
2015

Grateful Patient Initiates 'Woz Challenge' to Raise Funds for Pancreatic Cancer Research

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John "Woz" Wozniak and his son, Sean, in Ocean City, NJ

Grateful Patient Initiates 'Woz Challenge' to Raise Funds for Pancreatic Cancer Research

John "Woz" Wozniak has been a regular visitor to Jefferson's Center City campus for more than a quarter century. Through his career as a mechanical contractor, the Philadelphia native has helped design, build and maintain the hospital's facilities and mechanical systems. Last year, he transitioned from vendor to patient when, as an otherwise healthy 55-year-old, he was diagnosed with Stage III pancreatic cancer.

Wozniak was among the 15 percent of pancreatic cancer patients who are candidates for the Mini-Whipple procedure, which he underwent at Jefferson on October 13, 2014. In recovery, Wozniak's first thought was to ask his surgeon, Charles J. Yeo, MD, FACS, the Samuel D. Gross Professor and Chair of Surgery and Co-Director of the Jefferson Pancreas, Biliary and Related Cancer Center, what he could do to show his gratitude to Jefferson. Dr. Yeo joked, "Give me a million dollars" before explaining the dire lack of funding for pancreatic cancer research.

That jovial suggestion led to the "Woz Challenge" – a grassroots, patient-driven campaign. As soon as he was back on his feet, Wozniak reached out to his circle of family, friends, colleagues and fellow alumni of La Salle College

High School, where his 16-year-old son currently studies. His loved ones rallied around him, helping produce a video about his experiences and spread the word about the need for more funding.

Since kicking off the Woz Challenge, Wozniak has helped raise \$46,100 – and counting – for the cause. And he has no plans to stop anytime soon. He says he remains grateful for the gift of life and for the support and prayers he's received over the past year.

When he isn't receiving follow-up care, he devotes each day to going to church, exercising to stay fit, and spending as much time as he can with his son, mother and other family and friends. He's also committed to being an outgoing – and outspoken – advocate for pancreatic cancer research: "Every time I go somewhere, I talk about this and send people the video," he says. "I never thought I would do something like this, but I think this is my calling."

To contribute to the Woz Challenge in support of pancreatic cancer research, please visit advancement.jefferson.edu/Wozniak or contact Lara Goldstein, MBA, in the Office of Institutional Advancement at 215-955-8797 or lara.goldstein@jefferson.edu.

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News in Brief



Joshua Marks, MD (SKMC '07), has joined the Division of Acute Care Surgery. Dr. Marks completed his surgical residency training at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in 2013. During his residency he completed a one year research fellowship in the Division of Traumatology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP). He completed an additional

two-year fellowship program in Trauma and Surgical Critical Care at HUP in 2015. Dr. Marks is dual certified in Surgery and Surgical Critical Care.



Congratulations to **Qiong (John) Yang, MD**, on his promotion to Clinical Assistant Professor. Dr. Yang is an intensivist in the Jefferson Surgical Cardiac Care Unit (SCCU).

Charles J. Yeo, MD, Samuel D. Gross Professor and Chair of Surgery, was honored at a ceremonial portrait unveiling on October 21st. The event celebrated Dr. Yeo's contributions over his ten year tenure as Department Chair. The portrait, painted by Joseph Q. Daily, now hangs on the sixth floor of the Curtis Building.

A Fond Farewell



James W. Fox, IV, MD (SKMC '70), Professor and former Chief of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Sidney Kimmel Medical College and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital concluded his 37 years of

service at Jefferson on August 1, 2015. Dr. Fox earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Notre Dame and his medical degree from Jefferson Medical College, now Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University. He completed his internship and residency in General Surgery at Jefferson, winning the John H. Gibbon Surgical Prize and the College of Physicians and Surgeons Best Surgical Resident Award and Stipend. He went on to complete a fellowship in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at the University of Virginia.

In 1976, Dr. Fox returned to Jefferson as an Assistant Professor in Plastic and

Reconstructive Surgery. He joined Dr. J. Wallace Davis, one of his mentors and fellow Sidney Kimmel Medical College graduate, in private practice at Jefferson. As a testament to his clinical skills, Dr. Fox has been included in the "Top Docs" in Philadelphia list for 36 consecutive years.

Dr. Fox has published prolifically, led prestigious surgical societies and chaired innumerable committees, including over two decades as chairman of Jefferson Alumni Giving. He was made a Jefferson Fellow and awarded the Jefferson Gold Headed Cane for personal philanthropy in 1984 and the Jefferson Achievement Award for Medical Excellence in 2006. Dr. Fox has left an indelible mark on Jefferson which will be evident for many years to come.

Dr. Fox and his wife of 47 years, Kathleen, live in Gladwyne. They have three children and six grandchildren. We wish them the best and thank them for their service at Jefferson.