

Sylvester Receives Transformational \$75 Million Commitment from Miami Dolphins Foundation

The Miami Dolphins are taking their dedication to fighting cancer to the next level, announcing a transformational \$75 million gift commitment to Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine, South Florida's only NCI-designated cancer center.



Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center Director Stephen D. Nimer, M.D., speaks at DCC XI press conference.

Also announced at a news conference on November 10 at the Hard Rock Stadium – a new name for the second decade of the Dolphins' signature fundraising event, and a year-round promise to support cancer research at Sylvester. What began as

the Dolphins Cycling Challenge in 2010 will now be known as the Dolphins Challenge Cancer. While the mission remains the same, the organization is adopting a “one team, one fight” mentality that will further build on the funds the DCC has raised for innovative research at Sylvester in its first 10 years.

“The University of Miami is grateful to the Miami Dolphins Foundation for its renewed commitment to this extraordinary South Florida tradition,” said University of Miami President Julio Frenk. “The DCC has become a beacon of hope in South Florida. Together, we will continue to create a spirit of community around our cherished goal – giving patients the gift of life and freedom from the pain and suffering that comes from fighting cancer.”

A single goal

“The DCC began 10 years ago with one goal in mind: to unite the community against one of the most insidious diseases of our generation,” said Tom Garfinkel, vice chairman, president and CEO of the Miami Dolphins and Hard Rock Stadium. “In our first decade, DCC has raised more than \$39.2 million for innovative cancer research at Sylvester. As we look to the next 10 years of impact, we realize it is time for us to evolve from an event into a year-round movement focused on the challenge the cancer community faces every day.”

The DCC attracts thousands to ride, run, and walk to fight cancer. DCC XI, scheduled for April 10, 2021, includes plans for both an in-person event and a robust virtual component to accommodate safety concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The in-person event will include four cycling rides and a 5K

run/walk, with all rides ending at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens.

“It is an honor to serve my second year as chair of the Dolphins Challenge Cancer, particularly during this momentous occasion,” said Jacqueline A. Travisano, Ed.D., EVP and COO of the University of Miami. “This announcement is a true testament to the power of our South Florida community coming together to fund cancer research.”

Confirmation that the DCC will indeed ride in 2021 has been long anticipated by cycling enthusiasts who have continued to train year-round for the event, including Executive Chairman of Lennar Corporation Stuart Miller, who is also chair of the UHealth Board of Directors and a member of the University of Miami Board of Trustees.

“I could not be prouder to be a participant in a program that the Miami Dolphins has spearheaded for 10 solid years. For 10 years, you have had me hopping on a bike, elevating the game year after year,” Miller said to a laughing audience. “As corporations in our community, we should all participate. Solving important issues only happens if we band together.”

Support for research and studies

The funds raised by the DCC have directly supported cancer research and critical studies, making new treatments possible that have positively impacted, and even saved, lives. The support of the DCC assisted in Sylvester achieving the prestigious National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation in 2019, raising the cancer center’s research and patient care to a whole new level of excellence. As one of only two NCI-

designated institutions in the state of Florida – and one of only 71 centers in the United States – Sylvester stands as a leader in moving scientific discoveries from the laboratory directly to patients, and in providing the most innovative treatments in the region.

“Physicians and scientists at Sylvester are more committed than ever to developing new, more effective, and less toxic ways to treat cancer and to prevent it. We just launched an Experimental Therapeutics program which will accelerate our efforts to bring promising discoveries from our laboratories to our patients,” said Stephen D. Nimer, M.D., director of Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center.

In a dramatic moment, Dr. Nimer asked everybody in the audience who has either had cancer or been touched by a loved one who has had cancer to stand. Not one person in the room remained seated.

“This is why we DCC,” Dr. Nimer said. “This incredible partnership with the Miami Dolphins has supported vitally important research at Sylvester for a decade. We are extremely grateful for this renewed pledge to continue working side by side in pursuit of new cancer cures.”

For more information on DCC XI, visit the [Team Hurricanes website](#).

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