

## Dear Friend of Swifty,

We couldn't have planned it if we tried ... all the good things that have come from Michael's Master Plan! We're simply amazed at all that has been accomplished. But we did plan Gift from a Child's (GFAC) merger with the Children's Brain Tumor Network (CBTN) and there's lots of exciting news to share.

Inside, you'll see how Michael's Master Plan is succeeding and how sharing tissue with CBTN makes a post-mortem donation impactful for years to come. We will tell the story of how the donation from just one child has a lasting impact on future research thanks to CBTN.

On page 2, a bridge image illustrates the powerful partnership between GFAC and CBTN. During our Tissue Navigator meetings, Patti often says, "We're building this bridge as we walk on it"—a nod to how much we've learned along the way. Our collaboration with CBTN has been mutually supportive, driving research and treatments forward ... find out what's next!

Yesterday Without CBTN and Today with CBTN on pages 4-5 are must-reads to understand the value of tissue and its future impact. We also spotlight two GFAC advisors, recap our 2024 Annual Appeal, share some key metrics and financials, and, most importantly, thank you—our supporters. Your contributions to Michael's Master Plan Fund mean the world to us, and though funds now go through the CHOP Foundation, we still oversee them and deeply appreciate your continued trust.

There's much more to say, but first we want to share something that has humbled us. In speaking with GFAC families through the years, we've met so many "Michaels"—not children with his name, but children dying from brain cancer who are funny, generous, smart, and deeply aware. All kids are special, but these children seem to understand what really matters at a very young age. They have so much to teach us, if we're willing to listen.

Until there is a cure,

**Patti Gustafson**  
Director

**Al Gustafson**  
Board Chair



# BETTER TOGETHER: BUILDING BRIDGES TOWARD CURES

Over the past decade, we at Swifty—through our efforts to create a national program (GFAC) for post-mortem donation—and the Children’s Brain Tumor Network (CBTN)—in its mission to break down silos in science and accelerate pediatric brain cancer research—have each been organizations building bridges as we walked on them. It has now been a year since those bridges were joined, and we’d like to share some highlights from this union and offer a glimpse into our future plans.

## Our SUPER Woman

Superman may be the summer blockbuster, but we have a super woman, Ginny McLean! Our former Swifty colleague is now the GFAC Program Director for CBTN. Her tireless relationship building efforts now benefit both organizations. Ginny now reports to the Executive Director of the CBTN who manages 67 employees over 8 departments and has been bringing out the very best in Ginny. (As opposed to reporting to Patti, who has trouble even managing her email folders!)

Ginny’s leadership as board chair of the Coalition Against Childhood Cancer has been pivotal in strengthening vital connections for CBTN, connecting it with the FDA, new foundations, and international partners. Her advocacy has boosted GFAC’s and CBTN’s visibility through newsletters, webinars, and conferences demonstrating her deep commitment to collaboration.



## FDA: Forward March

Thanks to Ginny there is growing collaboration between CBTN and the FDA to improve clinical trial pathways for children with brain tumors. A recent meeting showed strong FDA support for using PedcBioPortal to identify treatment targets in the Pediatric Brain Tumor Atlas. With GFAC data contributing, this partnership offers real hope for faster development of new treatments and drug approvals.



Children’s Brain  
Tumor Network

## The Radiance of RADIANT

Artificial Intelligence has us all a little frightened and awed. CBTN is harnessing its power for good. Please take a moment (actually 4 moments), scan the QR code and watch this video showcasing RADIANT which will create a secure, cloud-based, real-time data-sharing and analytics platform, bringing us closer to a world where every child battling cancer has access to real-time, personalized treatment options.



# FOR PEDIATRIC BRAIN CANCER

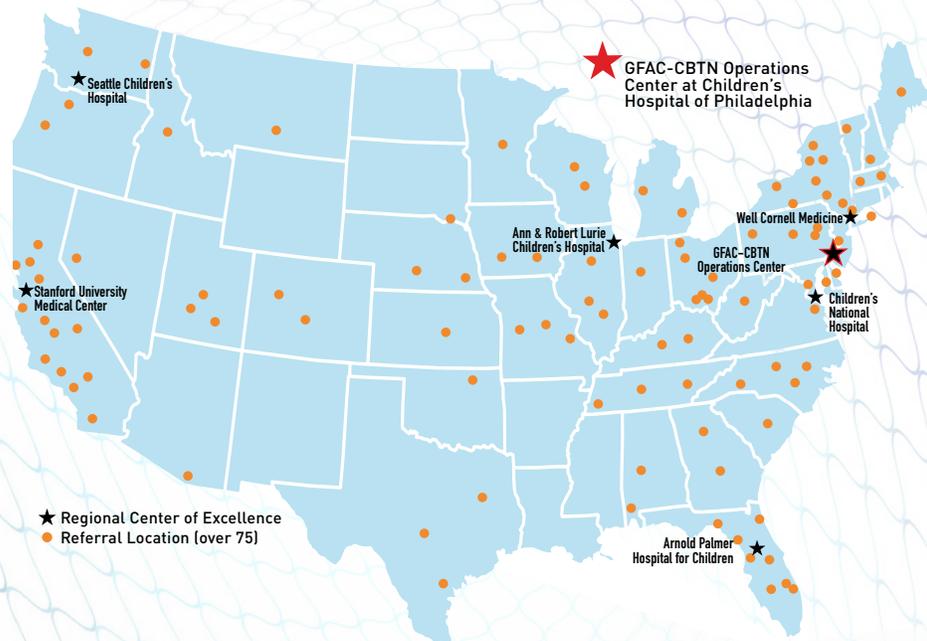
## Swapping Out Checkers for Chess Players



We're thrilled to welcome Dr. David Kram to the GFAC leadership team as the new head of the CBTN Core Working Group on post-mortem donation. A pediatric neuro-oncologist and researcher, Dr. Kram, will lead publication efforts, strengthen collaboration with the Children's Oncology Group, and guide strategic planning with a focus on patient experience and family feedback. His leadership will enhance the impact and efficiency of GFAC's research donation efforts. This was the position formerly held by Al, so it is easy to imagine the magnitude of this upgrade.



## Casting a WIDER Net



With 34 sites in CBTN's network, GFAC's partnership with CBTN brings many new referral partners to us. While not all sites can perform tissue donations, those that do adopt our protocols and serve as processing partners too. In the past year GFAC has facilitated donations at 13 new hospitals.



## Taking **Aim** For the Future

The GFAC operations team at CBTN has a detailed strategic plan for FY25-26 which we are happy to share in greater depth. Here is a list of the key targets:

- Aim 1** Expand Post-Mortem Donation Capacity Across CBTN Sites
- Aim 2** Integrate PM samples into CBTN's Multi-modal open-science platforms for translational research
- Aim 3** Continue Outreach, Education & Training at all CBTN sites
- Aim 4** Ensure efficient, transparent, and aligned CBTN/GFAC program operations
- Aim 5** GFAC Key Advocacy Aims include expanding funding, demonstrating impact and strengthening clinical and pathology engagement



# THE POWER OF ONE CHILD'S DONATION

## Yesterday Without CBTN

by Patti Gustafson

I'll never forget receiving the call from Dr. Taylor saying Michael's post-mortem tissue was used in a study published in *Nature* magazine. That Michael's "Master Plan" had helped shift the thinking on how medulloblastoma should be treated.

It was uplifting to know that our boy had understood something we hadn't—that he could continue to give even after death by donating his brain and spine to research. Michael's tissue also went to Dr. Li's lab. At a Chicago conference Dr. Li showed a PowerPoint slide illustrating his lab's use of post-mortem tissue. We determined from the slide Dr. Li had several mouse models of Michael's tumor tissue! Further evidence Michael's Master Plan was working.

Fast forward ten years and we've discovered that Michael's tissue was depleted at Dr. Taylor's and Dr. Li's labs. Even the mouse models have died. Physical tumor tissue is a finite resource. Once it's used to create cell lines or mouse model it's gone.

The sense of loss we feel knowing Michael's tissue is gone is like another death... the piece of him still living in the world is gone. And that hurts...a lot.

That is why we partnered with CBTN. CBTN makes donations infinitely available by pairing tissue collected with **clinical data** from diagnosis and throughout the child's journey.

It's painful to know Mikey's tissue is gone, even as we recognize how deeply his impact lives on. GFAC exists because of Michael's Master Plan.

I don't understand the technology behind CBTN. But I do understand the difference between finite and infinite. Mikey's tissue was finite. His Master Plan, however, was infinitely wise—just like the boy who dreamed it up. Thanks to GFAC and CBTN's merger, today's donations and data will answer questions we haven't even thought to ask in 2025.



## Remembering Jenn Mason

Jenn Mason was a guiding light, professionally and personally, for GFAC's merger into CBTN. As Director of Biospecimen and Clinical Research Operations at CBTN's D3b Center, she shaped key roles, including that of GFAC's Project Manager, Beth Frenkel. She worked right up to her last days, in her words, "as long as she has the strength, she'll do what she can for the kids." Her passing last year has deeply impacted us and renewed our commitment to the work she cared so deeply about.



## Today With CBTN

by Gerri Trooskin, Director of Partnerships CBTN

Imagine that a young child is diagnosed with an aggressive high-grade glioma, a deadly brain cancer. After that child passes, their family chooses to donate through GFAC—turning loss into hope for others.

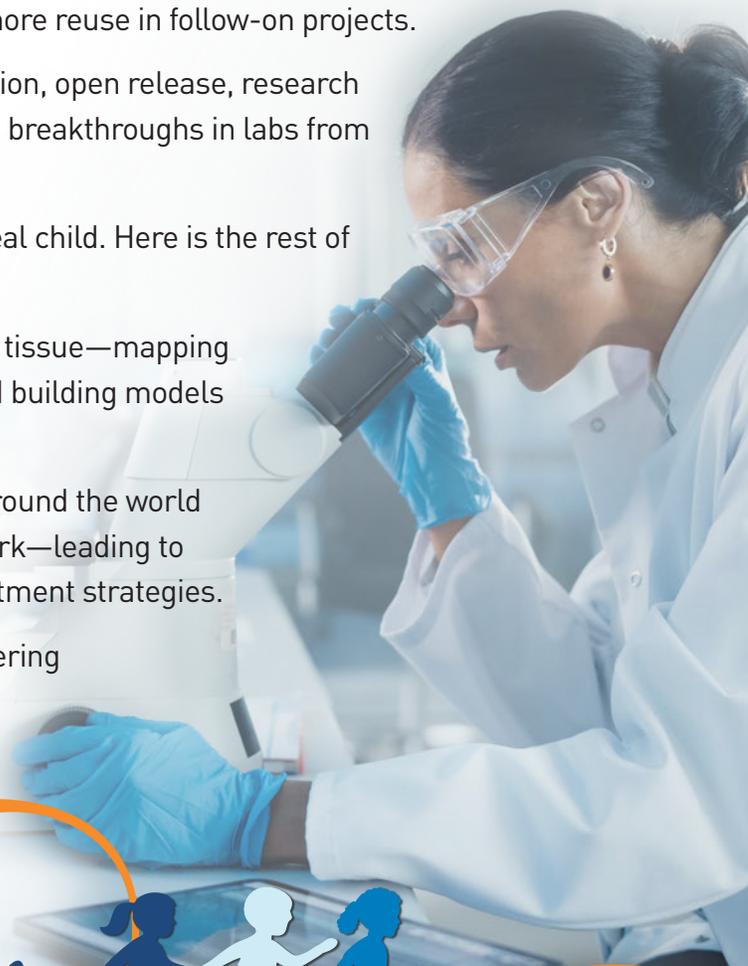
First, the donated tissue is processed and split into portions for DNA, RNA, proteins, and living models. Next, data is generated—sequencing genomes and profiling gene activity. That rich information is then released openly on CBTN's platforms. Researchers around the world use those data and models to drive new studies, which lead to publications and even more reuse in follow-on projects.

Through seven stages—donation, processing, data generation, open release, research use, publication, and global reuse—one family's gift sparks breakthroughs in labs from Philadelphia to Paris, multiplying impact again and again.

You don't need to imagine this, for this is the story of one real child. Here is the rest of this one child's story:

- Core Research: Six major studies used this child's tissue—mapping how the tumor grows, testing drugs in the lab, and building models that mimic the child's cancer.
- Wider Impact: After those projects, researchers around the world downloaded the data and models for their own work—leading to new papers on biomarkers, drug targets, and treatment strategies.

That single donation didn't just fuel one study. It's still powering breakthroughs everywhere.



tissue



data



### Swiftly Spotlight: Dr. Nicholas Whipple

Dr. Nicholas Whipple, a compassionate and tireless advocate for families, has been GFAC's most dedicated referral partner. He serves as Medical Director of Pediatric Neuro-oncology at Primary Children's Hospital in Utah and is now on GFAC's Medical Advisory Council.



# GFAC By The Numbers

GFAC’s merger with CBTN expands the program’s potential and changes how the program is funded, and we’d like to share an update through two financial statements.

The first is a cash flow forecast for the Michael’s Master Plan Fund (MMPF) at CHOP. Established last year by Swifty with \$745K, the fund covers all Gift from a Child operating costs, continuing Swifty’s eight years of support. The forecast includes one year of actual data and five years of projections, with Swifty overseeing the fund through FY 2029–30.

The second is Swifty’s audited balance sheet for fiscal year ending December 31, 2024. Its large ending balance is reserved to sustain GFAC operations while we work to secure new funding to replace Swifty’s support.

Dollars in Thousands (Fiscal year July 1-June 30)	Actual FY24-25	FY25-26	FY26-27	FY27-28	FY28-29	FY29-30	Statement of Financial Position (December 31, 2024)	
<b>Revenues</b>							<b>Assets</b>	
Swifty Donors	169	150	100	100	75	75	Cash & Equivalents	\$ 72,219
New GFAC/CBTN Fundraising	100	100	200	350	500	600	Investments	\$ 3,600,532
Swifty Foundation	1,189	750	750	500	500	250	Accounts Receivable	\$ 25
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>1,458</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>1,075</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 3,671,776</b>
<b>GFAC Program Costs</b>							<b>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>								
CBTN Operations	257	255	264	273	283	294	Grants Due	\$ 873,892
Centers of Excellence	444	427	388	354	323	296	Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$ 21
Advocacy	57	75	75	75	75	75	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 874,003</b>
Research	100	200	200	200	200	200	Net Assets Unrestricted	\$ 2,797,773
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>865</b>	Total Net Assets	\$ 2,797,773
<b>NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 3,671,776</b>
<b>Michael Master Plan Fund Balance</b>	600	766	710	814	1,008	1,068	To receive a copy of Swifty Foundation’s 2024 independent audit report conducted by Desmond & Ahern Ltd., please contact <a href="mailto:info@swiftyfoundation.org">info@swiftyfoundation.org</a> .	

## Numbers To Note:

### Swifty Donors

For the first time, our 2024 Annual Appeal invited gifts to the MMPF at the CHOP Foundation—and you responded with incredible generosity, raising over \$169K. We’ll continue encouraging Swifty donors to support MMPF in the years ahead. We’re counting on you!

### New Fundraising

We received our largest one-time grant—\$100K from the Deerfield Foundation—restricted to genomic profiling of post-mortem tissue.

### Swifty Foundation

Swifty remains the primary revenue source for GFAC, contributing \$1.189M in 2024. Our annual support will gradually taper in the coming years.

### MMPF Balance

FY24–25 closed with \$600K— and by the end of Swifty’s involvement there will be over a full year of operating expenses in reserve.



# Swifty Thanks Our 2024 Donors

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