

HOPE



In the cheerful setting of the Couric Center, former patient Phyllis Palmiero sits surrounded by members of UVA's nationally renowned women's oncology team. Left to right: Dr. Susan Modesitt, Dr. Chip Landen, Martha Thomas, and Jana Briedis-Ruiz.

Couric Center Fulfills a Legacy of Hope

Sharp Family Gift Impacts Generations of Cancer Patients

What began as a misdiagnosis ended with a bold commitment to women's oncology.

In 2000, April Garnett was treated in her hometown for what doctors thought was a fibroid issue. Shortly thereafter, she developed another tumor.

Her family turned to Peyton Taylor, MD, at UVA Cancer Center for help. In collaboration with pathologist Mark Stoler, MD, Taylor discovered that the tumors were actually low-grade sarcoma, a rare form of cancer that is treated by removing the uterus. This was not an option for April, who was set on having children.

Determined to save her fertility and her life, Taylor and Stoler reevaluated April's options. Thanks to their expertise, April and her family

would go on to celebrate her marriage and the birth of her two children.

"The partnership with pathology was essential," Taylor says. "If the pathology hadn't been correct, the care management decisions wouldn't have been correct. If those decisions hadn't been right, April would have been unable to fulfill her dream of children."

Women's Oncology at UVA

When April first visited UVA, only three academic institutions in the U.S. offered gynecologic pathology training programs. Taylor and Stoler recognized the importance of the partnership between oncologists and pathologists and realized that UVA had the ability to establish a rare and meaningful training program.

Rick and Sherry Sharp, April's parents, shared this vision. Their first gift to the Cancer Center was the foundation of UVA's Gynecologic

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INVESTING IN

Philanthropy in Action at UVA Cancer Center



DEAR FRIENDS

In this issue, we celebrate the 5th anniversary of the Emily Couric Clinical Cancer Center. In 2011, through private and public philanthropy, this long-desired space became a reality. Donors partnered with us on designing every floor of the Couric Center, not only to combat the issues of today, but also to plan for the needs of the future.

In fact, thanks to the visionary philanthropy of late UVA Health Foundation Trustee Rick Sharp and the Commonwealth Foundation, the infrastructure for the future is in place on the fourth floor to help us continue to meet the needs of a growing population with cancer.

As I look back on what we have accomplished together, I am proud to

be the Director of UVA Cancer Center. Proud of the strong foundation built by my predecessors. Proud of the work our team of physicians, researchers and nurses does every day to combat this terrible disease. Proud of the philanthropic partnerships, some of which have lasted decades, that make this work possible.

I will never forget the moment when something I discovered in the lab impacted a patient in the clinic. I hope that you will never forget the moment when your gift touched a patient's life in the Couric Center.

All the best,
Tom Loughran Jr., MD
Director, UVA Cancer Center

The Heart of a Cancer Center

Virginia National Bank Infusion Center Puts Patients First

Fifteen years ago, two cancer patients sat together in a dark infusion room receiving treatment.

Debbie Ryan, then UVA women's head basketball coach, and Virginia State Senator Emily Couric looked at each other and agreed—it should be better than this. An infusion center should be the heart and soul of a cancer center, the place where patients and their families spend countless hours as they receive lifesaving treatments.

As they planned together, a vision emerged of a patient-centric facility, filled with light, warmth, and healing. In 2011, their shared dream was realized in the Couric Center. Central to the building is the infusion suite, made possible in part by a lead gift from Virginia National Bank.

“Creating the right environment for our patients is critical,” according to Jody Reyes MSBA, BSN, OCN, and administrator of cancer services. “The space needs to be safe and comfortable.

Our nurses are expertly trained to deliver crucial therapies, and our team takes a lot of pride in the care we deliver.”

Today, the suite accommodates more than 100 patients daily and is open seven days a week, 363 days a year. It includes both private and communal treatment areas, all available thanks to community philanthropic gifts. Specially trained nurses administer a variety of treatments, including chemotherapy and therapies for various chronic conditions.

“Virginia National Bank was proud to support the creation of the infusion suite in the Emily Couric Clinical Cancer Center,” says Hunter Craig, board member of Virginia National Bank. “The resource took on a personal meaning for my family when our daughter needed infusion therapy. We'll be forever thankful for the exceptional care we received from Dr. Mike Williams and the nursing team at UVA.”

Although Couric ultimately lost her battle with cancer, her vision lives on today. The Couric Center is a testament to a dream of a brighter future and a legacy of patients, family, and friends coming together to support future patients.



Framed by a painting of Emily Couric, Jody Reyes (left) meets Emily Wadlow and Jessica Wadlow (Emily's granddaughter and daughter-in-law) for a tour of the Couric Center.

EMILY COURIC'S LEGACY

The Center was named for Emily Couric, a distinguished public servant, Virginia legislator, journalist, and author who died of pancreatic cancer in 2001. She was an outspoken advocate for other cancer patients during her lifetime, and after her death, her family worked tirelessly to move Emily's ideas forward. Her vision is realized in the Emily Couric Clinical Cancer Center and the compassionate, state-of-the-art care it delivers to the patients of today and tomorrow.

A Return on Investment

McConnell Radiation Suite Advances New Models of Care

What a difference five years can make.

When Susan McConnell began volunteering at UVA Cancer Center 10 years ago, patients were seen in the West Complex, otherwise known as the “old hospital.”

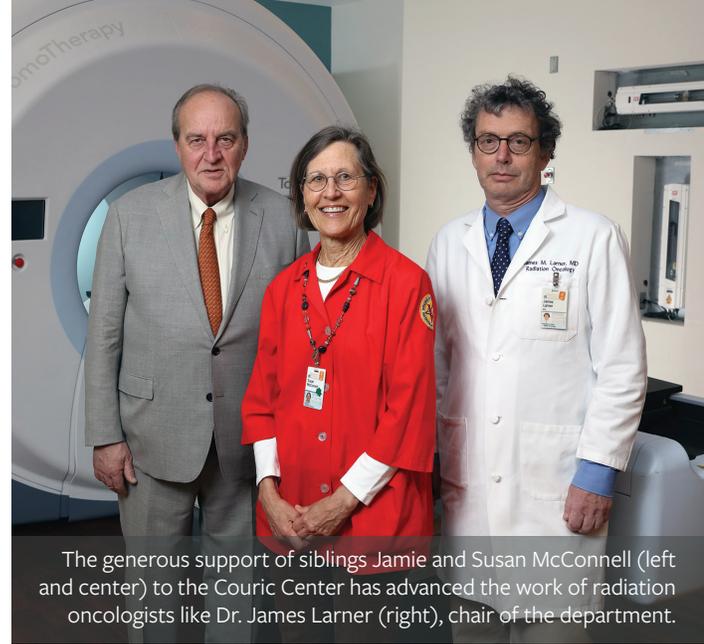
“Back then you needed a road map to get around as a patient,” Susan remembers. “The rooms were small and there was little light.” When plans were announced to build a new outpatient care facility—the Emily Couric Clinical Cancer Center—Susan knew this was the future of cancer care in Charlottesville.

“Because I had been a volunteer for so long, I could see the need. I could see how patient care could be dramatically improved. We could do better.”

In 2007, Susan and her brother Jamie McConnell made a \$250,000 gift to the construction of the Couric Center. The funds were used to outfit a radiation suite in the bottom floor of the center, a suite that was named in their honor.

“A project like this is perfect,” Jamie says. “It brings together the needs of the community, the needs of patients, the capital needs of the University, and the interests of donors and alumni like ourselves who want to be agents of change.”

“These leadership gifts make all the difference for the work we do,” explains James Larner, MD, chair of radiation oncology. “Clinical research in the McConnell Suite has led to new ways to treat head and neck cancers, resulting in more than 30 published research manuscripts and adding to our knowledge of the disease.”



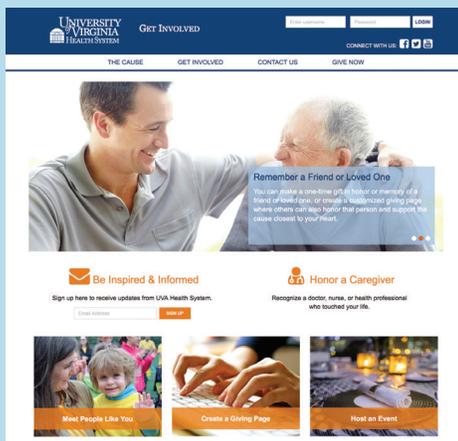
The generous support of siblings Jamie and Susan McConnell (left and center) to the Couric Center has advanced the work of radiation oncologists like Dr. James Larner (right), chair of the department.

“What’s more, this space helped advance the work of Dr. Paul Read, whose research has shortened the amount of time it takes for patients to receive palliative radiation treatments by over two orders of magnitude—from 625 hours, on average, to four to six hours. This advance in the speed of delivering radiation allows our patients to spend their limited time doing what they love with their families and friends instead of receiving radiation treatments.”

And for the McConnells, the return on investment became personal.

“I receive phone calls and pictures from friends whose spouses are being treated in this suite,” Jamie says. “They didn’t know about our involvement with the Cancer Center, but they were grateful for the expert care they were receiving and appreciative of our part in it.”

GET INVOLVED SPOTLIGHT: PRICES SUPPORT CANCER RESEARCH



For the last two years of his life, my dad, Edward Paul Price, received incredible care from the doctors and nurses at UVA. It was very important to him, as well as to my brother and me, that we give back and help support those efforts—not just for my dad, but for all people fighting this disease.

When my father died, we created a Get Involved giving page to raise funds in his memory to go toward cancer research. Through this site, we’ve raised significant funds and are planning to do even more. Having lost both my parents to cancer, there is no other cause more important to me or my family. Further, through our company, Price Automotive, we are raising funds for UVA Cancer Center with the Race to 1000 event going on through June.



(From left to right) Dan Price and his father, Edward Paul Price.

Visit get-involved.uvahealth.com today!

Written by Dan Price

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Pathology Fellowship, now renowned as one of the best in the country.

“Dr. Taylor always treated me with such compassion and care, and continues to do so well after his retirement from UVA,” April says. “I greatly appreciate how he considers all aspects of my health and well-being, understanding that I am more than just a body with cancer.”

Not only did Dr. Taylor help me survive seven uterine leiomyosarcomas during his time as my oncologist, but he also preserved my fertility so that I could have two healthy children. I owe him the world, or at the very least my world. My depth of love and gratitude for Dr. Taylor is profound and everlasting.”

With such success, the Sharps realized that they could do much more. They could create a complete program dedicated to caring for patients like April. The timing was perfect—plans for the Emily Couric Clinical Cancer Center were in motion, and Taylor dreamed of creating a comprehensive women’s oncology program that could capitalize on the emerging field of cancer genetics.

Today, their shared vision is realized within the Couric Center, which serves as a home base for the Women’s Oncology Program and the Women’s High Risk Breast and Ovarian Clinic. The program has grown to include a nationally renowned team of women’s oncology experts, all of whom were named to *Newsweek’s* “Best Doctors” list in 2015.

Currently the High Risk Clinic is the only designated center in the region that serves women at higher risk for developing cancers that can run in their families. The program



Sherry and Rick Sharp (3rd & 4th from left), daughter April (2nd from right), and families celebrate the Couric Center opening with Dr. Peyton Taylor (3rd from right) in 2011.

encompasses a multidisciplinary care team of breast and gynecological oncology physicians, nurses, social workers, and genetic counselors, and—as it was with April—the patient is at the center.

Using the common ground of genetics, the Clinic plays a pivotal role in both designing and running clinical trials related to all women’s oncology. Through cutting-edge research and cohesive working relationships between team members, women’s oncology patients in the Commonwealth and beyond have access to innovative, personalized care and treatments.

“Having a dedicated women’s oncology clinic space has been truly amazing,” says Susan Modesitt, MD, director of the Gynecologic Oncology Division and co-director of the Women’s High Risk Clinic. “It allows everything to be focused entirely on women. It also provides a physical environment conducive to collaboration and innovation for the clinical providers who have devoted their professional lives to improving women’s cancer outcomes at every level.”

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