



THE NICHOLAS CONOR INSTITUTE
for Pediatric Cancer Research

LIFE OUT LOUD

HONORS NATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS DAY ON SEPTEMBER 13

TNCI Brings Personalized Medicine to Children with Cancer

(SAN DIEGO – September 3, 2010) San Diego native Nicholas Conor Boddy was just 15 months old when he was diagnosed with cancer. Now, four years later, he's cancer free and the organization his parents help found, The Nicholas Conor Institute (TNCI), is helping bring new cancer therapies to kids like Nicholas in San Diego and world-wide. TNCI is dedicated to developing personalized pediatric cancer treatment and predictive tests by using a child's unique genetic profiles AND the genetic expression of each cancer affecting them.

Cancer is at the vanguard of genomic medicine because it is known unequivocally to be a genetic disease. Its environmental correlates (such as smoking) act not by poisoning cells directly but by promoting mutations in those cells' DNA.

The same type of cancer from two different children may look similar under the microscope but have completely different genetic causes and thus require different treatments. While there has been significant progress made in the last decade in developing targeted therapies for some adult cancers and improving treatment outcome, the same is not the case for solid tumors in children. The formation of most tumors in children is molecularly distinct from that of adult cancers and has not received equal attention in the research and translational community.

The goal of TNCI is to make a major inroad into the diagnosis and treatment of pediatric cancers that have thus far escaped treatment options, as well as to provide molecular information for choosing treatment options that are based on molecular profiles.

As a celebratory launching pad, TNCI is presenting *Life Out Loud* to honor the children under its watch who are battling with various forms of cancer and for whom treatments that are based upon the molecular makeup of their respective cancer and their individual genetic profiles are being developed. The event is being hosted by **Life Technologies** in Carlsbad. Life Technologies is supportive of TNCI's mission in the derivation of new diagnostics and cures for children.

During one of the worst fund raising climates possible, TNCI is initiating a major venture philanthropic campaign to raise \$15 million to:

- Develop cancer specific detection and diagnostic tools.
- Create cancer specific predictive tests to guide therapy per child.
- Bring new therapies to the unique physiology of each child and the cancer affecting that child.
- Accelerate these developments through collaborative partnerships with private industry.
- Create and compile a unique, shared database containing gene expressions of cancer in children, treatment plans, and outcomes to accelerate the right treatment for each child.

TNCI's first project is to take full gene expression profiles of ten (10) children currently receiving treatment and identify abnormal gene expressions of the cancers affecting them.

Beth Anne Baber PhD MBA is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of The Nicholas Conor Institute. She is directing TNCI to the development of treatment-specific, predictive molecular diagnostics that will enable the customization of cancer therapies per child. Her initial goal is to develop diagnostics that will provide better guidance for the use of existing chemotherapy drugs rather than requiring the development of new

treatments. *“We hope to develop companion diagnostics that will determine in advance if a child is going to respond to a specific chemotherapy drug. Thus drugs that had been shelved because they were thought to be ineffective may be effective if given to the right child. Companion molecular diagnostics can help to identify the ‘right children’ for shelved drugs to be commercialized for them. We look forward to playing a major role in building the right bridge to develop and accelerate the transition of pediatric oncology cures into common clinical practice.”*

Media Opportunities

- Interview with Beth Anne Baber, Nicholas mom; CEO and Co-Founder of TNCI
- Photos of Nicholas

For interviews, photos or more information please contact Beth Anne Baber at beth@tnci.org (858) 945-0552 or Martin Kleckner III at mkleckner@tnci.org (760) 814-5142

The Nicholas Connor Institute is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our tax ID# is 26-1768860 and your contribution is tax deductible to the extent provided by law. TNCI's goal is to create better detection, diagnostic tools and personalized treatments for children with cancer. Its mission is to

1. Translate biomedical discoveries into personalized treatment programs
2. Develop cancer-specific predictive tests to guide per-child therapy
3. Bring to the market new therapies that take into account the unique molecular physiology of each child and cancer

Through vital collaboration with industry partners TNCI intends to accelerate research outcomes into effective clinical applications. The Nicholas Connor Institute is partnered with AltheaDx to develop a broad array of diagnostic, prognostic, and treatment prediction information to best guide treatment for pediatric cancers.

With its advisors from academia and private industry, TNCI brings together the research from San Diego's academic institutions and physicians from children's hospitals across the country to change current cancer treatments for children with new and innovative therapies and approaches. TNCI has recently partnered with CureSearch for Children's Cancer, the National Childhood Cancer Foundation, which provides support for the largest childhood cancer clinical trial organization, the *Children's Oncology Group*, through a mission to cure childhood cancer.

On September 13, 2010, to acknowledge and support National Childhood Cancer Awareness Day and to celebrate its achievements, TNCI will present an evening of music and commemoration in a relaxed and appropriate atmosphere. The event, aptly named “Life Out Loud”, is dedicated to children and their families benefiting from the progress of TNCI's collaborative partners.

Request for additional information: Send email to info@tnci.org