

Dr. Paul Lee Dedicated His Life to Finding A Cure



It is with great sadness that the Hirshberg Foundation shares the news of the passing of Dr. Wai-Nang Paul Lee, our distinguished member of our [Scientific Advisory Board](#). Dr. Lee passed away this week from pancreatic cancer – a disease that he studied for the last 40 years of his life.

He was a mentor to many medical colleagues who pioneered biochemistry and metabolic profiling for translational and clinical medicine. His contributions are extraordinary and his publications are cited in fundamental papers in medical literature close to 10,000 times. Dr. Lee was one of the first investigators to develop exact mathematical tools to process large amounts of metabolic profiling data, nevertheless his interpretations moved metabolic disease towards a functional arena involving biochemistry and physiology named tracer-based metabolomics.

Dr. Lee was a 2014 Hirshberg Seed Grant Recipient for his project titled “Metabolic Profile of Gemcitabine Resistance in pancreatic cancer.” Most recently, Dr. Lee was a Professor of Pediatrics at Harbor-UCLA and the Director, Biomedical Mass Spectrometry Facility at Harbor-UCLA LA Biomed Research Institute. His bio can be read [here](#).

The Orange County Triathlon Partners with the Hirshberg Foundation!

Brandon Walters of Gemini Timing has been a part of the Orange County Triathlon for the past seven years. Now, with his new company Five Point Productions, he is the owner of the Orange County Triathlon. Brandon was looking for his next step in the race industry and when it turned out a race date had already been set for June 3rd, it was kismet for the date of the Orange County Triathlon 2018 falls on his father Richard's birthday.

In December 2016, Brandon's seemingly healthy dad Richard was rushed to the hospital with what initially seemed like symptoms of an ear infection but turned out to be a T.I.A (a minor stroke). Once in the emergency room he mentioned that he was short of breath, which resulted in a full body scan. The doctors found blood clots which led them to a diagnosis nobody expected, Stage 4 Pancreatic Cancer.

Because of his partnerships in the running industry through Gemini Timing, Brandon had done races with the Hirshberg Foundation, founded by Agi Hirshberg in honor of her late husband Ronald S. Hirshberg, who passed away from Pancreatic Cancer and he reached out for help. He and his family were overwhelmed by their generosity. Brandon would receive weekly, sometimes daily calls to check on not only Brandon and his father but the entire family and offer their support. Agi and her team at the Hirshberg Foundation helped Brandon's family through the uncertainty of this horrible disease.

Unfortunately, in April 2017 Richard Walters passed away. Agi and The Hirshberg Foundation have continued to be a support system to this day. When Brandon took on the Orange County Triathlon he saw this as the perfect opportunity to give back to the people who had helped his family so much as well as raise awareness and funds for research in the hopes that one day Pancreatic Cancer can be eradicated.

This is your opportunity as well to combat this awful disease. Very little is known about pancreatic cancer and it is often called a silent killer. There are not “routine screens” or tests, and very few symptoms that make Pancreatic Cancer the obvious diagnosis. Help us to end Pancreatic Cancer by donating today.

Thank you.

A Strong and Beautiful Woman – My Mother’s Day Tribute

My Mom was definitely not supposed to get cancer. The thought was impossible and unreal. This strong, beautiful woman who lived each day focused on taking care of her family, offering unwavering support and strength and functioning as the glue that held everything together. The possibility of her being seriously ill was unthinkable.

My Mom's Journey – A Mother's Day Tribute

By Sari R.

My mom has always been a huge influence in my life- as a friend, a role model and someone I grew up wanting to emulate. She has always been the true matriarch of our family, keeping my siblings and our families close to each other and a huge part of all our lives.

Our friends and family have been there for every step of my mom's journey – cooking and bringing her meals, being at every doctor appointment and surgery, visiting constantly at every hospital stay and at home, keeping my dad company, taking walks together, running errands for her, sending gifts to keep her spirits up, constant phone calls and just being there for everything she wanted and needed.

After grueling chemotherapy and a couple of related hospital visits, my mom was really weak and sick. She was pretty adamant that she was not willing to go through a Whipple surgery and the horrible recovery everyone told her would follow. When my sister found a doctor at the Mayo clinic performing laparoscopic Whipple procedures, my mom's attitude shifted to being her former strong self, certain she could get through that (much easier) recovery and anything that followed. Watching her put aside her fears and find her strength again was truly awe-inspiring!

My mom's diagnosis, treatment and recovery have made my family closer. We came together to make sure my mom and dad had everything they needed – and we all know now that we are truly there for each other, no matter what. My 90 year old father's

strength and love has been amazing as well. He has been a rock for all of us, and his optimism kept everyone's spirits up throughout.

I hope I let my mom know every day (not just on Mother's Day) how important she is to me, how much I love her and how grateful I am for every additional day I get with her!

***Sari's mom, Ronnie, was diagnosed November 2015.**

Richard Hatch Memorial Fund

Richard Hatch, star of the original "Battlestar Galatica" passed away on February 7, 2017 after a battle with pancreatic cancer.

Hatch was best known for his role as Captain Apollo in the original "Battlestar Galactica" sci-fi series, which earned him a Golden Globe nomination for Best Actor in a TV drama series. He played Tom Zarek, a different character on the Syfy remake in 2003. Hatch started acting in Off Broadway productions but his career took off after landing a leading role in "All My Children." He has a lengthy list of TV credits, including many guest roles in '70s and '80s television favorites like "Baywatch," "MacGyver," "CHiPS," and "Murder She Wrote."

The Hirshberg Foundation, with the blessing of Richard's family, is honored to invite fans, family & friends to pay special tribute to Hatch on March 19 at the Los Angeles Marathon. The Hirshberg Foundation, an official charity of the Los Angeles Marathon, hosts a cheer station in Brentwood, along the course. Dubbed the Purple People Party, our cheer station brings out hundreds of volunteers to cheer on the runners and raise

awareness for pancreatic cancer. We invite you to join us as we honor Richard Hatch at the Purple People Party.

[Memorial Fund >](#)

We're Fighters!

By Leslie N.

This year our family learned the devastating news that my father had pancreatic cancer. Having watched a very close friend pass one year earlier from this horrific disease, I was in disbelief. The thought of having to go through the experience of watching my father suffer at this time in his life was more than I could handle. But we're fighters, and we circled our wagons and prepared ourselves for what we knew lie ahead.

My father is a retired doctor and very strong man but he was up against an opponent that was bigger and tougher than him. As I watched both he and my stepmom struggle I reached out to the Hirshberg Foundation for guidance on how I could help them help themselves. That one phone call literally changed my life and the path of our experience through this struggle.

First I learned that there were resources offering support to both the patient as well as family members in need. Second I learned how I could get involved in an organization that one day will help save the lives of my family members and friends. And third, but most important, I learned that there was a small group of people who had walked the walk, just a phone call away, available to comfort me at a moments' notice. I immediately became part of a family who understood and sincerely cared.

While my father was going through chemotherapy and preparing for surgery my sister and I volunteered on the L.A. Cancer Challenge planning committee. And when my father had his surgery Agi, Amy and the Hirshberg Foundation team were by our side, offering support. Two weeks post-op our team Carabet's Crew walked proudly in honor of our father who was recovering from the Whipple Procedure performed by the best of the best, Dr. Hines.

The LACC may not be the biggest 5k/10k around but in all my years of participating in similar events I have never felt the love, support and determination I experienced that morning. To be surrounded by so many people who care, understand and are working toward a common goal of curing pancreatic cancer gave us hope that one day we'll be able to prevent other families from having to watch their loved ones suffer.