CBIO Graduate Interdisciplinary Program. “He started this program, along with Dr. (Eugene) Gerner, and continued to find funding for it because he believes deeply in its importance. We can’t thank him enough for this generous contribution.”

During his tenure at the UA Cancer Center, Dr. Bowden also served as Director of Education, Director of Basic Sciences, Chief Scientific Officer and the UA Cancer Center’s Deputy Director. He has mentored more than 25 postdoctoral students, 20 PhD students, including 12 from the CBIO program, five master’s degree students and several dozen undergraduate students. He served on PhD supervisory/dissertation committees for 83 students, including one current student.

“Diane and I do not have children, so we see these students and mentees as our extended family,” Dr. Bowden said.

Cancer has deeply affected the Bowdens personally, as many of their family members have suffered through the disease. This isn’t simply a field of study for Dr. Bowden. It is a lifelong mission to prevent and cure cancer.

“As with many people, cancer is a very personal issue for us. Having a program like this where you have the brightest minds studying cancer biology brings great hope for cancer research,” said Diane Bowden.

“This generous gift from Tim and Diane Bowden will have a long-lasting impact on the University of Arizona Cancer Center’s ability to educate and train the next generation of cancer biologists.”

~ Anne Cress, PhD, Interim UACC Director
Dr. Bowden is a big believer in the power of mentorship. Roswell Boutwell, PhD, mentored Dr. Bowden when he was a young researcher studying for his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin in the early 1970s.

Through the last four decades, they have been there for each other, both during times of great professional success and personal struggle. Dr. Bowden stays in contact with Dr. Boutwell, who, at 97 years old, is as eager as ever to chat.

When Dr. Bowden retired in 2010, Dr. Boutwell flew to Tucson to attend the ceremony. These are the kinds of relationships that form in these types of graduate programs — unwavering support, both in and out of the lab.

During his speech at Dr. Bowden’s retirement ceremony, Dr. Boutwell read a piece from his friend’s application letter. This line, in particular, explains the importance of the CBIO Graduate Interdisciplinary Program and why the Bowdens want to see it continue training the next generation of cancer researchers.

“I don’t know if I can make a difference in cancer research," Dr. Bowden wrote, "but I want to try.”

The Bowdans

Tim and Diane Bowden, natives of Cincinnati, Ohio, were junior high school sweethearts and married in 1966. They moved to Tucson in 1978 when Tim joined the faculty of the Department of Radiology, Division of Radiation Oncology at UA. Diane’s career spanned 22 years at Carondelet Health Network where she started as a programmer and became responsible for the health system’s financial software and medical records software systems.

Training Ground: CBIO

The Cancer Biology Graduate Interdisciplinary Program at the University of Arizona Cancer Center is one of the nation’s top training grounds for the next generation of cancer researchers. The foundation for this program was built in 1978, when principal investigator Eugene Gerner, PhD, secured federal funding for the Cancer Biology Training Grant.

In 1985, Dr. Gerner teamed up with Dr. Bowden and Jeffrey Trent, PhD, FACMG, to organize the proposal for a new graduate program. They obtained a planning grant from the University of Arizona in 1988. Graduate Interdisciplinary Program Coordinator Anne Cione was also vital in administering the key features that went on to become the foundation for this program.

From this grant, the Cancer Biology Graduate Interdisciplinary Program was established in 1988. Dr. Gerner served as program chair from 1988-92. Dr. Bowden led the program for nearly two decades (1992-2011), and was instrumental in shaping the CBIO program into what it is today.

To date, the Cancer Biology Program has graduated 75 doctoral students, each of whom possesses a comprehensive awareness for the biological triggers and treatments for cancer. Dr. Bowden’s impact on the UACC’s ability to train and educate the next generation of cancer researchers will be felt for generations to come.
Joanne Jeter, MD, never backs down from a challenge. In fact, she seeks out the toughest cases, because they often lead to the biggest breakthroughs.

The Ripple Effect

Dr. Jeter is an assistant professor of clinical medicine and an associate member of the UACC’s Cancer Prevention and Control program. She primarily treats breast cancer and melanoma patients, but she balances her work as a clinician with research efforts focused mainly on patients with the highest risk to develop cancer in their lifetimes.

“Dr. Jeter is currently collaborating with Tucson-area retinal specialist Cameron Javid, MD; interventional radiologist Paola Devis, MD; surgeon Tun Jie, MD; and UACC Department Head of Radiation Oncology, Baldassare “Dino” Stea, MD, PhD, FASTRO, to break down the biological mechanisms that drive ocular melanoma.”

“‘This is a very rare disease that differs biologically from the more common cases of melanoma that can develop on a person’s skin,’ Dr. Jeter said. ‘But it is a dangerous disease that requires specialization for proper treatment.’”

“These ‘orphaned diseases,’ as Dr. Jeter calls them, give researchers an opportunity to develop expertise in a given area, while leading to new drug discoveries that can have many different applications beyond the original research.”

“Dr. Jeter said, ‘There are ripple effects that come from researching these diseases and finding previously undiscovered genetic mutations that may lead to even more breakthroughs down the road.’”

The work currently being done by Dr. Jeter and her colleagues isn’t easy, but it is necessary in order to achieve the goal of a cancer-free future.

For more information on these and other research projects taking place at the UACC, please visit our website at arizonacancercenter.org.
The University of Arizona Cancer Center would like to acknowledge our wonderful community members, each of whom comes together to support us through bridge tournaments, golf tournaments, mud runs, and tennis tournaments throughout the year. Together, these amazing groups have raised more than $100,000 to support the University of Arizona Cancer Center. They continue to inspire us through their hard work and dedication in supporting our mission to prevent and cure cancer.

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News & Notes from the UACC

A Feast of Fiber
A Taste of SaddleBrooke at SaddleBrooke Community (1)
Chicks N Chaps (2)
Cure For Cancer Golf and Tennis Tournament through The Views Women's Golf Club
Dodging Balls for Cancer - University of Arizona Financial Management Association
Green Valley Bridge
Heritage at Dove Mountain
Knights of Columbus and Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Golf Tournament
Palo Verde Ladies Golf Association (3)
Mountain View/Preserves Women's Golf Association
Rally for the Cure at Sun Lakes Golf Club
Skyline Country Club Women's Golf Association
Swing for Hope with Ironwood Ladies Golf Club
Tucson National Men's Golf Association
Ventana Cares

A Community Mission

Thank you

Lymphoma researcher and professor of pathology Lisa Rimzsa, MD, was named the 12th annual Sydney E. Salmon, MD, Distinguished Investigator.

Dr. Rimzsa, a member of the UA Cancer Center's Therapeutic Development scientific research program, presented a lecture, "From Microscope to Microarray: Toward Precision Medicine for Aggressive B-cell Lymphomas," on May 8, Dr. Salmon’s birthday.

The Sydney E. Salmon, MD, Award recognizes UA Cancer Center faculty members for their leadership in cancer research, grant support, publications, community service and clinical responsibilities.

Dr. Rimzsa and her lab recently were awarded $1.75 million over five years to serve as the Southwest Regional Biorepository for the AIDS Cancer Specimen Resource Network.

Harrison H. Barrett, PhD, a University of Arizona Regents’ Professor and UA Cancer Center member whose work in medical imaging has contributed to fields including cardiovascular disease, cognitive neuroscience, breast cancer and tumor detection, was inducted into the National Academy of Engineering in February.

Dr. Barrett leads the UA Center for Gamma-Ray Imaging. He is a member of the Cancer Center's Imaging scientific research program.

Election to the National Academy of Engineering is among the highest professional distinctions accorded to an engineer. Academy membership honors those who have made outstanding contributions to engineering research, practice or education, and to those who have pioneered new and developing fields of technology, made major advances in traditional fields of engineering, or developed or implemented innovative approaches to engineering education.

A cancer-prevention study led by Cancer Center member and UA public health professor Cynthia Thomson, PhD, has been published and posted widely since its publication earlier this year in the Journal Cancer Prevention Research.

Thomson's study found that postmenopausal women whose behaviors were consistent with the Nutrition and Physical Activity Cancer Prevention Guidelines put forth by the American Cancer Society had lower risk for cancer incidence, and cancer-related and cancer-unrelated death.

"Postmenopausal women who have greater adherence to cancer prevention guidelines demonstrate a 17 percent lower risk for cancer incidence, 20 percent lower risk for cancer-related death, and 27 percent lower risk for death from all causes," she said.

"The message is simple and clear: If you want to reduce your risk for cancer, even later in life, eat a healthy diet, be active daily, avoid or limit alcohol, and don't smoke."

To view more news from the UACC, go to: azcc.arizona.edu/news
Your Impact

With your support, the University of Arizona Cancer Center (UACC) can fund new research initiatives as they emerge and accelerate our ability to prevent, detect and treat cancer.

Giving to the UACC provides opportunities for discovery, promotes education and enables our scientists and physicians to expand hope. Help us achieve these essential goals by choosing to become a partner. Together, we can save and change lives.

For more information, please contact (800) 327-2873 or send an e-mail to development@uacc.arizona.edu.