## Gail Coleman Directs Generous Gift to Pancreatic Cancer Research



Gail Coleman and her husband, Ken Bruntel, at a vineyard in Tuscany. Since Ken's death in 2009, Gail has made funding innovative pancreatic cancer research a top priority.

Gail Coleman of Alexandria, Virginia spent three decades as an attorney with the U.S. Department of Labor. Now retired, she enjoys traveling, volunteer activities, and taking history classes at George Mason University. And she still utilizes the analytical skills of an attorney. Indeed, before recommending a \$100,000 grant to Jefferson (see "Changing Lives Through

Research" on p. 3), Gail educated herself on the landscape of pancreatic cancer research, met with several institutions and evaluated a number of potential projects.

Gail's initial decision to support pancreatic cancer research was not analytical, but deeply personal: The disease took her mother in 1989, her father in 2002 and her husband, Ken Bruntel, in 2009. Ken, with whom Gail spent 30 years, received the diagnosis the day they were supposed to leave for a trip to Germany.

When he died exactly four months later, Ken had just celebrated his 60th birthday, surrounded by friends. As noted in his Washington Post obituary, Ken was a senior partner in the Washington law firm of Crowell & Moring, which he had helped to found in 1979. He was an expert in government contracts law, including healthcare law. He also provided pro bono legal services – receiving his firm's George Bailey Public Service Award for his efforts in helping low-income elderly citizens to navigate the complexity of new Medicare benefits.

Recognizing that her husband's estate would exceed her needs, Gail chose to create a donor-advised charitable gift fund as a way of honoring his memory and supporting research into one of the deadliest cancers. The fund allows her to take an immediate tax deduction when she makes contributions, and then gives her the leisure to investigate how this money can best be used to support cancer research. In the meantime she advises as to how her contributions are invested and makes recommendations for future grants.

Early on, Gail says, she focused on cancer institutes but was later introduced to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network. In fact, it was at a national PanCAN meeting that Gail first met Jonathan R. Brody, PhD, Jefferson's Director of Surgical Research and a 2010 PanCAN Career Development Award recipient, who was presenting on his leading-edge work. The potential for a direct relationship with an organization such as Jefferson emerged as an attractive opportunity for Gail because of the high level of engagement it would offer.

"It appealed to me because I value the closer connection to the projects and direct relationships with the doctors," she says. Twice a year, Gail comes to Philadelphia to meet with the team and receives reports on the two projects she is supporting.

"From my first interaction with Gail, it was obvious that she would be a very active, intelligent donor. She is eager and capable of understanding the science and knows the critical questions to ask," Dr. Brody notes. "She is a new brand of donor that I would call a 'donor-collaborator.'"

Gail adds, "It is important to me to support translational research into treatment of advanced pancreatic cancer, especially innovative work that would otherwise go unfunded."

For information about making a contribution to the Department of Surgery, please contact Lara Goldstein in the Jefferson Foundation at 215-955-8797 or lara.goldstein@jefferson.edu.



# **Surgical Solutions**

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Jennifer Brumbaugh, MA, Editor-in-Chief Susan Murphy, Writer

Susan Murpny, Writer

Robert Neroni, Photography

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## News in Brief



**Stanton Miller, MD, MPH,** has joined the Division of Acute Care Surgery as a trauma advocate and liaison. Dr. Miller, a board-certified surgeon, specializes in public health and directs the Jefferson Center for Injury Research and Prevention (JCIRP). He works at Jefferson and Main Line Health.

**Fernando Blanco, PhD,** is working under the mentorship of Jonathan Brody, PhD, Director of the Division of Surgical Research, as a Clinical Pharmacology Fellow. Dr. Blanco came to Jefferson under a training grant with Drs. Scott Waldman and Walter Kraft in the Department of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics. His work focuses on chemoresistance mechanisms of pancreatic cancer cells.

The annual **Surgery Resident Research Presentations** will take place on Thursday, May 29, 2014, from 7-8:30 a.m. in Foerderer Auditorium in the College Building. All are welcome to attend.



On March 3, 2014, **Get Your Rear in Gear Philadelphia** presented a check for \$55,000 to Dr. Scott Goldstein, Director of the Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery and Dr. Edith Mitchell, Director of the Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Center to Eliminate Racial Disparities. The monies were raised during last year's GYRIG event and will fund colon cancer research. This year's event was held on March 23 at Memorial Hall in Fairmount Park. Jefferson is a proud sponsor and beneficiary of this annual event.

The annual **Templeton Grand Rounds lecture** is scheduled for 8 a.m. on Thursday, May 22, 2014, in Foerderer Pavilion. Raja M. Flores, MD will present "Current Management of Mesothelioma." Dr. Flores is the Steven and Ann Ames Professor of Thoracic Surgery and Chairman of the Department of Thoracic Surgery at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, NY.

Nine faculty members have been named to Philadelphia magazine's "Top Doctors" list for 2014: James Diehl, MD (Cardiothoracic Surgery)
Scott D. Goldstein, MD, and
Gerald Isenberg, MD (Colon and Rectal Surgery)
Murray Cohen, MD, Anne Rosenberg, MD, and Charles Yeo, MD (General Surgery)
Steven Copit, MD, and James Fox, MD (Plastic Surgery)
Paul DiMuzio, MD (Vascular Surgery)

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