

# TRANSFORMING

THE SYSTEM  
TO CURE KIDS

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

BRIDGE TO A CURE FOUNDATION, INC.

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# BRIDGE TO A CURE FOUNDATION IS ON A MISSION TO UNIFY AND TRANSFORM THE CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH COMMUNITY TO REDUCE CHILDHOOD CANCER DEATHS 50% BY 2030.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

Dear Friends,

Our journey to unify and transform a broken healthcare system accelerated in 2022, creating the basis that will ensure our goal to cut the childhood cancer death rate 50% by 2030 will be achieved. We have you, our donors, volunteers, and the pediatric cancer community, to thank. Your support means everything, and we hope that the progress reported on the pages that follow not only meets your expectations but exceeds them.

Our focus remains on achieving childhood brain tumor breakthroughs by transforming the childhood cancer community's approach to research and our nation's approach to funding it. You will note that collaboration and technology continue to be the key drivers in this push for transformation.

Our ability to optimize these forces stems from the strong strategic relationships we have forged with two major influencers within the childhood cancer community: Children's Brain Tumor Network (CBTN) and the St. Baldrick's Foundation.

As we look ahead, I am filled with optimism for the future. With your continued support, I am confident that we can work toward finally eradicating childhood cancer and other diseases that have previously taken our family, friends, and loved ones far too soon.

Yours in Hope and Health,



Robert Martin  
Founder & President



## OUR INSPIRATION

*Foundation President Robert Martin's granddaughter Clara Ely was just six years old in 2017 when she lost her battle with a form of brain cancer. Her remarkable courage and optimistic spirit continue to inspire the work of Bridge To A Cure Foundation.*

#### FOUNDATION LEADERSHIP

#### 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Martin, Board Chair  
Ken Asher, Secretary  
Gary Tapella, Treasurer  
Rudi Dubois  
Ira Dunkel, M.D.  
Henry Friedman, M.D.  
David Gibbons  
Tricia Martin, RLA, LEED AP  
Peter Tombros

#### ADVISORY BOARD

Lois Juliber  
Al Musella, DPM  
Carolyn Rogers, CFRE, CPRC  
Corinne Wyard

#### STAFF

Robert Martin, President  
Wendy Payton, Executive Director



# CHILDHOOD CANCER DESTROYS DREAMS

**THAT'S WHY WE DISRUPT THE STATUS QUO.**

Our sick children are being treated with the same toxic cancer medicines that were used more than 40 years ago. And the survival rates for deadly brain cancers have remained virtually unchanged over the past two decades. About 100,000 kids worldwide lose their lives to cancer each year. The journey is agonizing, and throngs of survivors face lifelong pain and disability caused by their cancer or the poisonous treatments used to heal them. Clearly, the status quo is not good enough.

That's why Bridge To A Cure Foundation is working to transform the healthcare research community by equipping them with the technology, collaborations, and open access to the data these brilliant minds and caring hearts need to end this cruel disease.

# SHARPENED APPROACH

Bridge To A Cure Foundation is a small organization with a **big goal:** to unify and transform the childhood cancer research community to reduce deaths 50% by 2030.

## 01.

By Empowering  
Discovery Through  
Collaborative Data

We realized that if we can find cures for the deadliest forms of childhood cancer, brain tumors, we will achieve our mission. We've focused our approach to first and foremost drive cures for this devastating disease.

Big data is transforming everything from the way companies connect their products with people to solving logistics headaches in getting them delivered. And now, big data is being applied to advance childhood cancer research. There is not enough data for one institution or researcher to benefit from big data discovery; the scientists must come together to share. And that's exactly what has taken shape in 2022.

This model to use big data and artificial intelligence (AI) to cure pediatric cancer was launched after Bridge To A Cure's Bob Martin met with Ned Sharpless, then the director of the National Cancer Institute, on October 5, 2017, just three days before his granddaughter Clara passed away from a brain tumor. Now, this model of building and accessing collaborative data is taking hold.

## 02.

By Advancing  
Personalized Medicine  
for Every Child

The clinical trial process was created for adults – not children. It's no wonder these treatments are cruelly toxic. Bridge To A Cure worked this past year to influence clinicians away from a one-size-fits-all solution to a tailored, personalized approach for treating childhood cancer based on findings from collaborative pediatric data and the biology of the individual child to gather real-time learnings and provide less harmful, more effective treatments.

## 03.

By Requiring  
Open Science for  
Research Funding

As a society, we have a moral obligation to care for and protect the vulnerable and dependent. The battle for a cure should be waged against the disease, not against each other. That's why we've continued our push to require that researchers share their data in an open and accessible way. To reinforce this cooperation, we invited childhood cancer foundations and other major funders to require data sharing as part of every research project they fund. In addition, we called on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to increase investment in childhood forms of cancer. Because when we work together, helping one helps all.

# STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

We have forged strategic relationships with two key organizations critical to transforming research and funding: Children's Brain Tumor Network and St. Baldrick's Foundation.



## CHILDREN'S BRAIN TUMOR NETWORK

### Clara Ely Bridge To A Cure-CBTN Fund

Bridge To A Cure is a member of the CBTN Executive Council, and in 2022 Robert Martin joined the CBTN Executive Board. In this role, he pushes for institutional participation and peer foundation support and provides expertise in strategic planning and communications. And now, there's an amazing alignment between the Bridge To A Cure Foundation and CBTN that allows crucial leverage of both organizations' resources to boost the efforts of the collaborative research model through the Clara Ely Bridge To A Cure-CBTN Fund.



## PROJECT ACCELERATE

Bridge To A Cure Foundation teamed up with CBTN to drive participation in a collaborative, data-sharing research model to accelerate the pace of scientific discovery. One significant outcome is the CBTN NIH X01 Resources Award, made possible by Kids First and the Children's Cancer Data Initiative. Data from 8,400 samples were generated at the Broad Institute beginning in September 2022. Now this data is being painstakingly processed at the Center for Data Driven Discovery in Biomedicine (D3b), home of CBTN. Project Accelerate creates a flood of new data to increase the size and scale of information available. This effort turbocharges progress so cures for even rare forms of childhood brain cancer become a more real possibility. This also ensures that doctors and clinicians will eventually deliver the right diagnosis and treatment for each individual child.



## PEDIATRIC BRAIN TUMOR ATLAS

The Pediatric Brain Tumor Atlas (PBTA) is a collaborative effort to accelerate discoveries for therapeutic interventions for children diagnosed with brain tumors. Since beginning in 2018 with data from 1,000 patients, Project Accelerate has driven the number of specimens available to researchers to nearly 9,000 this past year. Funding for this initiative was provided by more than 20 foundation sponsors, including Bridge To A Cure.



## ST. BALDRICK'S FOUNDATION

Foundation President Robert Martin sits on the board of directors of St. Baldrick's Foundation, the largest non-government funder of childhood cancer research grants. This foundation has raised \$310 million to fund 1,620 research grants. The goal of Bridge To A Cure is to influence this important funder to support open science processes and projects in cooperation with institutions like CBTN. Further, Bridge To A Cure provides leadership and strategic insight to enhance operations. Martin sits on the Government Relations subcommittee, meeting with legislators and influencing bill language, lobbying strategy, and messaging.

# TRANSFORMING FUNDING PRIORITIES

In 2022, Bridge To A Cure Foundation pushed coalition members toward institutional cooperation to better leverage resources unavailable individually.

Working in this way promotes a more collaborative effort in childhood cancer research to yield bigger breakthroughs at a faster pace.



## STAR ACT

Childhood diseases like cancer shouldn't be used as political tools, yet with all that is at stake, some elected officials began making overtures that the Childhood Cancer Survivorship, Treatment, Access, and Research (STAR) Act would be a casualty of budget cuts.

Thanks to pressure from groups like Bridge To A Cure, the value of this legislation was recognized and it was reauthorized for five more years by President Biden on January 5, 2023. Since being signed into law in 2018, the STAR Act has helped deliver over \$120 million to fund promising research and assist patients and families battling cancer. The reauthorized version pushed even further than the original, streamlining the approval process and requiring data sharing for all projects funded under the act.

## NIH CHANGING ATTITUDE

Through the efforts of Bridge To A Cure and many other voices in the childhood cancer community, the NIH increased its childhood cancer budget allocation from 4% in 2017 when Bridge To A Cure was founded to about 8% of its total budget in 2022. While still far too low of an investment, we are moving in the right direction. The NIH is adapting its funding priorities to reflect new and emerging areas of research, including funding research related to precision medicine, which seeks to tailor medical treatments to the specific needs of individual patients.

## RACE ACT REQUIREMENT

In 2017, the RACE for Children Act authorized the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to direct companies developing cancer drugs for adults to study those drugs in kids when substantially relevant to children's cancers. Where once there was little interest, this act has incentivized drug companies to invest more in childhood cancer research, and Bridge To A Cure now calls upon pharma companies to collaborate and share the data they produce.

## KIDS FIRST 2.0

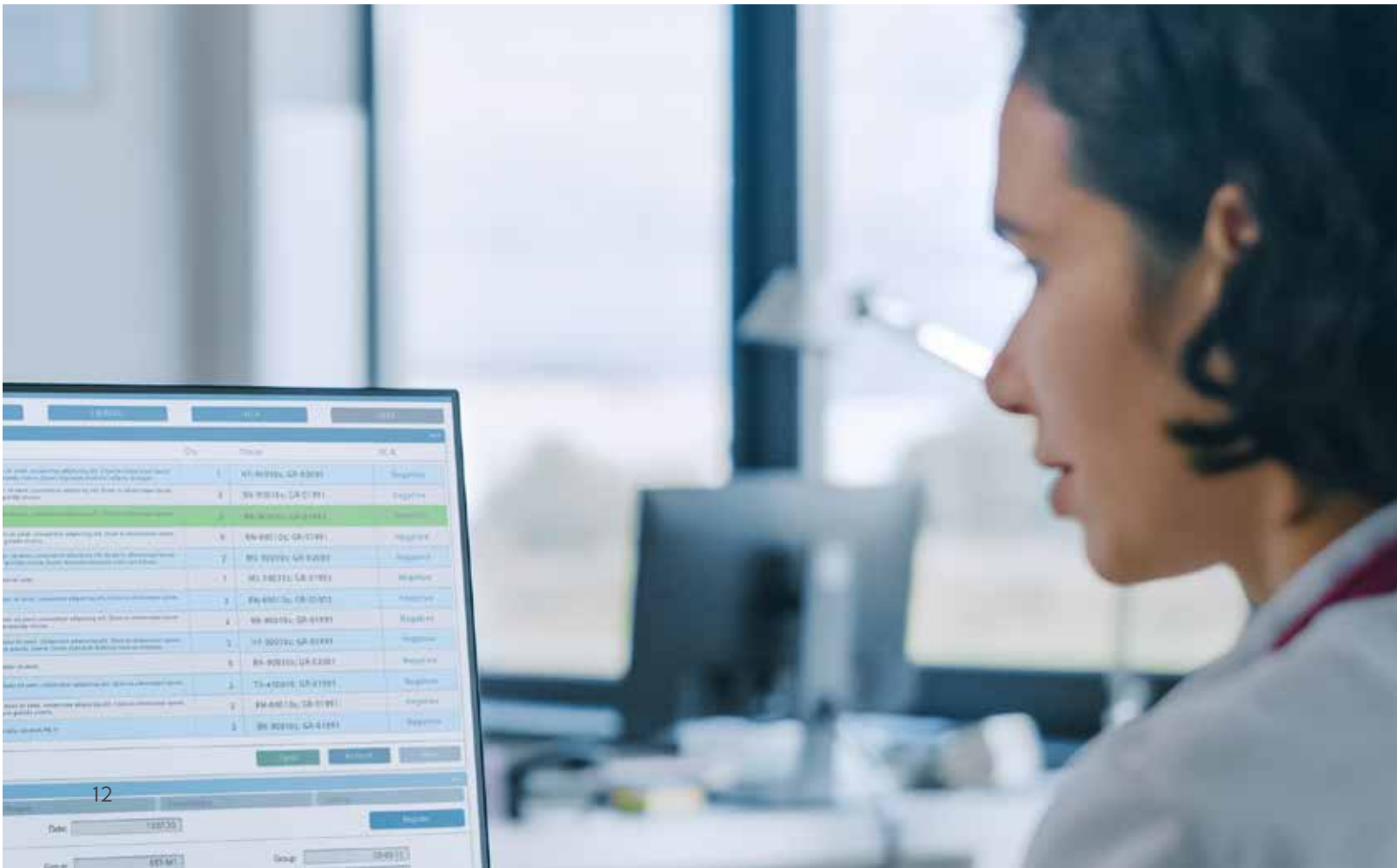
In July 2022, the House of Representatives passed the bipartisan Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act 2.0, which would nearly double funding for lifesaving research of treatments and cures for childhood cancer research. Bridge To A Cure and its network lobbied hard to ensure its passage, meeting with congressional leaders to implore them for support.

However, the bill did not move forward in the Senate before the end of the year. Funding for the NIH Kids First Data Resource Center, housed at CBTN parent D3b, will expire at the end of 2023 if Congress does not act to renew this vital legislation.

The Kids First Data Resource Center housed at CBTN holds data from more than 90,000 samples, enabling researchers, clinicians, and patients to work together to accelerate the 36 studies on cancer and structural birth defects available for researchers. It's a \$26 million investment in keeping kids healthy that is at risk of being discarded by a powerful few who lack vision and heart. Bridge To A Cure is determined to turn the tide.

# TRANSFORMING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Technology now has a major impact on the healthcare industry, and CBTN, powered by D3b, is transforming the way healthcare is delivered, managed, and accessed. Technology advancements such as informatics portals, AI, and partnerships with Amazon Web Services (AWS) are improving patient outcomes, increasing efficiency, and reducing costs in cancer research. In the past year these advancements have also opened new opportunities for research and personalized medicine.



## CLOUD-BASED SHARING

Cloud-based sharing can be a valuable tool for researchers to collaborate, store and access large amounts of data, and run complex computations without worrying about the limitations of local infrastructure. Additionally, cloud computing can enable real-time data analysis, better data security, and the ability to scale resources as needed. Our partners at CBTN utilize a variety of web-based applications to manage and freely share large collections of specimen, clinical, and genomic data for accelerated discovery.

## AMAZON WEB SERVICES (AWS) PARTNERSHIP

In 2022, President Joe Biden set a goal to end cancer as we know it by improving prevention, screening, diagnosis, and treatment. In reigniting the Cancer Moonshot, the administration brought relevant departments and agencies together to form a Cancer Cabinet and has issued a call to action to the private sector to join the effort. Bridge To A Cure Foundation network members CBTN and Dragon Master Foundation participated this past fall in panels and working groups to push this initiative further.

To ensure the continued transformation of data sharing for cancer research, this past fall, AWS announced that it is expanding its ongoing work with CBTN. The work is still in its early stages, together, AWS and CBTN will enable researchers and clinicians to share and analyze medical records and imaging, genomic, and other data in near realtime to speed the development of new therapies for pediatric brain cancer.

# TRANSFORMING RESEARCH & CARE

## TRANSFORMING THE RESEARCH MODEL

Bridge To A Cure Foundation continued its initiative to transform the traditional research model from a siloed approach to a collaborative one. This transformation is aimed at breaking down barriers and encouraging communication, sharing of resources, and joint problem-solving among researchers from different fields and specialties. This approach can lead to more innovative and effective research outcomes and can also help to foster a culture of teamwork and mutual support among researchers.

## CBTN MODEL

How researchers view their role in discovering new cures and therapies for cancer is something we've worked hard to help change. Bridge To A Cure believes that data should be available broadly to the scientific community. Collaborator CBTN makes data available to any researcher, anywhere in the world, via cloud-based platforms, including the Kids First Data Resource Portal, CAVATICA, and PedcBioPortal. More and more, scientists are adopting this new research model by providing resources and expanding the network of scientists working toward cures. We believe that in time, those who practice the siloed traditional model of science will be left out of important discoveries.



## TRANSFORMING CARE FOR EVERY KID

The mission to improve the quality of life and outcomes for children with cancer by reshaping the way they are cared for is an important one. It aims to bring together researchers, healthcare providers, patients, and families to improve the diagnosis, treatment, and care for children with cancer. The goal is to ensure that every child with cancer has access to the best possible care and treatments, leading to better outcomes and a higher quality of life for children and their families.

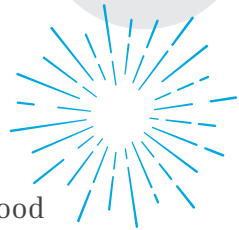


# DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISE

## A Year of Transformation

### DATA BOOM

Data-building efforts led by CBTN are exponentially growing the scale of childhood brain tumor data. With this unprecedented effort, cures that were once out of reach are now in sight. In 2022, CBTN added data from more than 8,000 specimen samples and added hundreds of new patient participants.



### FUNDING UPTICK

After years of stagnation for pediatric cancer research, the government has doubled its investment to about 8% over the past couple of years. This is the result of effective lobbying by childhood cancer foundations, including Bridge To A Cure Foundation, St. Baldrick's Foundation, and many other passionate and dedicated advocates. It is also a reflection of the demonstrated progress and promise of cures by CBTN and its confederation of medical institutions, scientists, researchers, and patients. While this increased investment is encouraging, it is still far below where it should be based on the impact of the disease. Bridge To A Cure Foundation will continue to lobby for increased investment in childhood brain tumor research.

### INSTITUTIONAL ADOPTION

A global collaboration is forming between many of the leading childhood brain tumor research and treatment centers in the United States,

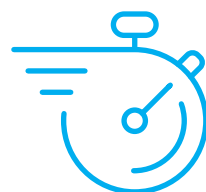


Europe, Asia, and Australia.

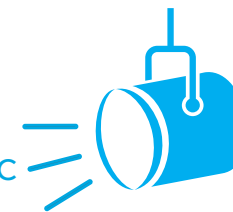
This network added six new member institutions this past year. In all, 34 member institutions now contribute expertise, develop clinical trials, enroll research subjects, and collect the data and specimens needed for research. This level of cooperation gives researchers a comprehensive view of childhood brain tumors and opens doors to the discovery of more effective therapies for children.

### RESEARCH ACCELERATION

As researchers have adapted the collaborative data-sharing model of CBTN and Bridge To A Cure, the pace of research in critical areas of rare childhood brain tumors has sped up by as much as 20 years! While we don't have a good grasp on how many researchers worldwide are seeing this kind of acceleration, documented projects show the promise of open science and collaboration in developing cures not only for childhood cancer but also for other serious and rare diseases.



### SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGHS



Cancer remains the leading cause of death from disease among children in the United States. And while treatment of several types of childhood cancer has progressed over the past 50 years, success in developing treatments for many deadly forms has been limited. This includes the 30 known types of pediatric brain and central nervous system cancers. Even when long-term survival is achieved, many experience lasting or even permanent side effects from either the disease or its toxic treatments.

Bridge To A Cure Foundation applauds the heroes working in clinics and research labs across the country and around the world to find better treatments and cures for childhood cancers. It can be isolating and tedious work — sometimes over an entire career. But its importance to the thousands of kids and their families fighting cancer cannot be understated. [Thank you.](#)

Through CBTN, more than 300 childhood brain tumor projects are being studied, and even more are using data produced by CBTN. Here are just three examples of how data shared through CBTN has led to significant progress in 2022 over widely different types of research:

### IMAGING

Dr. Ali Navevzadeh, a radiologist at the University of Pennsylvania, has moved the needle in research efforts using MRI to better understand the complex nature of the brain tumor environment. This research includes the development of a more precise and widely available substance to better diagnose and target treatments for brain tumors.

### DNA

Dr. Lukas Chavez of the Chavez Lab at the University of California, San Diego provides a prime example of how data collected by CBTN is informing science. This year, Dr. Chavez's team demonstrated how to leverage data sets in childhood brain tumors to identify tumor subgroups. This advancement allows oncologists to better target even rare forms of childhood brain cancer to improve treatments for better outcomes.

### IMMUNOTHERAPY

Dr. Arash Nabbi, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Calgary, used CBTN and Kids' First data among other sources to improve cancer care through precision immunotherapy — a type of treatment that uses a child's own immune system to fight cancer. This past year, he used this data to identify biomarkers that could be targeted by treatments to overcome tumor growth.



# STEWARDSHIP

## FINANCIAL REPORT

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES  
FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022

	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>	
Donations	\$ 230,867
Interest Income	3
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>	<b>230,870</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Program Services	129,381
Management & General Services	50,907
Fundraising Services	6,249
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>186,537</b>
<b>NON-OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	
Investment Return, net	203
<b>TOTAL NON-OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>203</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>44,130</b>
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	88,984
<b>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 133,114</b>

Bridge To A Cure Foundation has operated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit charitable organization since its incorporation in September 2019.



# TOGETHER, WE TRANSFORM

## VOLUNTEER

Whether you'd like to volunteer on an ongoing basis or for a short-term project, your time and talents will greatly enhance our efforts.

## FUNDRAISE

Create your own campaign to support Bridge To A Cure Foundation. Make it a great time while you make a difference. Visit [BridgeToACure.org](http://BridgeToACure.org) for ideas that bring "fun" to your fundraiser.

## ADVOCATE

Write emails or set appointments with decision-makers and legislators, forward our latest blog stories, and share social media content with your friends and connections.

## SHOP

Bridge To A Cure Foundation is a registered charitable organization with some of the nation's largest online retailers, including PayPal and eBay.

## SHARE

If you've been touched by childhood cancer, we want to hear your story. We're at the ready to listen with resources, compassion, and acceptance.

## DONATE

Give once or give monthly when you visit [BridgeToACure.org/donate](http://BridgeToACure.org/donate). For other ways to give, visit the website's support page to see check, stock, wire, employer matching, or legacy giving options.

## CONNECT



@BTACFoundation  
Visit [bridgetoacure.org/support](http://bridgetoacure.org/support) or call 877.460.2873 to learn more.

HOW YOU CAN HELP



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[bridgetoacure.org](http://bridgetoacure.org)