

Collaborative Seed Grant Award Focuses on Understanding Pancreatitis-Promoted Pancreatic Cancer

The Hirshberg Foundation is pleased to announce a multi-researcher project will be funded for the 2020 Seed Grant. Expanding on current research underway at the [Hirshberg Laboratory for Pancreatic Cancer Research at UCLA](#), this project will look at the influence of hereditary pancreatitis on pancreatic cancer development.

While there is no one cause for developing pancreatic cancer, it is known that environmental factors such as smoking and diet can increase one's risk. Chronic pancreatitis, an inflammatory condition, is also a known risk factor. It is well established that Kras mutations play a necessary role in initiating pancreatic cancer and subsequent growth but the environmental risk factors that promote tumor development are far less understood. These risk factors offer a potential for interceptive strategies to prevent the development of pancreatic cancer.

Zsanett Jancso, PhD, will work with Dr. Guido Eibl, Director of the Hirshberg Laboratory on a project titled, *Preclinical Model of Hereditary Pancreatitis-Promoted Pancreatic Cancer*, thanks to 2020 Seed Grant funding. UCLA's [Translation Research Lab](#) is focused on identifying and understanding the causes and risk factors of pancreatic cancer. Dr. Jancso's research aims to investigate whether hereditary pancreatitis accelerates pancreatic cancer development and tumor growth. Through studying early-onset pancreatitis, they aim to gain a deeper

understanding of how inflammation impacts and promotes tumor growth.

While our Seed Grant program has historically focused on early research projects, the need for collaborative research and partnership has become apparent. In order to make the strides we need to combat this disease, we must focus on projects that will bring science from the bench to the bedside. For our 2020 Seed Grant program, we are honored to be funding a first-of-its-kind, collaborative research grant. Dr. Jancso's research will offer critical insight into how hereditary-pancreatitis associated pancreatic cancer develops and how chronic inflammation promotes tumor growth in the pancreas. The hope is that these findings will then be translatable into preventative strategies against pancreatic cancer.

Thanks to continued support throughout this difficult year, the Hirshberg Foundation has been able to maintain our promise to fund novel pancreatic cancer research. Despite the set-backs of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are unwavering in our quest towards a cure for this disease. Thank you for staying the course with us and making this research possible.

[Read the Project Abstract »](#)

**A2A Designs Gives Back
Throughout November While**

Helping You Raise Awareness

Friends Alli, age 11, and Avery, age 12, started [A2A Designs](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to give back to their community. They began creating mask chains for friends and family as a fun and stylish way to keep their masks handy while running errands and walking the dog. With an emphasis on supporting essential workers, each month they chose a different non-profit organization and donate a portion of their sales. For November, A2A Designs has partnered with the Hirshberg Foundation to help raise pancreatic cancer awareness with a collection of special purple mask chains.

We are excited to partner with these young entrepreneurs to help raise pancreatic cancer awareness in style! As November community partner for A2A Designs, Alli & Avery will be donating half of their monthly profits to the Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research. In addition, they have specially designed two purple chains, the [Never Give Up](#) and [Purple Power](#), that will continue to give back towards research & patient support services.

[Order your mask chains online »](#)

We are excited to have Alli & Avery join us at our Flower Truck Pop Up for World Pancreatic Cancer Day on November 19th. Plus, each mask chain purchased that day will come with a free [Never Give Up mask](#). [Learn more and add it to your calendar »](#)

How to Host a Virtual Fundraising Event

Give friends and family a fun night in, alleviate that cooped up feeling and serve a greater purpose – raising awareness for pancreatic cancer. All of these goals can be accomplished by hosting a virtual fundraising event online and we guarantee it will be an exciting and fulfilling experience. The big difference between an in-person event and a virtual event is moving everything to a video conferencing platform and selecting an activity everyone can participate in – we've plenty of ideas and resources for you!

5 Steps to Get Started

1. Choose a Virtual Event Idea
2. Ask a Friend to Help Plan & Co-host
3. Create a Fundraising Page
4. Choose a Video Conferencing Platform
5. Follow our Virtual Event Checklist

Step 1: Choose a Virtual Event Idea You'll Enjoy

Make your virtual event interesting and memorable with a few fresh ideas. Here are some suggestions to get your imagination going! Give your event some purple pizzazz when you [order a Purple Spirit Box](#) and send them to attendees to share amongst their households.

- Scavenger hunt at home
- Game night (virtual card & board games)

- Wine & Cheese Tasting
 - Pajama Brunch
 - Holiday Trivia Party
 - Simultaneous crafting projects
 - Teach a yoga class
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- Amateur Music concert
 - Amateur a cupcake wars baking class
 - Netflix Watch Party
 - Costume party
 - Pre-Thanksgiving Family Reunion
 - Do crafts or a DIY project
 - Video Game Competition

Example: A Virtual Scavenger Hunt is a game anyone can participate in right from home. Each household team can scour their home and the web for funny items or mysterious clues. Split your event attendees into teams and turn the hunt into a race, or you can award points based on the originality and absurdity of the answers. Prompts or theme ideas: Family photo gone wrong, terrible present, elaborate decoration, getting a stocking full of coal, pet dressed up in Christmas clothes, Drunken Santa and more!

Step 2: Ask a Friend to Help Plan & Co-Host

This is an optional step, but really, everything is more fun when you do it with friends. Brainstorm ideas, divide up tasks and spread the word together. And if you want to go it alone, that's fine too!

Step 3: Create a Fundraising Page

A fun event idea combined with a cause you care about will inspire people to not only attend your virtual event but also make a donation. Your online gathering will serve a greater purpose – raising awareness and funds for pancreatic cancer research and patients services. So, don't hold back, present a strong call to action to drive donations and attendance.

Fundraising is key but it can be kept simple. Two easy ways to collect donations are:

Event Fundraising Page

When you set up a fundraising page you'll have a link to direct donors and event attendees to give. Follow up each donor by sending them a link to access your event!

[Create an Event Fundraising Page »](#)

Facebook Fundraiser

When you start a Facebook Fundraiser, you can direct people to your Facebook Fundraising Page to give. Follow up each donor by sending them a link to access your event!

[Create Facebook Fundraiser »](#)

Step 4: Select a Video Conferencing Platform

Video conferencing tools have become a popular way for people to communicate with family, friends, and the organizations they

care about. Around the world, people are getting creative in how they are using livestreaming thanks to inexpensive technology. New to hosting online events? Check out this collection of resources.

- **Zoom** – Allows free video meetings for three or more people for up to 40 minutes with their free plan. The next tier lets you set up video calls for up to 100 participants long.
- **Skype** – Up to 10 people can join a Skype group video call. Skype is free to download and works on phones, tablets and computers with webcams.
- **Google Hangouts** – If you have Gmail, that means you already have a Google account you can use to set up Hangouts for free. Up to 25 people can join a video Hangout and up to 150 people can join a voice-only Hangout.
- **Houseparty App** – This app was made for up to eight participants can participate on a FaceTime-like call. It also features third-party games that can be played simultaneously throughout the call.
- **FaceTime** – You can set it up as a Group FaceTime with up to 32 people (requires newer devices and updated iOS).

Step 5: Follow our Virtual Event Planning Tips

This [virtual event checklist](#) will help guide you as you dig into the details of your virtual fundraising event. From start-to-finish, we're helping you set up your fundraising page, select an event idea, plan an event agenda, thank your attendees and more!

*Resources and articles

LA Times: [How to have Zoom parties that are actually fun](#)

LA Times: [Ultimate guide to hanging out with your friends online](#)

Style Caster: [How to Throw an Epic Zoom Party Your Friends Will Never Forget](#)

Team Building Blog: [32 Fun Virtual Holiday Party Ideas in 2020](#)

Your Virtual Fundraising Event Checklist

We've officially entered the age of the social video call for remote work, social events and family/friend gatherings. This virtual event checklist will help guide you as you dig into the details of your virtual fundraising event. From start-to-finish, we're helping you set up your fundraising page, select an event idea, plan an event agenda, thank your attendees and more! If hosting a virtual event online is new to you, make sure you read our 'How to Host a Virtual Event' instruction sheet first. We share 5 steps to get started, video platforms, resources available and more.

Select a Virtual Event Idea!

Before selecting an activity, check out the section below about partnering with a small business for an easy additional way to fundraise. Select an activity that you'll enjoy planning and isn't too complicated. Here are a few ideas to consider:

- Scavenger hunt at home
- Game night (virtual card & board games)
- Wine & Cheese tasting
- Holiday Trivia Party

- Amateur cupcake wars baking class
- Pre-Thanksgiving Family Reunion
- Do crafts or a DIY project
- Video Game Competition

□ **Ask a Friend or Family Member to Co-host**

Co-hosts can support each other through the planning process, learn how to set up the video call together and guide attendees through the online event.

□ **Create a Fundraising Page & Set a Goal**

A fun event idea combined with a cause you care about will inspire people to not only attend your virtual event but also donate! Don't hold back, present a strong call to action to drive donations and attendance. Fundraising is key but it can be kept simple. We suggest two easy ways to collection donations:

- Create an [Event Fundraising Page](#) to collection funds and follow up with each donation with a link to access your event.
- Create a Hirshberg Foundation [Facebook Fundraiser](#) to collect funds and follow up each donation with a link to access your event.

Collect Donations or a Suggested Donation Entry Fee

It's a fundraising event! In addition to collecting donations, if you partner with a business there may be a fee to purchase a product or service. If not, ask for a 'suggested donation admission fee' for an appropriate amount. Attendees donate to your fundraising page to cover the fee.

Create your guestlist

Virtual fundraising events can range from small to large-scale depending on the activity. Set a limit of attendees based on what you're comfortable with and the activity you choose.

Plan an Agenda

Set an agenda so people know what to expect and how long you'll dedicate to each part. For example: "We'll chat from 6 to 6:30ish, then at 6:35 we'll share the instructions for the activity, we begin the activity and at 8pm we wrap up by thanking everyone for participating and donating.

Provide a Virtual Background

Zoom video conferencing allows you to upload your own photos, so you can really go wild with this one or allow everyone to spice up their own lives by adding backgrounds to their screens.

Purple Décor

For pancreatic cancer awareness, add some purple accessories and decorations. The Hirshberg Foundation provides a [Purple Spirit](#)

[Box](#) in our e-store that you can suggest or send to attendee households!

Keep it short

One-hour-to-90-minute range tends to be the sweet spot for most online gatherings. Give them too much and their brains will shut off, give them too little and they will get bored. Give attendees a chance to get up, walk around, and grab drink.

Keep it interactive but monitor noise

Even if your audience is not outspoken enough to ask questions, they typically will be willing to participate. Make sure you can mute everyone when the host needs to speak or if someone has to step away and there's background noise.

Play games

Tap into your attendees competitive side. Puzzles or riddles, crosswords, memory games, ordering tasks are all great ways to keep your attendees engaged and on-task. For added drama, impose a time limit. Try introducing a quick quiz and offer a small prize for the winner.

Offer reward or prizes

Attendees will be more motivated to participate You should also consider extra incentives such as a competition or small prizes. [Ask the Hirshberg Foundation](#) if we can provide a few fun items to offer!

□ **Thank your donors and attendees!**

As you finish your event, remember to thank your attendees for participating and giving. Let them know how they're making a difference and send a thank you email or note to people who donated but didn't attend.

Partner with a Local or Online Small Business

Before you decide on an event idea, consider whether a local small business would be interested in partnering with you. Do a little local research and you may find a business that provides a service or product to be the theme of your event. Many businesses are taking their in-person services and transitioning them to online while mailing products. Ask if they'll donate 20% of their sales towards your fundraising. Examples include: a yoga studio teaching a virtual class if you sell the tickets, they'll donate a portion of the proceeds; a wine bar that provides a cocktails/mocktails recipes or wine & cheese package and then offers an online tasting class; or a local baker willing to teach a pie making class online, provides a list of ingredients and offers a discounted pie for attendees for Thanksgiving. Get creative and simply ask. Small businesses are looking for exposure and community support and they recognize the value of supporting something their customers believe in and partnering with a charity!

Alicia Honors Her Mother Through All Facets of Her Life and Inspires Us All to Never Give Up

Alicia “ACE” Easter is a longtime friend and supporter of the Hirshberg Foundation. A [Hirshberg Training Team alumni](#), an LA Cancer Challenge team captain, a Yoga & Meditation teacher, and a Master Reiki Healer, Alicia not only embodies but inspires others to “Never Give Up.”

When Alicia lost her mom to pancreatic cancer on April 20, 2002, she became a very reluctant member of the “Motherless Daughters Club.” Facing undeniable grief after her mom died, and with a job that moved her to different cities across the country, Alicia realized she was searching for something. When she began exploring yoga classes, she knew it was the lifesaver she was looking for.

As a long-time athlete, Alicia thought she had an awareness of her body from years of playing sports. In one of her early classes, the teacher led them in camel pose, a backbend from kneeling where you reach to grab your heels while lifting the chin and chest to the sky. Known as a heart-opener pose, Alicia struggled and her body resisted. After class, the yoga teacher asked Alicia if she had a broken heart. It was then that Alicia realized she was still weighed down with the grief of her mom’s death.

Alicia’s mother, Cynthia Geneva Lawson, had died four years earlier but Alicia still carried the pain of a loss she never fully processed. Despite being physically fit, there was still

so much taking up space in her body that she wasn't aware of. Yoga inspired and empowered Alicia to find the healing she sought. After years of muffling her voice and her light, she realized the most powerful way to honor her mother was to share her light with the world.

Inspired, Alicia studied yoga, reiki, and meditation to help others and share her gifts of empowerment and mindfulness. Alicia now teaches yoga and meditation classes, locally and online, and recognizes it's an honor to guide students on their journey through yoga, meditation, and grief with love. She created *I AM FREE: Yoga, Meditation, and Intention Setting* workshops which she has hosted throughout California.

[I AM Candle](#)

In June 2020, Alicia launched the I AM Candle Collection with the hope to inspire generations to come. Each time Alicia lit a candle, she was reminded she "is a brave being of light who is protected and safe no matter what society says." Her hope is that, as you light the candle, you are able to feel the waves of peace wash over you and your home.

The I AM Candle Collection proclaims I AM BEAUTIFUL, I AM BRAVE, I AM LOVE, and I AM FREE. Each one declares one of Alicia's mantras, reminders to be the best of what we already are. Alicia believes we come into this world with love and have a duty to let love lead while we are here. She trusts it can all start with a spark of your own light and be reminded with a candle!

"It is never too late to affirm who you are and who you want to become." – Alicia C. Easter

[Buy an I AM candle today →](#)

Throughout the month of November, Alicia will be donating 18% of the proceeds from the sale of her I AM BEAUTIFUL candle to the

Hirshberg Foundation in honor of her mother, Cynthia, and in honor of all those pancreatic cancer has taken too soon.

Catch Alicia in-person at the [Flower Truck LA](#) pop-up on November 19th!

Our Gift to You on Giving Tuesday: Yoga and Meditation with Alicia

Yoga and meditation are ancient practices used across the globe to calm the mind and hone the senses. Participation in a yoga program has been shown to help cancer survivors feel better physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Clinical trials have shown that yoga can improve mental health outcomes of stress, mood and anxiety. There are findings that show relief from fatigue, gastrointestinal issues, pain severity as well as improvements in respiratory function and heart rate with yoga. There are many different forms of yoga and this noninvasive practice can be endlessly adapted so that all may benefit, regardless of functional or physical challenges.

Meditation, the practice of training attention and awareness to clear the mind and calm the emotions, is another natural boost for wellness. Mindfulness meditation practice for cancer patients can alleviate insomnia and, like yoga, provide a more elevated mind-body connection. Different forms of meditation use various techniques to focus the mind, such as focusing on the breath or a mantra. Breathing exercises, for example, can help patients feel calm before a procedure or doctor appointment or

soothe anxiety prior to a painful procedure.

Both practices provide tools to help move forward in life, and treatment, with a more relaxed, mindful and resilient attitude, as well as the ability to self-soothe and return to calmness. Selecting an appropriate style of yoga with an experienced, certified instructor is recommended, which is why we turned to [Alicia "ACE" Easter](#) for this special Giving Tuesday webinar.

Alicia "ACE" Easter is a longtime friend and supporter of the Hirshberg Foundation. A [Hirshberg Training Team alumni](#), an LA Cancer Challenge team captain, a Yoga & Meditation teacher, and a Master Reiki Healer, Alicia not only embodies but inspires others to "Never Give Up." Alicia lost her mom to pancreatic cancer on April 20, 2002. Devastated by the loss, she knew she was searching for something. At a yoga class where the teacher asked about her broken heart, she knew she was ready to begin her healing journey and honor her mother through her practice.

Alicia, also a Master Reiki practitioner, now teaches yoga and meditation classes, locally and online, and recognizes it's an honor to guide students on their journey through yoga, meditation, and grief with love. We've partnered with her on Giving Tuesday to share her gifts of empowerment and mindfulness with our pancreatic cancer community. Alicia will lead us in a *Soul Liberation Heart-Flow* yoga session followed by *I Am Love* meditation.

Soul Liberation is **unconditional** love of one's self. In loving yourself, you pay homage to our ancestors, teachers, and the lineage of yoga. Yoga is a reminder to be kind, love, and forgive quickly and often. This yoga sequence was created to help liberate the mind, body and soul. Designed to balance the Anahata (heart) chakra and strengthen the spine, this is a great class for those experiencing grief, in need of a little love, or

looking to find greater balance. Alicia will provide modifications for those without yoga mats and those who wish to stay seated. We will end our movement with an I AM LOVE meditation. Please have a journal, pen, and open heart ready. We hope this session will leave you with a deep, heart-expanded meditation which will energize and balance your state of being.

Watch Webinar