

Quest Diagnostics steps up in the fight against Desmoid Tumors

December 2010

Quest Diagnostics has a long history of giving back to the local communities in which its employees live and work. An opportunity presented itself in the Philadelphia area during the latter part of 2010 for Quest employees to again make a difference with individual contributions of time, treasure and talent. This time, the effort and support of Quest employees was directed to the **Desmoid Tumor Research Foundation (DTRF)**. A desmoid tumor is a rare form of soft-tissue sarcoma. While they do not metastasize, these persistent tumors are very aggressive and destructive locally, and are often very difficult to treat. The DTRF is the only organization in the world dedicated to funding desmoid tumor research and finding a cure for this rare and devastating disease.

In the summer of 2010, the DTRF was in high-gear planning its annual patient symposium meeting and next-day fundraising event, Running for Answers (a 5-mile run / 1-mile along West River Drive) in Philadelphia for mid-November. At the same time, Robin McLaughlin, whose husband John works for Quest Diagnostics in Collegeville PA, learned that the desmoid tumor she had removed from deep in her chest wall via radical surgery just one year before had recurred, and had already grown to almost its original size. Overwhelmed with fear and confusion at the idea of Robin facing another radical excision of the tumor in the difficult anatomic site, John reached out to the Board and members of the DTRF community in search of information to shed light on alternative treatment options. The caring people at the DTRF embraced Robin and John, and responded with overwhelming support, information and good advice regarding how to move forward objectively. While Robin's pain increased by the day as the new tumor grew, Robin and John got busy seeking expert opinions and were soon armed with a range of options. Robin has had success thus far, and has avoided another massive surgery and potential loss of function in her left arm. She is under the care of leading oncologists and continues to fight this rare disease in the least invasive way possible.



Feeling immensely grateful to the DTRF as Robin's situation stabilized, John signed he and Robin up for the DTRF patient meeting and Running for Answers. The consistency in missions of the DTRF and his company struck John, so he approached his on-site representative of the Quest Diagnostics community employee volunteer program called **QuestCares**, about spreading the word about Running for Answers. He also discussed the potential of sponsoring the event with the Quest Diagnostics Philadelphia Business Unit.



Cathy Shields of the Collegeville **QuestCares** team puts finishing touches on the DTRF bake sale in October.

Before long, the caring people at Quest Diagnostics responded and embraced the DTRF mission and Robin & John. The Quest Diagnostics Philadelphia Business Unit provided sponsorship and promotional items for Running for Answers, and employees began signing up for the walk/run. Meanwhile, Robin's story became known around the company via her DTRF Running for Answers fundraising web page, and personal donations to the DTRF in Robin's name started pouring-in. Even further, **QuestCares** coordinators at three main Philadelphia-area facilities organized and held bake sales to benefit the DTRF. Bake sale proceeds totaled over \$1,300, with the largest one in the Collegeville site raising \$600 in one morning. Over fifty (50) employees invested their time, money and talent to bake goods for the three sales.



By the time Running for Answers rolled around in November, thirty (30) Quest Diagnostics employees and family members had signed-up, and seventy one (71) employees made personal contributions to the DTRF in Robin's name, totaling roughly \$5,300. With the help of the Quest Diagnostics matching gifts program, the overall contribution from Quest Diagnostics and its employees topped **\$15,000**.

What an amazing success story of genuine and caring people stepping-up to meet a tremendous need!

