

Herzsteins' generosity honors scientist's legacy

With their recent gift of \$1 million to Dana-Farber, Barbara and Sigmund Herzstein are continuing the groundbreaking work of a man they never met. Their generosity will help establish the Stanley J. Korsmeyer Professorship at Harvard Medical School and Dana-Farber, a \$3.3 million endeavor to honor the late DFCI scientist whose research changed the cancer landscape. This gift not only brings this professorship substantially closer to fruition, it also provides momentum for *Mission Possible: The Dana-Farber Campaign to Conquer Cancer*.

The Herzsteins have been personally connected to the Institute since Sigmund Herzstein began treatment to combat lung cancer, and the couple sought a way to offer their support for its cancer-fighting mission. When their neighbor and friend David G. Nathan, MD, president emeritus of Dana-Farber, spoke about the work of his former colleague and the professorship being created in his memory, the Herzsteins were inspired to support this mission.

"I was impressed that David, who has long experience with first-class scientists, was so impressed with Stan Korsmeyer," said Sigmund Herzstein. "By David's account, Korsmeyer was more than a fine scientist. He was also a motivating leader. By helping to fund this professorship, we hope that Dana-Farber can attract someone with these same qualities."

Carrying the torch

The Korsmeyer Professorship is an appointment that will provide its incumbent physician-scientist with the financial support to engage in the kind of basic cancer research that translates into better understanding of the disease and more effective therapeutics. The Korsmeyer Professor, to be selected at a later date, will follow a trail blazed by one of the world's greatest scientific minds.

The late director of Molecular Oncology at DFCI and the Sidney Farber Professor of Pathology at Harvard Medical School, Korsmeyer was renowned for his research into apoptosis, or programmed cell death, revealing a gene that contributes to the unnatural survival of cancerous cells. Today, a number of effective, cancer-fighting therapies for patients are rooted in Korsmeyer's work, and more than 40 companies are currently exploring new cancer treatments based on his research.

After his death from lung cancer in March 2005, Korsmeyer's friends and colleagues united to raise the funds for the professorship. Now, the generosity of donors like the Herzsteins is propelling his legacy.

"Stan was one of our greatest scientists," said Institute President Edward J. Benz Jr., MD. "He was nominated for a Nobel Prize in 2005, and, with adequate time, I believe that he surely would have received that distinguished honor. People like the Herzsteins are ensuring that his memory lives on, and that his important work will lead to the dream he wanted for us all—an end to cancer." ■



Barbara and Sigmund Herzstein are advancing basic cancer research with their \$1 million gift to help establish the Stanley J. Korsmeyer Professorship at Dana-Farber and Harvard Medical School.