



**Friends of T.J. Foundation**  
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory  
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## 2016 Newsletter

### Hope for tomorrow.

Your support enables breakthroughs in cancer research



## Foundation Newsletter 2016

We are pleased to share with you our highlights and annual report for 2016. Our efforts continue to advance scientific research to bring the treatment of pediatric/young adult sarcomas on a path to a universally survivable condition.

### February 2016: Foundation Thanks Sponsors

On a cold winter evening, Sponsors and Board Members celebrated the success of 2015 and looked ahead to the 2016 Outing. The venue was at the home of The Arcati Family. While enjoying cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, the 2016 Outing kick-off began with early sign-ups and sponsorships. A great evening!

### June 2016: The Outing

*The following is a text from the Lloyd Harbor/Cold Spring Harbor Life Magazine, highlighting the 2016 T.J. Arcati Outing.*

The 2016 Friends of T.J. Outing surpassed the expectations projected yet again! This event has become an annual gathering of over 425 truly remarkable people! It warms our hearts to hear friends and family comment on how it has become an event they wouldn't miss. We also hear inspiring comments from many who have heard about the event and want to get involved. So many of you have become partners with us in a very worthwhile project to make sarcoma a universally survivable disease and hopefully to aid in improving cancer research for all. We are grateful to the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory for having the vision to embrace the need for sarcoma research.

The Outing took place on June 20, 2016 at the Huntington Country Club, the Huntington Crescent Club and the tennis courts at the Lloyd Neck Bath Club, all places where T.J. enjoyed playing golf and tennis with many of you.

Maybe this outing is a big success because most of you feel his loss and can identify first hand the impact a death of someone so young can have on a community. We all feel the frustration when we witness a lack of adequate treatments available due to a lack of research. Perhaps you want to be a part of a solution to a problem that T.J. always said shouldn't happen to anyone. The bottom line is that you are one of the most incredibly generous and supportive groups of people in the world to us!

This is a "huge" thank you to our board members, volunteers, sponsors, auction donors and participants. The Foundation is extremely grateful to Lucky To Live Here Realty for being the event sponsor. Although most of the work for the event takes place in small groups, we need an army of volunteers at all of the different venues during the day and again at the evening reception. The amount of people willing to be involved at this event was phenomenal.

We can't wait to see you next year on Monday, June 19th, 2017!

Please visit [www.friendsoftj.org](http://www.friendsoftj.org) for further information or to be placed on our mailing list.

A Special Thank You to our Sponsors:

**Event Sponsor:**  
Lucky To Live Here Realty

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Much appreciation to our Tee Box Sponsors; Auctioneer, Kevin Moriarty and Photographer, Bob Koprash.

### Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Research: Spotlight



CSHL's Assistant Professor **Chris Vakoc** has been leading the Lab's efforts in understanding the genetic dependencies and additions in sarcomas. With a proven track record of uncovering druggable targets in cancer (his work helped spur clinical trials of a potential drug for leukemia patients), the Vakoc lab is working to pinpoint specific protein regions that are required for cancerous cells to proliferate.

In their latest work, Chris and his lab have developed a cutting-edge, high performance screening technology that allows researchers to interrogate not just individual genes but functional units within a single protein. The technology relies on a new gene editing to discover vulnerabilities in rhabdomyosarcoma (RMS) and other cancers.

### The Vakoc Lab Sarcoma Research Team



**Bryan Lanning, PhD**  
Postdoctoral Researcher

Using gene scanning to search for drug targets in RMS. Bryan started by validating patient-derived cancer cell lines using molecular markers and is now screening thousands of genes.



**Xiaoli "Sky" Wu**  
Graduate Student

Exploring the role of so-called "chromatin readers" in RMS. She is screening nearly a thousand genes in four different cell culture models of RMS to search for genetic dependencies and possible drug targets.



**Joe Milazzo**  
Research Scientist

Establishing the gene scanning system in RMS cell culture lines. His preliminary experiments have paved the way for the larger scale experiments that are now underway.

### Strategic Affiliation Bolsters CSHL Sarcoma Research



In 2014, CSHL entered into a partnership with Northwell Health to move basic cancer discoveries closer to patients in the clinic. Now in its second year, the partnership has already funded 16 pilot projects and a Phase 1 clinical trial for a new breast cancer treatment is ongoing.

As part of this alliance, CSHL and Northwell Health have jointly recruited Dr. Robert Maki, MD to serve as Director of the Center for New Cancer Therapies (CNCT) at Northwell Health Cancer Institute. His primary role will be facilitating the translation of basic research into the clinic. Bob will also hold an appointment at CSHL as full professor. In his own clinical research, Bob is a world leader in exploring the molecular weakness in sarcomas, focusing on the tumor microenvironment and genetics. He is also one of the nation's leading clinicians in treating sarcomas.

### March 2016: The T.J. Arcati Perpetual Hockey Award



In March 2016, the T.J. Arcati award was presented to Brian Cooleen (center) at the Annual Hockey Awards Dinner at the Winter Club in Huntington, New York where T.J. played his favorite sport. Brian possessed the qualities that made him an ideal recipient for this award. The award is granted to a graduating senior high school student who showed dedication to his teammates, his coaches and exhibited a tremendous "love for the game" and had fun doing so.

### Foundation Presents Gifts: Ongoing Rhabdomyosarcoma Research at CSHL



In October, 2016, Nancy and Tom Arcati, on behalf of the Friends of T.J. Foundation, presented a \$50,000 donation to Dr. Chris Vakoc at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories. This donation will be used for ongoing Rhabdomyosarcoma research.

### Children's Cancer Therapy Development Institute for RMS

During the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory's 2014 Symposium on RMS, Dr. Charles Keller, one of the researchers who led the Symposium, was introduced to the foundation. Dr. Keller is one of the few who has dedicated his work to RMS. His initial collaboration with Dr. Chris Vakoc was highly successful in moving the drug Entinostat, to a phase 1 clinical trial. We are anxiously awaiting a start date.

The Friends of T.J. Foundation has announced a \$25,000 gift to the cc-TDI ([www.cc-tdi.org/](http://www.cc-tdi.org/)) for research in rhabdomyosarcoma. The cc-TDI, located in Beaverton, Oregon, is a unique non-profit organization focused on the 'preclinical gap' in childhood/young adult cancer research. Their mission is to bridge scientific discovery and the initiation of clinical trials. Through their efforts, they will provide evidence-based testing for the selection of new drugs to be used in childhood/young adult cancer clinical trials, thus seeding pediatric Phase I and II trials.

### Grant: Spotlight

August 2016: The Grant's Committee of The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation decided that our project warranted a grant from their foundation. Thank you Claire Friedlander Foundation!

### Foundation Hits New Milestone

After all of the events from the Foundation's inception, we are excited to tell you that because of your support we have collectively raised over \$700,000. As promised, we have expanded our efforts in the ambitious research plan we have set out to accomplish. The only path to a cure is to keep investing in scientific research.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**MONDAY, JUNE 19, 2017**  
**T.J. ARCATI OUTING**

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HELP FIND A CURE