

# LUSTGARTEN FOUNDATION® PANCREATIC CANCER RESEARCH

## PANCREATIC CANCER EXPERTS AVAILABLE IN RESPONSE TO ALEX TREBEK DEATH

The Lustgarten Foundation offers in-depth insight into life-threatening disease

Like fans around the world, we were saddened to learn of the death today of Alex Trebek, 80, from pancreatic cancer. By openly sharing his cancer battle, Alex became a powerful voice in raising awareness of pancreatic cancer and providing hope for people affected by pancreatic cancer around the world. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and millions of fans who welcomed the long-time Jeopardy! host into their homes for 35 years.

Last November, approximately six months after first publicly sharing his diagnosis, Alex filmed [a public service announcement](#) (PSA) for the World Pancreatic Cancer Day. November is Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month, which coincided with the 2019 **Jeopardy! Tournament of Champions**.

Throughout the two-week tournament, Alex and players wore purple ribbons to honor Alex's cancer battle and to memorialize Tournament of Champions qualifier and Teachers Tournament winner Larry Martin, who died of pancreatic cancer earlier in the year. But it was College Champ Dhruv Guar, who's heartfelt **Final Jeopardy!** answer "We love you, Alex." caused the beloved Jeopardy! host to choke up. The moment went viral and #WeLoveYouAlex became a viral fundraiser for the Foundation, bringing in more than \$100,000. We caught up with Dhruv again back in July, when Alex's memoir "[The Answer Is...Reflections on My Life](#)," was released.

**World Pancreatic Cancer Day**, which is Thursday, Nov. 19, was established to raise awareness of the disease that kills more than 45,000 Americans and 5,300 Canadians each year—including Alex Trebek, SCOTUS Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Rep. John Lewis. With a five-year survival rate in the single digits, pancreatic cancer is the third leading cause of cancer-related death. Though currently there are no early detection tests and, unless the cancer is surgically removed in its earliest stages, no cure, scientists are making progress.

Since the Foundation's launch more than 20 years ago, Lustgarten-funded researchers have been at the forefront of the most promising breakthroughs, achieving significant milestones in understanding and treating this disease and in detecting it earlier. To date, the Foundation has invested more than \$200 million into pancreatic cancer research, including \$25 million into our dedicated labs. The Lustgarten Foundation is the only non-profit in the country to have four dedicated pancreatic cancer research laboratories, which means more resources, time and talent are being put toward finding a cure for this devastating disease.

- **Elizabeth M. Jaffee, M.D., Chief Medical Advisor, Lustgarten Foundation (Baltimore/DC)**  
Dr. Jaffee is an internationally recognized expert in cancer immunology, with specific expertise in preclinical and early clinical development of immunotherapies for pancreatic cancer. She is a pioneer in pancreatic cancer vaccine development who holds six vaccine patents and is working to further develop these vaccines. Dr. Jaffee is the Dana and Albert "Cubby" Broccoli Professor of Oncology, and Deputy Director of the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins.
- **David Tuveson, M.D., Ph.D., Chief Scientist, Lustgarten Foundation (Greater NYC Area)**  
As an internationally renowned physician-scientist, Dr. Tuveson merges his laboratory and

clinical research to bring new treatment options to patients faster. He is known for generating the first genetically-engineered mouse model for pancreatic cancer, which is now used throughout the scientific community to test new therapies for pancreatic cancer. He is the Director of the Lustgarten Foundation Pancreatic Cancer Research Laboratory at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, where he leads research into organoids—a form of personalized medicine. An organoid is a tiny 3-D culture of a patient's pancreatic cancer tissue that can be replicated in the lab, allowing researchers to test a variety of drugs and treatment options.

- **Bert Vogelstein, M.D., Director, Lustgarten Laboratory at Johns Hopkins (Baltimore/DC)**

Dr. Vogelstein's more than 500 scientific papers have been cited nearly 300,000 times—making him the most cited scientist in any discipline, in recorded history. After analyzing tumors of the colon and breast, the Lustgarten Foundation recruited Dr. Vogelstein to sequence the genetic makeup of pancreatic cancer, which was a significant turning point in pancreatic cancer research. He is the Director of the Ludwig Center, Clayton Professor of Oncology and Pathology and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator at The Johns Hopkins Medical School and Kimmel Cancer Center.

- **Tyler Jacks, Ph.D., Director, Lustgarten Laboratory at MIT (Cambridge/Boston)**

Under Dr. Jacks' guidance, the Lustgarten Laboratory at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) will leverage its unparalleled expertise in cancer biology and engineering to advance pancreatic cancer research. His work studying the genetic events contributing to the development of cancer has been recognized with numerous awards and accolades, including the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Outstanding Achievement Award. Dr. Jacks is a Professor of Biology at MIT, a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator.

- **Brian Wolpin, M.D., MPH, Director Lustgarten Laboratory at Dana-Farber (Boston)**

A medical oncologist, Dr. Wolpin sees patients while simultaneously leading a research program investigating the biology and treatment of pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC), the most common type of pancreatic cancer. His laboratory focuses on diagnosis, risk factors, survival determinants and clinical trials for PDAC, which he is able to translate to his patients in real time.

- **Kerri Kaplan, President and CEO, Lustgarten Foundation**

Under Kerri's leadership, the Lustgarten Foundation has directed more than \$200 million to pancreatic research, which has led to significant breakthroughs, including the first FDA approval of an immunotherapy treatment for pancreatic cancer and a promising early detection blood test, CancerSEEK, which will be entering clinical trials this year. She also was instrumental in establishing a collaboration with Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) to jointly fund several pancreatic cancer research teams and in expanding that collaboration to form the Pancreatic Cancer Collective (PCC) to accelerate research for pancreatic cancer patients who desperately need better treatment options. Through the PCC, the Foundation and SU2C are creating a dynamic and fluid network to engage and influence medical institutions, researchers and corporations that are aligned to achieve bigger more meaningful results for patients.

- **Andrew Rakeman, PhD, VP of Research, Lustgarten Foundation**

In his role as VP of Research, Andy manages the scientific and clinical research programs and international partnerships to fulfill the Foundation's mission to advance the scientific and medical research related to the diagnosis, treatment and cure of pancreatic cancer. Prior to joining the Foundation, Andy spent 13 years at the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation

(JDRF), where he was the Assistant Vice President of Research. He holds a B.A. in Biology from Boston University and a Ph.D. in Cell Biology and Genetics from Cornell University.

### **About the Lustgarten Foundation**

Lustgarten Foundation is the largest private funder of pancreatic cancer research in the world. Based in Woodbury, N.Y., the Foundation's mission is to cure pancreatic cancer by funding scientific and clinical research related to the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of pancreatic cancer; providing research information and clinical support services to patients, caregivers and individuals at high risk; and increasing public awareness and hope for those dealing with this disease. Since its inception, Lustgarten Foundation has directed more than \$200 million to research and has assembled the best scientific minds with the hope that one day, a cure can be found. Thanks to separate funding to support administrative expenses, 100% of your donation goes directly to pancreatic cancer research. For more information, visit [www.lustgarten.org](http://www.lustgarten.org).

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