

PROCURE CANCER FOUNDATION DELIVERS FIRST GRANTS

Foundation Provides Assistance with Nonmedical Expenses for Proton Therapy Patients

New York – Feb. 2, 2010– Two young cancer patients from Virginia are the first recipients of grants from the [ProCure Cancer Foundation](#), a new charitable organization that is providing financial assistance to families who cannot afford the nonmedical expenses associated with proton therapy. Proton therapy is an alternative to X-ray radiation that spares healthy tissue and results in far fewer short- and long-term treatment side effects. Proton therapy can be particularly effective in treating tumors in children. Since their bodies are still growing, children are more sensitive to the damage to healthy tissue that can be caused by X-rays.

The families of Christopher Stubaus and Ella Wells each received a grant to offset the costs of traveling to and living in Boston to undergo treatment at the [Francis H. Burr Proton Therapy Center at Massachusetts General Hospital](#) (MGH).

“There are only seven proton centers in the United States, and most patients have to travel hundreds of miles to receive treatment,” said John Cameron, Ph.D., president of the ProCure Cancer Foundation. “Proton therapy is generally given five-days-a-week over a period of approximately six to eight weeks, requiring that patients and their families endure the hardship and the costs of relocating away from their homes, jobs, family and friends. The nonmedical costs, such as travel, daily meals and lodging, can be a tremendous burden to families and our goal is to alleviate some of that burden.”

The Grant Recipients

Christopher Stubaus, age eight, just finished a five-week course of proton therapy for orbital rhabdomyosarcoma, a type of eye cancer that is particularly suited for treatment with proton therapy. His parents, Amanda and David Stubaus, and his two sisters, Emalee, age five and Cassidy, two, relocated with him to Boston from their home in Norfolk, Va., where David is stationed in the Navy.

“You acquire a lot of expenses traveling away from home,” said Amanda Stubaus, who is expecting the family’s fourth child in early February. “Living on one income is difficult, especially when a family member is seriously ill, but we were willing to do anything to get Christopher the treatment he needed.”

“Most of our living expenses in Boston had to go on our credit card because our savings was depleted to cover the rest of Christopher’s treatment,” Amanda said. “Thanks to the grant from the ProCure Cancer Foundation, we’ll be able to pay that bill.”

Five-year-old Ella Wells begins proton therapy at MGH in early February to treat a brain cancer (pilocytic astrocytoma) that she has been fighting for the last two years.

Ella’s proton therapy will last for about six weeks; her mother, Amy, and brother, two-year-old Parker, will stay with her the whole time. Ella’s father, Rick Wells, will commute weekly between Boston and the

family's home nearly 600 miles away in Chesapeake, Va., where he is employed at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard.

"This is huge," Amy said of the Foundation grant. "My husband and I talk all the time about how blessed we are that at least we don't have to take on the entire financial burden of our living expenses in Boston," she said.

The grants were presented to the families by Michelle Lipton, a member of the Board of Directors of the ProCure Cancer Foundation and a cancer survivor, who was treated for a brain tumor with proton therapy at MGH.

"It was an honor for me to present these grants, which are the first in what will be an ongoing effort to help patients and their families by alleviating some of the financial pressures associated with relocating to receive proton therapy," Lipton said. "There is a significant need for more proton centers so that traveling is not an issue or a deciding factor for patients who can benefit from this important treatment."

The grants, which are based on financial need, are available to patients undergoing treatment at any of the nation's seven proton therapy centers: [ProCure Proton Therapy Center](#), Oklahoma City, OK; [Francis H. Burr Proton Therapy Center at Massachusetts General Hospital](#), Boston, MA; [University of Florida Proton Therapy Institute](#), Jacksonville, FL; [Proton Therapy Center at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center](#), Houston, TX; [Midwest Proton Radiotherapy Institute](#), Bloomington, IN; [James M. Slater, M.D. Proton Treatment and Research Center](#), Loma Linda, CA; and [the University of Pennsylvania Roberts Proton Therapy Center](#), Philadelphia, PA.

For more information about the ProCure Cancer Foundation, visit www.procurecancerfoundation.org.

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ABOUT THE PROCURE CANCER FOUNDATION

The ProCure Cancer Foundation is a public charity that provides support to proton therapy patients in need of financial assistance by funding nonmedical expenses associated with the treatment — such as housing, food and transportation — to ensure that eligible patients have access to the improved quality of life proton therapy enables. For more information, visit www.procurecancerfoundation.org.