

AZ Giving: Ben & Catherine Ivy Foundation

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The Ben & Catherine Ivy Foundation is an organization dedicated to supporting patient-focused research on gliomas, a type of brain tumor usually found in the brain or spine. The Ivy Foundation strives towards working on a cure, but immediate goals involve doing research to find new ways of improving the diagnostics and various treatments that patients must endure. The founders, Ben and Catherine Ivy, created a foundation together that became focused on brain cancer when Ben was diagnosed with a glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) and passed away shortly thereafter. The Ivy foundation has worked hard since 2005 to bring better care to those who suffer from all types of glioma brain tumors.

AFM: Tell us more about your unique start in the formation of this supportive organization.

CI: My husband and I both valued giving back to the community. We were interested in finding a way to support education and health care. But when Ben was diagnosed, it was clear that the focus of our organization should be on how to improve the treatments and therapies patients can get when dealing with this brain cancer. And now, since 2005, we've committed more than \$50 million towards research. Our foundation was never funded until Ben got sick. Now we are able to work hard looking for new treatments and ways to support patients.

AFM: How do you focus on bettering life for patients?

CI: During the last four months of Ben's life, his quality of life was severely compromised. The suffering he endured motivated the cause of our foundation: to fund research on gliomas in order to better develop treatments and prognostics for patients. Our goals are to add more time to survival and to prevent others from having to go through what we endured, and to decrease the suffering of patients with brain tumors. The patient is at the core of everything we do.

AFM: Your foundation works on exploring new types of treatments as well?

CI: Yes. One of Ben's greatest strengths was turning challenges into opportunities. This is why we fund what others may call "riskier" science. Brain cancer is one of the largest cancers out there, and we seek to add more awareness. In the medical field, there has only been one drug created in the past 25 years to help fight this, and we aim to change that in order to find new treatments and ways to improve the patient's life. We work with people all around the world, especially in the United States, including M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, UCLA, and Stanford. We also created a new research center in Seattle that has been operating since 2008.

AFM: What do you as the founder focus on?

CI: I oversee all the projects our foundation creates or supports, as well as manage all assets, like real estate. I am traveling to Seattle soon in order to oversee things at the fairly new research center we built there that has been operating since 2008. As a whole, our foundation seeks to learning what to do and what not to do. We are part of a larger network of researchers and organizations, like our work with the National Institute of Health. The more we can learn, the more we can continue to improve our research efforts and bring hope for the future.

To learn more about the The Ben & Catherine Ivy Foundation, visit www.ivyfoundation.org.

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