

Trent leaves legacy at the Center for Cancer Research

BY ALEXANDRA WELIEVER
News Editor
@welihathever

Tyler Trent gave a heart to Purdue's Center for Cancer Research, a gift one person at the center regards as phenomenal.

"He wanted to be a voice for the story of cancer," said Jasmine Moisesides, the director of development operations at the CCR. "It was all about other people, even though he had suffered quite a bit. He certainly wanted to talk about how this could help other people."

The CCR comprises over 100 different researchers from departments across campus, all working together to ultimately find a cure for cancer. Located in the Hansen Life Sciences Research Building just south of State Street, the CCR was thrust into the limelight on 2017 after being mentioned by Trent on social media.

"He knew that we had some events coming up for 'Hammer Down Cancer' last year," Moisesides said. "He just had said on social media that if we ever needed someone to campaign for us to let him know. That was probably the first time we ever had a student reach out in that capacity."

"One of our goals is to ensure that students know who we are. ... Sometimes there's a gap I think, in terms of what we do and then students being aware that we have a cancer center right here on campus."

Shortly after emailing him, Moisesides met Trent at the office to listen to his story of battling cancer and the struggles that presented to his family.

Though Moisesides said Trent told one of the most compelling stories she's ever heard, what stuck out the most to her was the then-freshman's focus on other people.

"Most importantly I think he wanted us to know how important it was for him to let other people be heard," she said. "So that was his goal, to make sure the conversation stayed alive for others to talk about their families, cancer and their relationships."

Trent's involvement with the center as the first student member of its Advancement Board brought more than attention to the cause — he also served as a voice for the reason behind the research.

"I think he just brought a new life," Moisesides said. "Because we work in such an academic sense in terms of raising money for research, it's stories like Tyler's that reinvigorates the 'why' behind research."

"For people on campus, they hadn't heard about us before. I think suddenly they were seeing it wasn't just the research; there (were) human lives behind this. I think it really kind of gave it a heart."

As of Dec. 18, the Tyler Trent Cancer Research Endowment had raised just below \$109,000, bringing the total to approximately \$217,000 after being matched in full by the Walther Cancer Foundation, according to Cheryl Pierce at the PCCR. She said additional dona-



EXPONENT STAFF PHOTO

Tyler Trent is followed by a documentary photographer at the Purdue-Northwestern game in August. Trent passed away on New Year's Day.

tions that came in over winter break would also be added to the endowment's total most likely later this week, and all proceeds from The Challenge 5K Run/Walk event would also be donated to the endowment.

Trent met fellow center advisory board member Alan Karpick, who also works as the publisher and president of "Gold and Black," a media company which provides sports coverage of Purdue Athletics. He first met Trent

at a "Hammer Down Cancer" lunch in 2017, and the two later worked together as Trent wrote special columns for Gold and Black's website.

"We do a live-stream show here at Gold and Black that he'd been a guest on," Karpick said. "So he's been quite an inspiration to all of us."

Trent will be known for his work in bringing attention to the need for cancer research, according to Karpick.

"His legacy will be how much at-

tention he's brought to the center," he said. "The need for research and the reminder that this is an awful disease, and he has brought that to the fore."

Trent will also have left a mark on those outside the center.

"I think his legacy," he said, "will be of optimism in the most difficult of situations."

The CCR tweeted its condolences, saying, "His life may have been short, but his legacy with be forever."

Dance Marathon helped Trent form lasting friendships

BY ALEXANDRA WELIEVER
News Editor
@welihathever

The beginning of Tyler Trent's impact on campus started, perhaps, with the University's biggest fundraising event of the year, the Purdue University Dance Marathon.

"It was very emotional for me, because ... I met Tyler the first day of Day of Miracles," said Jackie Ham, PUDM's public relations online strategy chair.

Ham met Trent in 2017 during one of the several fundraising events held by PUDM throughout the year, Day of Miracles. She went on to become one of his closest friends.

"He was like, 'Yeah my name's Tyler, I'm glad you're in PUDM, all that stuff.' And I was like yeah, I'm

actually going to go on a tour of Riley Hospital in a couple weeks," Ham said. "And he was like, 'Oh, I can give you a tour myself.'"

Their friendship grew over time, both through their involvement in PUDM and by the fact that Ham's boyfriend lived on the same floor in Tarkington Residence Hall as Trent.

"Literally probably like, five-ish doors down," Ham explained. "I always made the joke that I could hear Tyler coming before I saw him because he would have a crutch and so I'd hear him coming, and I would just yell his name down the hall whenever I wanted to talk to him."

Ham's conversations with Trent weren't limited to PUDM — the two often talked about the current state of Purdue Athletics. She said Trent's love for any Boilermaker team was

clear through his black-and-gold apparel and temperament after a particularly intense game.

"He would come in and just be decked out in his Purdue gear," Ham said, "wearing his striped overalls with his Purdue beanie. You could tell that he was just the biggest fan."

"If Purdue lost in basketball, we would make the joke that, 'Don't go talk to Tyler. Tyler needs his alone time in the room to steam off.' And then when he was ready he would come out and then we would talk about the loss, and he would just say a couple words and then go back in. ... You could almost see the steam coming out of his ears."

Trent also met people through the classes he attended, such as fellow PUDM member Nicole Martin, who works as special events chair for the

organization. Martin and Trent shared a management class together, and often talked and shared funny photos of their professor through Snapchat. Eventually, they reached a 100-day snap streak, according to Martin.

One of her more memorable interactions with Trent was when he asked her to cut his hair post-chemotherapy, Martin said.

"There was one day that he came over to my house ... to cut his hair, because it was starting to grow out after chemo and everything," Martin said. "And he was tired of having it long. So I got to cut his hair. And that was a really funny experience."

"I've never cut anyone's hair before. It was fun, it was a little bit awkward because I think that was the first time that we'd actually like met in person, really. ... But my motto was, his hair

was shorter than it was when he first got to my house, so I counted it as a success, a successful haircut."

Martin interacted with Trent mostly outside of PUDM. They grew close over social media and as study partners. His battle with cancer didn't go unnoticed by Martin, however, and she recognizes the long-lasting legacy Trent will have on campus for years to come.

"I think he's just a great example of a fighter and someone who doesn't give up," Martin said. "He really inspires people. If you want something, go for it — nothing's impossible — and just, to keep doing things for others and to help others."

"That really is just kind of like him as a person and I know that it will stay with this campus for a long time."

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// from fall 2018

The College of Engineering would like to congratulate the following faculty and lecturers for their outstanding dedication to teaching Boilermaker Engineers!

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