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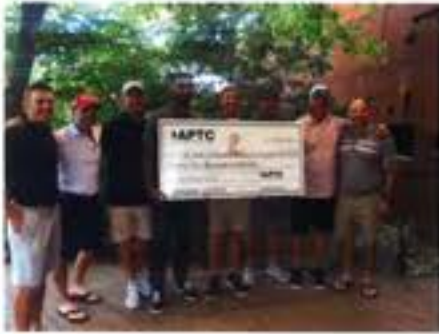


ALSAC, the fundraising and awareness organization for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital



[Steve DiMeglio](#), USA TODAY Sports Published 2:11 p.m. ET June 6, 2017 | Updated 5:07 p.m. ET June 6, 2017

PGA Tour caddies lend a hand to children at St. Jude's



With each step during a tour of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital a few years ago, PGA Tour caddie Scott Sajtinac's heart broke just a little more. From one room to another, down one hallway after another, Sajtinac and a few of his fellow caddie mates met children battling cancer and other life-threatening diseases in the Memphis facility.

"If you go into that hospital and don't walk out a changed person or feel like it needs to be a priority in everybody's lives, than I don't think you really have a soul, as harsh as that may sound," said Sajtinac, who caddies for Troy Merritt. "It was a tear-jerking moment when a group of us took a tour of the hospital. "It was a life-changing moment."

The visit certainly changed Sajtinac. From that day forward, he and many of the traveling gypsies who carry a golf bag for a living decided to take action. They agreed to start raising money for St. Jude, which is the primary beneficiary of this week's FedEx St. Jude Classic, where Rickie Fowler, Phil Mickelson

and Adam Scott will headline the action at TPC Southwind.

With the cooperation of the St. Jude workforce dedicated to raising money, a fundraising platform for each caddie who belongs to the Association of Professional Tour Caddies was established. In addition to giving their players comfort, counsel and yardage on the PGA Tour, the caddies started to give out a [web link](#) for St. Jude's fundraising to all of their contacts through phone calls, texts, emails and posts on Facebook and Twitter.

In their first year of raising money, the caddies donated \$41,000 last year. They've already raised thousands more this year. The caddies partnered with AT&T for the first annual AT&T Tour Caddie Championship at Trinity Forest Golf Club in Dallas on May 22. While Mark Urbanek, who totes for James Hahn, shot 5-under-par 67 to topple the field of nearly 80 caddies, St. Jude was the biggest victor and received a \$25,000 check.



On Wednesday, about two dozen caddies will participate in a corn hole tournament near the driving range at TPC Southwind. Many of the caddies will tour the hospital, taking golf balls, gloves, caps and other souvenirs to hand out. And the fundraising link will remain active. The goal is to raise another \$50,000 this year.

"We are extremely grateful to the members of the Association of Professional Tour Caddies for selecting St. Jude as their charity of choice," said Richard Shadyac Jr., president and CEO of fundraising and awareness organization for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. "So far, APTC's efforts have raised nearly \$70,000, helping to ensure that families never receive a bill from St. Jude for treatment, travel housing or food because all they should worry about is helping their child live."

Caddie James Edmondson, whose friend and boss is Ryan Palmer, became aware of St. Jude seven years ago when the son of a friend was diagnosed with cancer. Edmondson and Palmer went to see the young boy and his family at St. Jude and saw the remarkable work being done. The boy, Tyler Bates, has been cancer free for years.

“That experience touched me,” Edmondson said. “There are so many charitable organizations out there that do such great and important work. But being a father, of two little ones, being around kids ... these kids don’t deserve this. Seeing what they do there in Memphis really hit me. ...

“The passion for that hospital – people didn’t ask twice when we asked for donations. They just opened up their wallets. It’s not world changing, but it’s a good start.”

Kenny Harms, who caddies for Kevin Na, said it was a no-brainer to give to St. Jude. “Those kids got the raw end of the deal,” he said. “It breaks everybody’s heart to see any kid sick. Our goal is to raise as much money as possible.”

Don Yaeger Contributor

9/23/2015 @ 11:07AM

How An 18-Year-Old And His 'Army' Are Marching To Defeat Cancer



Adam of "Adam's Army" and Rick Shadyac Jr., President and CEO of ALSAC, the awareness and fundraising organization for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. (Photo provided by St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.)

Cancer sucks. These were the words inscribed on wristbands and given away by 18-year-old Adam, who had been diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). Adam and his cousin had ordered the bright orange wristbands online because it summed up, in two words, how Adam was feeling after learning what he faced. For many years ALL had been a diagnosis that came without much hope, but thanks to the efforts of [St. Jude Children's Research Hospital](#) the survival rate for ALL has increased from 4% before opening in 1962 to 94% today.

Despite the improved odds, Adam was focused on the fact that Cancer Sucks...but it didn't take long after his initial diagnosis to realize that Cancer REALLY Sucks. Adam's family discovered some unsettling news as he underwent chemotherapy.

"Doctors discovered that I was allergic to one of the primary drugs in my chemo regiment," said Adam. "The alternative cost was \$30,000 per dose, and I would need 85 doses."

The \$2.5 million dollar medical costs terrified Adam's family, but St. Jude doctors didn't hesitate and, like all of its patients, covered the *entire* cost of Adam's medical care, treatments, housing, and food; St. Jude believes that all a family should worry about is helping their child live.

"We never got a bill for anything," said Adam. "It was then that I knew I wanted to pay St. Jude back, somehow, someday, for saving my life."

Suddenly the Cancer Sucks bracelets seemed all too simple. They needed to be replaced by a new, more positive message. The script had to be flipped on how Adam and his family were going to approach this new situation.

With chemo still running in his veins, Adam was inspired to help others also diagnosed with childhood cancer and other life-threatening diseases. He began brainstorming ideas with Richard Shadyac Jr., President and CEO of ALSAC, the awareness and fundraising organization for St. Jude.



"Initially I was hoping to impact my region, but Rick encouraged me to think bigger, more national and corporate," said Adam. "And personally, I realized that I wanted my experience to be positive. Cancer does suck, but I just didn't want to live with that being the message I was spreading, so I turned it into a challenge for me to try and defeat."

Thus "Adam's Army", a national collection of run/walk teams, was born, with Adam setting a goal to fund-raise \$100,000 through his senior year of high school for childhood cancer research and awareness. Additionally, he discarded the cancer sucks changed wristbands and replaced with, "Adam's Army" and on the underside "Make Every Day Count."

"I didn't want my memory of the fight with cancer to have a negative connotation," said Adam, who is now in remission.

With the help of Rick, and the amazing ALSAC/St. Jude team, Adam's Army quickly gained a national following in Boston, Tampa, Miami, Knoxville, Raleigh, Dallas and Indianapolis. Adam and Rick discussed and strategized ways to spread the vision and recruit support—especially through September commemorating Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

Though the partnership with St. Jude has been extremely beneficial, Adam—who spent most of his life living less than 30 minutes away from the hospital—admits he did not know much about the facility and its world-class care before his diagnosis...until he needed it.

"The odds were against me until St. Jude stepped in and saved my life," said Adam, who is currently in remission. St. Jude has the world's best survival rates for some of the most aggressive childhood cancer.

Though still undergoing treatment, Adam will join his army this Saturday and participate in the [St. Jude Walk/Run to End Childhood Cancer](#) in Memphis, and then begin training for the St. Jude Memphis Half Marathon in December. "With my participation in these events, I want to give others hope and purpose," he said. "You never know when life can go away, and we can all create change by making every day count."

Though Adam will soon enter college, he hopes to return to St. Jude when he graduates to "continue to repay" and help lead others in discovering their potential to make a difference.

"With Adam's Army, I envision a future of great leadership," said Adam. "And I'd like to lay down some roots in my region so that others will be able to help me spread the influence of St. Jude around the country and world."

As leaders, we can be overwhelmed by a number of unpredictable conditions; likewise, no one would have blamed Adam for continuing to give away "cancer sucks" wristbands—but he chose not to live by that narrative. As a result, there are people all over the country who will be running in his race this weekend as part of Adam's Army, all because one young man decided to make a positive change. This is what makes him great.

Join Adam's Army by visiting his [St. Jude fundraising page](#) or [St.jude.org/September](#) to locate one of the 58 walks near you.

Music Gives to St. Jude Kids

Billboard

St. Jude Jam Taps Montgomery Gentry, Kim Carnes & More for Children's Hospital Fundraiser

6/19/2017 by Chuck Dauphin

As you would probably imagine, there's always a lot of activity going on at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Of course, it goes without saying that the doctors and nurses at the Memphis-based facility are working feverishly to try to find cures for diseases that have afflicted their patients, from cancer to leukemia. But that's not all that is going on at the hospital, located just a stone's throw from the Mississippi River.

Earlier this month, St. Jude held its annual FedEx St. Jude Classic golf tournament that brought hundreds of the game's best to the city. According to Rick Shadyac, Jr. -- the chief executive officer of ALSAC, the awareness and fund-raising organization of the hospital -- it was quite an emotional week for all involved, and a historic one, to boot.

"We celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Classic, as well as the 60th anniversary of ALSAC," Shadyac told Billboard in an interview at Memphis. "We had many opportunities to spotlight our patients, and to give them the opportunity to interact with the PGA Tour pros, and their wives or partners. That was a great opportunity, whether they were putting with the pros, holding the flag, or having an airplane named after them. We also had some of them creating artwork, there was a lot of special activities. Four patients were actually able to participate in Pro-Am's during the festivities," he said, beaming. "To me, that was incredibly meaningful -- to see four kids and two young women participating. There was another child, Ali, who had passed away," he lamented, though added that those who attended the event felt her spirit. "Literally, on the eighteenth fairway, if you were walking up, you would see her mom's house, and to remember while we are celebrating all these great things with the kids that are survivors, there's still a lot of work to do."



In addition to the golf tournament, the week also brought the annual St. Jude Jam to Memphis, which brought talent ranging from country's Clare Dunn and Montgomery Gentry to R.E.M.'s Mike Mills. Also attending the concert was song stylist Kim Carnes. A Nashville resident, Carnes said she was pleased to lend her talents to the event. "Anytime I can do something for St. Jude, it's something I try to do," she said. "The work that they do touches so many lives and affects so many people, how could you not want to be a part of that?" The artist behind such hits as "Bette Davis Eyes" and "Don't Fall In Love With A Dreamer" added that cancer had touched her family before on multiple occasions, so she was honored to be a part of the Jam.

Hearing words like Carnes' makes the work of St. Jude even more meaningful, says Shadyac. "I love hearing people say that. I believe that we have the most blessed and amazing mission on the planet. I say that because I don't think there is anything more beautiful or more pure than to help kids, but also to help kids that have been stricken with such a catastrophic disease. To know that we are giving families the opportunity to not have to make healthcare decisions based upon how good their health insurance is or how much money they have in their bank account, to alleviate those burdens that are associated with taking care of a catastrophically-ill child, I think it's just incredibly special, and something that people gravitate towards. I think that's why we are successful as an organization. I think the general public loves helping kids, particularly kids that have dealt something like they have."

The Pro-Am and the Jam are just two events of what promises to be a busy summer for St. Jude, said Shadyac. "Now, we're moving into our Music Gives to St. Jude Kids' Program, a campaign which is just beginning. We're going to have the Music Gives To St. Jude Kids' Day, which will take place on Aug. 4. It's going to be a day that will allow bands and venues to raise funds and awareness and support for the patients and families of St. Jude."

Shadyac said that Music Gives is an extension of the great support that the hospital has received from the country and the Latin genres. "We've enjoyed a long history of support from the music and entertainment industry, going back to our beginnings with Danny Thomas. He called upon his friends to help support him in his dream that no child would die in the dawn of life, that led to a tremendous history of support from the country music industry -- who do an amazing amount of work for us. Now, we've got the involvement of Jason Thomas Gordon, who is Danny's grandson, and also a musician. He has taken the Music Gives program, and elevated it tremendously. Now, we are taking it to rock n' roll, which is near and dear to my heart from my generation. We've been able to work with rock bands, and have a great relationship with the Goo Goo Dolls, in large part to Jason. The Avett Brothers are someone else who has a unique connection to St. Jude because (band member) Bob Crawford's daughter is a patient here, so we are truly blessed to have the support from the community. Alabama Shakes is another one that has supported us. It's exciting, because these are new genres for us."

St. Jude continues to be honored with visits from artists among all musical formats – including one of the biggest on the charts right now. “It’s so exciting for us right now because we are supported by Luis Fonsi, who has the number one song in the world with ‘Despacito.’ He’s been an amazing champion for the kids of St. Jude. We are blessed to have his support. He was here literally last week building things for St. Jude while having the number one song in the world. That’s the kind of support that we get from people in the music industry.”



Part of Shadyac’s job is to represent St. Jude and the patients at events such as Country Cares for St. Jude Kids, which is held each January. He says he doesn’t take one second of his time for granted. “I have the best job on the planet, but it really isn’t a job. I enjoy it so much. It’s such a rich job because of the patients, the moms and the dads of these patients, and I get to see them every day. I admire the courage that they exhibit everyday in battling this horrible disease. We have been blessed to have had a lot of successes, but at the same time, we know that our work isn’t done. There are kids that don’t make it, and those are the ones that really inspire you – to work harder.”

Luis Fonsi to Receive Spirit of Hope Award at the 2017 Billboard Latin Music Awards



How Bucks' Greg Monroe finds inspiration in St. Jude patients

By: Alysha Tsuji | March 24, 2016 5:36 pm

When Bucks big man Greg Monroe was drafted by the Pistons in 2010, he knew he wanted to give back to youth in his community somehow, but he didn't know he'd ever become as invested as he is in a place like St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Now, he's in his third year as a league ambassador.

"These are great young kids fighting cancer and other things that are very serious, and I think the research and the care that they're getting is very important," Monroe said to *For the Win*. "I just want to make sure I do my part to help."

One of the patients, 18-year-old Qua Gray, has met several NBA players since being admitted to St. Jude in 2015 with a rare cancer called desmoplastic small round cell tumor, including Mike Conley and Marc Gasol, who he says were the first two guys he met along with Justin Timberlake.

"I know what I'm going through is tough, but I don't like to see it like that," said Qua.

He's a huge basketball fan — his favorite team's the Warriors — so visits from the pros mean a lot to him.

"It's really special. I know they take time out of their busy schedules from playing just to come hang with us," Qua said. "Some people, they don't have to, but they do that, and I really enjoy it so much. So many kids they can't really do it because they're mostly sick. I'm really thankful."

While Qua expresses nothing but gratitude to the NBA players, Monroe said that during his visits to the hospital, the kids are the ones who bring him motivation.

"Just growing up, you always hear about St. Jude, and you always hear about the hospital, and to actually be able to go there and see it, it's a great experience. But then the kids, just to see how happy they were, even though they were going through so much, it's motivation for me," Monroe said.



“There’s definitely stuff that I’ve learned from them as far as not complaining with the circumstances. Some things we might go through, we might feel the need to be upset or mad, but the things that we go through doesn’t amount to anything close to what those young kids are going through. And the way they are happy and smiling, it makes you not want to be upset about anything.”

St. Jude has been around for 54 years, and in that time, it has developed treatments that have increased the overall childhood cancer survival rate to 80 percent. Families that take their children to the hospital for care never receive a bill. NBA Cares and St. Jude have teamed up since 2009 to help raise awareness through Hoops for St. Jude Week. This year, the week runs from March 20-27.

The other 2016 ambassadors around the NBA who advocate for and often visit St. Jude in Memphis are David Lee, Mike Conley, Kevin Love, Marc Gasol and Pau Gasol. In the past, coaches have also served as ambassadors. For instance, Mavs coach Rick Carlisle can be seen wearing a St. Jude pin during games.

Moving forward, Monroe said he hopes to stay involved to raise as much awareness as possible for the hospital, the cancer research and the medication. Qua and his mother are grateful.

“We’re just happy that we were allowed to have this chance to experience this (the NBA player visits),” said Qua’s mom, Tiffany. “It means a lot to him and it also means a lot to me, and I think it will better him and make him fight more, so that he could become somebody and make a difference.”

FedEx St. Jude Classic 60th Anniversary



Calkins: A 14-year-old St. Jude patient named Ally proves, once again, this tournament is not just about the golf

Geoff Calkins , USA TODAY NETWORK -- Tennessee Published 3:01 p.m. CT June 8, 2017 | Updated 3:11 p.m. CT June 8, 2017

The emergency room doctor invited them to come back and look at their daughter Ally's MRI. Even before they got there, Ken Aagaard knew. "Every nurse, every doctor, was just standing and staring at us in complete quiet," he said. "The entire emergency room, you could have heard a pin drop." The doctor beckoned for Ken and his wife to look at an image. Aagaard's instincts had been right.



"She had a tumor the size of a tennis ball next to her brain, over her spine," he said. "We were in shock. Three days later, she was having brain surgery. We didn't find out it was malignant until four or five days after that.

"Then, reality struck. What were we going to do? We didn't know anything. We went into research mode. I got names of doctors from all over, UCLA, Mass General, Philadelphia. And all of them came back saying the same thing. The expert on this is at St. Jude."

So welcome to another day at the FedEx St. Jude Classic, which is marking its 60th anniversary this year. But as we celebrate 60 years of the tournament in Memphis, there is another number to celebrate, too.

Thirty-five million. That's how much the tournament has raised for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. So while all the talk is about Phil and Rickie and whatever other golfer you happen to be pulling for, I can't help think about Ali and Tyler and Brennan and all the other St. Jude kids I've met over the years.

Ali lived right on the golf course. Tyler had a FedEx airplane named after him. Brennan wound up at St. Jude because it was the only place that would take him after his first bone marrow transplant failed. He wound up having four bone marrow transplants before his treatment was complete.

At one point during the whole process, Brennan and his mother went for a walk Downtown.

"We stopped at the historical marker overlooking the Mississippi River," she wrote in their journal. "During the yellow fever epidemic of 1878, most of Memphis's population fled, but 19,000 people decided to stay and help those who were infected. ... The sculpture commemorating this event is stunning. I can't help but wonder about those who stayed in Memphis and survived. What role did their faith in humanity play in the Memphis our family experiences today?"

That is what St. Jude has meant over the years, and what it still means today. Which brings us back to Aagaard and his daughter, Ally, who was just 11 when she was diagnosed.

"We were told the expert was Dr. Amar Gajjar at St. Jude," Aagaard said. "I sent him an email and he answered it within 10 minutes. He convinced us to come to Memphis within two days, and then he gave us his best story of what Ally was going through and what he would recommend as a protocol."

8 That was three years ago. Ally is now cancer free. She returns to Memphis twice a year for checkups, but so far, so good.

"We believe they saved her life with the protocol they have given us, and that St. Jude has given her a chance," Aagaard said. "She now has a 90 percent chance to survive. When Danny Thomas opened up, she would have had a 10 percent chance. We feel very strongly about St. Jude and what they've done for us."

As it happens, Aagaard has another connection to the tournament. He's an executive vice president for CBS, which handles the weekend broadcast. But that had nothing to do with the treatment Ally received. Nor did it have anything to do with what Ally thinks of the hospital.

"I think of it as a fun place to hang out," she said. "A place where I have a lot of fun."

Hearing Ally say that, I was reminded of my conversation with PGA pro Rich Beem, after he visited the hospital in 2009.

"The kids were wishing *me* luck," Beem said. "What are you supposed to do with that?"

You're supposed to embrace it, of course, as a reflection of this city at its best. Memphis may have things it needs to work on, but it understands compassion and hope.

So it was that 14-year-old Ally Aagaard actually played the Pro-Am earlier this week, her father on her bag.

"All I know is that I'm not going to tip him," she said, and then she laughed and laughed.

“ Ms Holly Cooper's work ethic is tremendous. She works until the job is completed and is very detail oriented. Ms. Cooper is a tireless worker and a team player. ”

-- Ricky Clemons – Former Executive Director for Public Relations, Major League Baseball