



For more information, contact:

[Chris Zurawsky](#)

Director of Communications and Public Affairs

412-770-5409

[Emily Stimmel](#)

Communications and External Relations Coordinator

412-647-0504

September 1, 2020

### **Phil and Penny Knight to Receive AACI Champion for Cures Award**

Nike, Inc., co-founder Phil Knight and his wife, Penny, will receive the 2020 AACI Champion for Cures Award, in recognition of their transformational philanthropy that advances our shared vision of a future without cancer.

The Knights have demonstrated their commitment to the cancer community for over a decade, beginning with a \$100 million gift in 2008 that was used to recruit the best and brightest researchers to the Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU). Beyond their significant financial support, the Knights have also helped build a network of people who are emotionally—and financially—invested in the success of Knight Cancer Institute.

In 2015, the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute announced that it had achieved a \$500 million fundraising challenge set by the Knights, raising \$1 billion for cancer research. The Knight Cancer Challenge garnered support from donors in every state in the nation and 14 countries. Donors were inspired by plans for the first grand-scale program of its kind dedicated to radically transforming early detection of lethal cancers.

“Phil and Penny Knight’s generosity and their commitment to defeating cancer is unsurpassed,” said AACI President **Roy A. Jensen, MD**. “Such gifts allow cancer centers to improve facilities, conduct more research, and deliver exceptional care. AACI is pleased to recognize the Knights’ legacy of promoting cancer research and improving care for generations of patients with cancer.”

The Champion for Cures Award was established as an annual award in 2018 to recognize philanthropic support of AACI cancer centers. The award will be presented to the Knights on Monday, October 12, during the 2020 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting. To prioritize the health and well-being of AACI meeting attendees, supporters, and cancer center patients, the annual meeting will take place October 12-13 in a virtual format.

The Oregon Cancer Center was founded at OHSU in 1992. It became an NCI-Designated Cancer Center in 1997. It was renamed the Knight Cancer Institute in 2008 and earned comprehensive designation from the NCI in 2017.

OHSU Knight Cancer Institute Director **Brian Druker, MD**, will present the award to the Knights. Dr. Druker revolutionized the treatment of cancer through research that resulted in the first drug to target the molecular defect of a cancer while leaving healthy cells unharmed. Marketed under the name Gleevec®, his discovery turned a once-fatal cancer, chronic myeloid leukemia, into a manageable condition. Dr. Druker received the 2013 AACI Distinguished Scientist Award.



## Association of American Cancer Institutes

---

“Phil and Penny Knight presented us with the challenge of a lifetime,” said Dr. Druker. “Their remarkable vision motivated more than 10,000 people in Oregon—and around the world—to recognize an extraordinary opportunity to support our mission to end cancer as we know it. The Knights’ incredible generosity leaves an indelible legacy in the world of cancer research and will no doubt impact generations to come.”

The AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting hosts directors, administrators, faculty, and staff from AACI’s 102 North American cancer centers, along with representatives from national cancer research and advocacy organizations, industry, and government health agencies, to create innovative solutions to common challenges in the field.

###

*The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) is dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer by enhancing the impact of North America’s leading academic cancer centers. For more information, please visit [aacicancer.org](http://aacicancer.org).*