

## What is THON?

Childhood cancers are the number one disease killer of children in the U.S. - more than asthma, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, and pediatric AIDS combined. THON's mission is simple: **to conquer pediatric cancer** by providing outstanding emotional and financial support to the children, families, researchers, and staff of The Four Diamonds Fund.

THON has been partnered with The Four Diamonds Fund at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center since 1977. The Four Diamonds Fund provides outstanding support to children and families by paying for all medical expenses not covered by insurance, and funding research performed by a team of Pediatric Oncologists at the hospital.

2012 marks the 40th anniversary of Penn State's THON, a year-long, student-led effort to raise funds and awareness for the fight against pediatric cancer. The fundraising efforts culminate with a 46-hour, no sitting so sleeping dance marathon from February 17th to 19th 2012.



## Cutting Edge Research

Penn State Hershey Pediatric Oncology researchers are a part of Pediatric Oncology Experimental Therapeutics Investigators' Consortium (POETIC), a group of Oncologists throughout North America working together to reach common goals. The research done at Hershey has the ability to help children across the country. Dr. Barbara Miller, in particular, is working on understanding the role of a family of ion channels called TRP channels in tumor formation and responsiveness to chemotherapy. Because they are expressed on the cell surface, they have great potential as targets for new drugs, leading to novel approaches to cure a wide range of pediatric cancers. Additionally, Dr. Kenneth Lucas is developing ways to promote immune responses in cancer patients, greatly increasing the amount of preventive therapies as well reducing the frequency of relapses. This approach includes novel vaccine trials in neuroblastoma and leukemia. Dr. John Kuttesch, the Director of Clinical Research for the Four Diamonds Pediatric Oncology Experimental Therapeutics Program, is working with leaders of research across the country to bring Phase I and Phase II trials to the Penn State Children's Hospital and develop innovative treatment options. Lastly, Dr. Sinisa Dovat is studying factors which enhance leukemia growth by turning on or off other genes, and how to target them to improve cure rates. Together, these researchers are providing outstanding opportunities and your donation to THON allows them to continue to take steps toward curing pediatric cancer!

## THON: by the Numbers

- ❖ **2,300** children lose their battle to cancer everyday
- ❖ **\$9,563,016.09** raised by THON in 2011
- ❖ **15,000** Penn State student volunteers participating in THON annually
- ❖ **46** Hour, no-sitting, no-sleeping dance marathon each year in February
- ❖ **708** dancers
- ❖ **9,643** meals served during THON weekend
- ❖ **27,816** water bottles consumed
- ❖ **7,372** registrants for the 2011 THON 5K
- ❖ **\$78 million** has been raised by THON for The Four Diamonds Fund since partnering in 1977

Join the fight against pediatric cancer and donate to THON today! Learn more at [www.thon.org](http://www.thon.org).