

The Cullather Center



*helping patients and their families
navigate their cancer journey*



Chris and Jean Cullather's picture looks out on the welcoming space of the Cullather Center

The Cullather Center

The Cullather Center focuses on quality of life for cancer patients and brain tumor patients. Founded by Jack Cullather and his family after he lost his wife, Jean, and son, Chris, to brain cancer, the Center now offers support to all Bon Secours cancer patients as well as to all brain tumor patients, no matter where they are seeking medical care. Since opening in 2007, the Center's complimentary integrative and supportive services have helped many patients and families find their "new normal" and promote well-being during and after their cancer journey. The Center's space was updated in Fall 2019 and provides a welcoming environment for patients and families to seek support and services.

During this past year of the COVID-19 pandemic, patients were isolated and afraid, but still in need of support. While the Cullather Center's physical location was closed to keep patients safe, the Center adapted to provide safe alternatives by developing virtual programs and patient support via video, phone, text and emails. Virtual platforms increased access, diversity and flexibility to patients who lived far away, were too sick to come in, were tight on time, had no transportation and to those who felt more comfortable in their home. We learned from supporting our patients during this unprecedented time, and so as we transition to post-pandemic care, the Cullather Center will now provide both in-person and virtual services to best support patients and families.

The Cullather Center is part of Bon Secours, the only faith based not-for-profit health care system in Virginia whose Mission is to improve the health and well-being of our communities and bring good help to those in need, especially people who are poor, dying and underserved. The continued partnership and contributions from patients, families, Bon Secours employees and the community help to make Cullather Center services available to those in need.

"The Cullather Center is a huge help to so many of our cancer patients. These patients are going through a very challenging time. The Cullather Center is able to help patients navigate what they are going through with greater comfort. By doing so they are improving lives every day."

J. Daniel Pennington, MD, PhD
Radiation Oncologist

Therapy/Service 2020

1,712 Participants in Supportive Services

77 Yoga Classes

8 Healing Arts

50 Brain Tumor Patients - new

152 Brain Tumor Encounters/Navigation

579 Patient Encounters

95 Meditation

101 Massage Therapy

216 Acupuncture

325 Music Therapy

11 Counseling

2 Respite/Home Health

95 Grief/Loss Support

1 Art Legacy
FAMILY

\$102,767 2020 Total Cost of Supportive Services
Patients and families are never charged for services.

These complimentary integrative therapies are designed to promote wellness and healthy living for patients and their families throughout the cancer care continuum.

Sally's Journey

Today, Sally is the epitome of grace under pressure. But years ago, her emotional, physical and spiritual health were in peril due to a delayed diagnosis of the rare ovarian cancer, GCT. The Cullather Center empowered Sally to begin to live as a person with cancer rather than allowing GCT to determine her destiny.

Over the last six years, Sally has endured nine surgeries, chemotherapy, six different cancer-fighting medications, radiation and a clinical trial. She credits the Cullather Center and its services for helping her manage each of these stages of her treatment and for creating the cancer patient advocate that she is today. "This place is a blessing. They genuinely care about me as a person, aside from being a cancer patient. I have tried so many things here at the Center, from massage to yoga to acupuncture and music therapy – and we've set short and long-term goals for my healing. The nurse navigators were so helpful because I did not know what services were even available or how to access them. They have taught me how to navigate and advocate for myself."

Sally's renewed spirituality is another aspect of her journey that she finds incredibly comforting. "If spirituality is important to you, then it's important to the Cullather Center. The staff will incorporate prayer and the right support staff to help guide you. I find great peace in prayer and meditation now, something that I may not have explored so deeply if I hadn't been coming to the Cullather Center."

The physical, spiritual and mental needs of cancer patients are the focus of the Cullather Center's compassionate, holistic care. "When I was first diagnosed, I was angry, sad and frustrated. You don't know what you need or how dark things are until you start to see the light. The Cullather Center showed me how to accept my cancer diagnosis and start living again on my terms." Today, Sally's career, travel plans, her dog Luna and her husband and family fill her full and growing life.

Sally pays it forward in gratitude. "I will be the advocate that the Center has taught me to be. I will show you my scars and let you feel my port. I will explain every single procedure I've ever been through if it helps someone else. Everyone has their deep, dark, scary moments – especially after their diagnosis. That's okay – but when you are ready – the Cullather Center and I are here to help you pick yourself up."



"The Cullather Center showed me how to accept my cancer diagnosis and how to start living again on my terms."

2020 Funding Sources

\$12,944.32

Tribute Gifts

\$38,931.33

Employee/Community Gifts

\$75,000.00

Events*

\$126,875.65

Total

*Proceeds from the Richmond Highland Games held in 2019.

"For me, a side effect of chemotherapy was neuropathy. It significantly impacted my feet, making it difficult to walk. Through acupuncture with Dr. Jennings, I was able to walk again with far less stiffness and pain. The Cullather Center literally got me back on my feet."

Keith M.



Courtney and Kin's Story

Behind every great man is an even greater woman, and Lawson "Kin" Headley probably knew it. Courtney and Kin met during her freshman year when he was a senior at James Madison University and fell in love. Later they married and began careers and had children – but the story does not end there. When their children were just teenagers, Kin was diagnosed with glioblastoma. Courtney recalls this being an overwhelming and terrifying time, when the shocking medical words did not always sink in, but the kindness of many had long lasting effects.

One of the many recommendations from friends and colleagues was that they seek out the services of the Cullather Center. "I can't begin to articulate how wonderful they are. They were so personal and helpful and warm," Courtney remembers. When Kin was still able to transport himself, he enjoyed the Center's services, most notably massage therapy, which Courtney says had such positive effects on him, not



Kin and Courtney with their children, LeAnna and Caid

just physically, but also on his mental outlook on life. "He would come home and share that they talked about movies and the kids, and it wasn't always about him being a cancer patient. These kind-hearted people with so much to offer treated him like a person."

"The Cullather Center loved us so much and so well. I would recommend them to anyone. They made a terrible situation brighter and more bearable."

During Kin's four-year journey with brain cancer, the Cullather Center was

also there for Courtney, knowing that as a spouse and caregiver, this was also taking a toll on her emotions and energy. "Chris from the Center would check in on me constantly with such kindness. After every surgery and procedure, I would hear from her. She truly cares about me and wanted to make sure that I was ok, as the support person and spouse. She was a wonderful listener, which is what I truly needed during those hard times."

Courtney shares that she cannot believe that Kin has been gone since November 2020. She and her family are so grateful for the Cullather Center and the unique services that they provided to Kin and would recommend them to anyone going through a brain cancer diagnosis.



To speak to the Cullather Center patient advocate, please call 804-287-7809 or visit cullather.org

To make a gift to the Cullather Center, visit bsvaf.org/cancer or mail gifts to: 5008 Monument Ave., 2nd Floor, Richmond, VA 23230 | 804-287-7700



The meditation room at the Cullather Center

"April 2018 changed my life. I lost my sister to glioblastoma in 2015 and had been assured that it doesn't seem to be genetic. On April 8, 2018, I seized and was found to have a diffuse astrocytoma and a meningioma. I researched places to go for help and found the Cullather Center listed. I knew I needed support. I needed the guidance of Chris, the massages, the meditations and just the advice of how to live with this new world I had been unfortunately aligned. The Cullather's system of support should be offered at every medical institution. Cancer is no one's friend, but it causes you to find people to put in your corner to assist you in getting on with living."

Heather G.