

O'Hagan family seeks cure for carcinoid cancer



Matthew Kulke, MD, was instrumental in developing one of the nation's largest neuroendocrine cancer research databases, which links patients' clinical information with blood and tissue samples in a new and meaningful way.

Nancy and Patrick O'Hagan founded the Caring for Carcinoid Foundation in December 2004 to fight this rare disease. To accelerate research into this often overlooked gastrointestinal cancer and help discover a cure, this non-profit research foundation has given \$250,000 to support the investigation of DFCI's Matthew Kulke, MD.

"The foundation's mission is to discover a cure for carcinoid," said Nancy, who was diagnosed with the disease at age 29. "It is unique in its sole dedication to funding physicians and scientists who research the genetic causes of carcinoid to develop novel, targeted therapies."

Kulke has helped create one of the country's largest databases of clinical information and blood and tissue specimens collected from patients with neuroendocrine tumors. Utilizing this powerful information bank, he is leading studies that include the use of "gene chips" and other techniques to identify the genetic underpinnings of neuroendocrine malignancies. Kulke is also conducting promising clinical trials to evaluate the efficacy of angiogenesis inhibitors in treating this disease.

"Thanks to the Caring for Carcinoid Foundation," Kulke said, "we will be able to move ahead more rapidly with clinical trials of novel agents and with studies that will help pinpoint the underlying causes of carcinoid cancer. We believe these studies will make a real difference in improving diagnosis, treatment, and survival for patients with this disease." ■