



Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

IT STARTS WITH

ONE

The word 'ONE' is rendered in large, bold, black letters. Each letter is filled with a vibrant, abstract pattern of red, blue, and green, resembling a microscopic view of tissue or a complex network of fibers. The 'O' is a circle, while 'N' and 'E' are block letters.



MAKING GOOD:

How Jennifer James Became a Fundraising Powerhouse

▲ “My endless gratitude for MSK Kids’ lifesaving treatment and care makes me want to give back as much as possible,” says Jennifer James (right), with daughter Scarlett, son Austin, and husband Robert. Photo credit: Sara Beth Turner

Jennifer James is a dedicated philanthropist who has hosted or participated in more than 50 fundraising events, inspired more than 11,000 donations from almost 7,000 donors, and raised \$3.1 million — all to support MSK Kids.

“After my daughter, Scarlett, was diagnosed with cancer, I was compelled to fund research that would improve treatments for children. I made a promise to myself that I would do whatever I could to help other families,” Jennifer says.

Scarlett was diagnosed with T cell lymphoma in 2013 when she was just 6 years old. She endured 25 months of difficult treatment — unable to return to school for two years. During a chemotherapy appointment, Jennifer saw a postcard for Kids Walk for MSK Kids, an annual fundraising event in Central Park.

“It had been seven months since Scarlett was diagnosed, and Kids Walk for MSK Kids would be the first opportunity people had to see her and support our family,” says Jennifer. “Most people really do want to support you. Sometimes they just don’t know how.”

Once Scarlett’s doctors, Peter Steinerherz and Neal Shukla, gave the green light for her to participate, Jennifer invited all of their friends and family to join.

The event helped light a spark in Jennifer. Knowing that philanthropy funded

much of the research that led to the chemotherapies that Scarlett needed, Jennifer wanted to fund the development of more-targeted treatments with fewer side effects. Pediatric cancer research is drastically underfunded, receiving less than 4 percent of federal cancer research dollars. To help close that gap, Jennifer created The Scarlett Fund. Mostly through grassroots efforts and small donations, The Scarlett Fund raised enough to seed the Pediatric Translational Medicine Program, now directed by Dr. Shukla. “The money that The Scarlett Fund raised is proof that one donation makes a difference,” Jennifer says. “It all adds up.”

While The Scarlett Fund raises money for research, it also raises awareness about the opportunities for everyone — especially kids — to get involved. “I try to empower children to make a difference,” Jennifer says. “If I help raise a community of young people who know about pediatric cancer, then hopefully they will become more involved as they grow up.”

Through The Scarlett Fund, young people around the country have organized

lemonade stands, talent shows, bake sales, and numerous greeting card drives that deliver supportive messages to kids with cancer. Today, Scarlett visits schools in New York City to educate students about pediatric cancer and also serves on the Kids Walk for MSK Kids Student Board. Because of her work, Scarlett received an inaugural American Girl Character Counts award. In addition to Kids Walk for MSK Kids, Jennifer participates in MSK’s Cycle for Survival, has run seven marathons with Fred’s Team, is Co-Chair of MSK’s Patient Family Advisory Council for Quality, and is a member of The Society of MSK.

In December 2019, the family received the ultimate good news: Scarlett was declared cancer free. After living with the diagnosis for six long years, Jennifer asked 13-year-old Scarlett if she wanted to take a break from her work with The Scarlett Fund.

Her response: “No, Mommy. I want to give more.”

To learn about the many options for supporting MSK through philanthropy, visit [Giving.MSKCC.org](https://giving.mskcc.org).