

## **CHILDHOOD CANCER INITIATIVE: UPDATE-2020**

**Lion SRI Vasudevan, Chairman of Childhood Cancer 27 Lions ([drsivasudevan@gmail.com](mailto:drsivasudevan@gmail.com))**

The MD27 Lions appointed Lion SRI Vasudevan, (member of the Port Washington Lions Club, MD27a2) as Chairman of Childhood Cancer in January of 2018. He was asked to meet the “Childhood Cancer Initiative” that was announced at the Centennial meeting of Lions Clubs International (LCI) in July of 2017.

**2018:** Lion SRI submitted a grant to the Lions Clubs International Foundation (**LCIF**). The LCIF “Humanitarian Grant” was submitted to help in the purchase of a “Flow Cytometer”, an equipment used in the new cutting-edge treatment of Childhood Cancers, Immunotherapy. Known as “CAR-T Cell Therapy”, this treatment involves taking the patient’s own blood, sorting out the “T-Cells” (part of the immune fighting response of our bodies) and modify the protein on these cells (CD 19), to recognize the cancer cells and kill them. These modified T-cells are grown & expanded and injected back into the patient. While being treated these cells must be monitored and checked regularly during the approximately 8-week treatment. These modified T-cells selectively kill the cancer cells (becoming Ninja cells) and cures certain cancers. The equipment requested in the LCIF Grant is an essential process to identify these immune-cancer fighting cells. This approach was first used in 2012 to treat a “6-year-old child with leukemia, who had failed all available treatments”. The child recovered and is still doing well

On behalf of MD27 & working with our **“Twining partner”, the Midwest Athletes against Childhood Cancer Fund (MACC Fund)**, Lion SRI submitted a Grant for \$100,000 in January 2018. The Grant was approved in May 2018 and the MD27 Lions had six months to raise the “Matching \$100,000). The MD 27 Lions clubs stepped up and raised in excess of \$100.000. On November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the MD27 Lions (represented by PCC Chuck Steinmetz) and Third Vice President of LCI, Brian Sheehan), along with the MACC Fund President Jon McGlocklin, presented the check for \$201.1025 to the Medical College of Wisconsin(MCW)/Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin. The Flow Cytometer has been purchased and is being used at the MCW in treatment. In addition, the MCW physicians have an FDA approval for targeting two proteins (CD 19 & 20)- the first facility in USA to do this ground-breaking treatment. Lion SRI is very grateful for the leadership of the current District Governors who serve on MD27 Council of Governor’s for their support and effort in having the clubs in their districts not only meet the challenge of raising the matching dollars but exceeding the goal.

**2019:** With the excess of \$78.000 raised from the efforts of the MD27 Lions, Lion SRI with approval from the MD27 Council in January, applied for another LCIF Grant for close to \$100,000 for the purchase of a different “Flow Cytometer” for the University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center in Madison. Our partner MACC Fund contributed the additional monies to match the LCIF Grant which was submitted on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019. **This grant was approved on May 17<sup>th</sup>. 2019.**

**On February 11<sup>th</sup>. 2020, the MD27 Lions (represented by Past District Governor’s (PDG’s) from 2017-18 year who approved the original grant, & The PDG’s from 2018-19 year, who raised matching funds from the Lions Clubs in Wisconsin’s MD27; Lion Clarence Harris & Kristi Garcia representing LCVIF (Lions Clubs International Foundation), as well as Jon McGlocklin, President of MACC fund presented a check of close to \$200,000 for the “Flow Cytometer”, that was recently purchased by University of Wisconsin, Children’s Hospital/ Carbone Cancer Center. Dr. Ken DeSantes welcomed the Lions and**

others in attendance and Dr. Mario Otto, was the Emcee. Drs. Ken DeSantes, Mario Otto, Paul Sondel & Christian Capitini are considered the “Dream team of Children’s Cancer research & treatment” by NCI (National Cancer Institute) & others. Lion Clarence Harris & Kristi Garcia from LCIF spoke, as well as, Jon McGlocklin of MACC fund. Lion Jodi Burmester, Immediate Past Council Chair & grant administrator for the grant that provide funds for providing the Flow Cytometer to Carbone Cancer Center coordinated the event and described MD27 Lions service to Wisconsin, especially University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Eye bank, The Hope House and Lions Camp- with financial help from LCIF.

On behalf of the Children with Cancer we are helping now, Lion SRI is thankful to the MD27 Lions (and all the clubs that stepped up for this great cause )

Thank you.

**Lion SRI Vasudevan**

Chair of MD27 Lions Childhood Cancer.

LCIF Ambassador, Campaign 100: Empowering Service

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