

## From the Executive Director

Dear partners, donors, and friends of The Max Foundation (TMF), it is a pleasure to introduce you to the first volume of the TMF newsletter. The purpose of this quarterly publication is to provide an update to our collaborators on TMF services, initiatives, milestones and topics of interest.



Every human being has an innate desire to live. No matter the culture, socio-economic status or community conditions, families are devastated by a diagnosis of cancer. In an era of overwhelming information available through the internet, as well as marketing strategies and initiatives targeting consumers in developed countries, it is important to remember that millions of people live unaware and unable to access information and resources. Our role is to fill this gap; to provide a hand to hold; and to offer solutions that give hope.

TMF is committed to finding synergies and to using our expertise to develop partnerships which will result in patients having better access to treatment, support and information. We look forward to a closer dialogue with our partners and collaborators and hope that this newsletter will open the conversation. ■

**Pat Garcia-Gonzalez**  
Executive Director  
The Max Foundation

“The Max Foundation (TMF) is a US-based non-profit cancer organization with international focus. TMF is dedicated to helping patients with blood-related cancers and other rare cancers worldwide by facilitating access to treatment and providing care and support for those who have limited access to resources.”

## HELPING ANA—A Collaboration Success Story

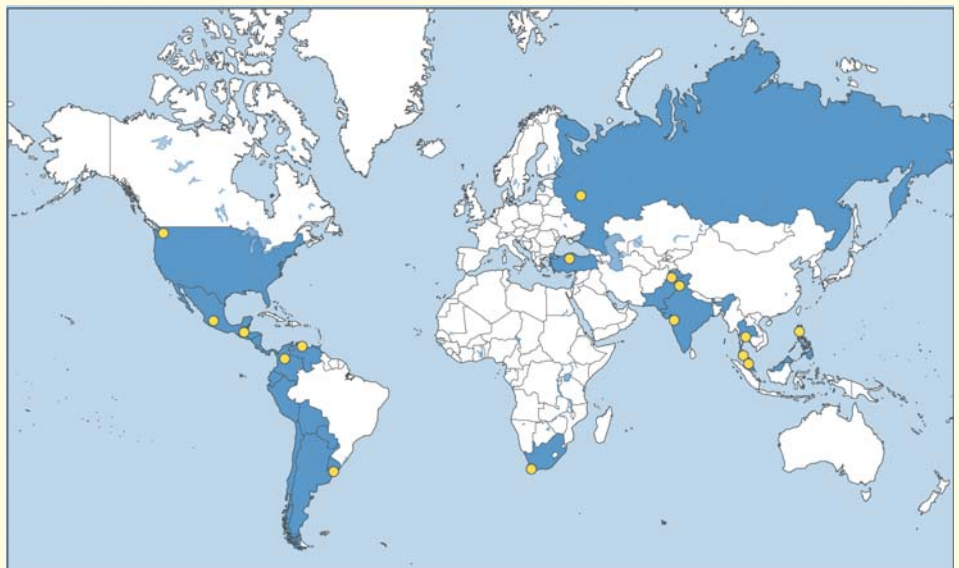
Ana is 22 and lives in Honduras. (*Pseudonym to protect patient confidentiality*) In 2004 her treating physician appealed to TMF for assistance to access treatment for CML. Ana's case is similar to many – a shocking diagnosis – a healthcare system that does not provide treatment options or access to the most effective treatment – a family with too few material resources to pay for the prescribed treatment.

What makes Ana's story special is the extraordinary collaboration between her treating physician, family members, a local NGO, a multinational pharmaceutical company, a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Study Coordinator from Bethesda, Maryland, and a TMF Program Officer.

As with all patients who come to TMF we began with a needs assessment to determine Ana's socio-economic status, confirm her medical status, and to evaluate which available resources would best fit her needs. TMF determined that Ana met the eligibility criteria to receive Glivec free of charge from Novartis through the Glivec International Patient Assistance Program (GIPAP™). TMF also determined that Ana had a strong family support network and attentive medical care and set up a schedule of contact to follow her progress. However, the story does not end here.

*story continued see over*

## TMF Team Worldwide



After two years of treatment with Glivec and close tracking of Ana's progress we learned from her physician that the drug was no longer effective. A request to TMF's Medical Advisory Board for a case review informed us that the best treatment option would be a bone marrow transplant. The out of reach transplant cost prompted Ana's physician to appeal to TMF to collaborate on a solution.

The first good news: TMF learned from Ana's physician that her brother was a perfect donor match and was willing to donate his bone marrow. More good news: The US National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland, was actively enrolling eligible patients in a clinical trial that would cover the transplant costs for patients with perfectly matched donors. TMF began to facilitate the process of getting Ana and her brother enrolled in this trial. We connected the NIH Study Coordinator with Ana's physician, Ana and her family and facilitated the exchange of information to confirm eligibility in the trial.

*The out of reach transplant cost prompted Ana's physician to appeal to TMF to collaborate on a solution.*

Challenges included funding airfare and ensuring family financial reserves. TMF responded with an appeal to a local partner in Honduras for assistance. The local non-governmental cancer support organization made a commitment to provide both the airfare for all three family members and a charitable donation to the family to cover expenses.

Next steps largely involved capturing the US Embassy's attention to prioritize an appointment based on emergency medical need. Finally, the call came from the US embassy: the visas for Ana, her brother, and guardian were approved! Ana's travel to the NIH and process of settling in to prepare for her bone marrow transplant was not glitch-free, but along the way she had the support of the many collaborators who facilitated this next step in her access to treatment and to support her heroic steps toward becoming a cancer survivor.

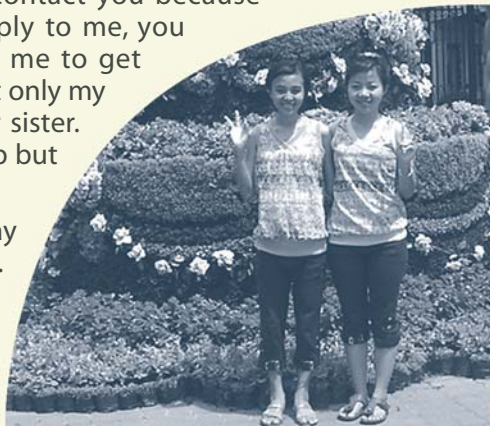
Since 1997 more than 16,000 people diagnosed with blood-related cancers, including CML and gastrointestinal stromal tumors (GISTs), worldwide have been helped by TMF. Although every patient has different medical and psychosocial support needs TMF meets these needs through corporate partnerships, institutional collaborations, and knowledge of local and international resources. Cultural and language appropriate support is integrated into our approach and carried out by a global staff of cancer care specialists. The gap to treatment access and support although wide, is being bridged through TMF's unique model of addressing these unmet needs. ■

## Patient Testimonials

"I don't know words I should use in order to my thankness to your generous help to our family. Further, I 'll keep on contact you because you always make great sense to your reply to me, you encourage me, give me hope and guide me to get out of the darkest place we're , you help not only my sister but all people in our family my dear sister. To call you in this way not because you help but your care and self encouragement.

I hope to see you someday and if that day comes I can return my gratefulness to you. Wish you all the best.....!"

Kunnary, patient's sister  
Cambodia



## How to Donate to TMF

**Donations may be made to The Max Foundation, a 501 ©3 organization by:**

**Mail:** The Max Foundation  
110 W. Dayton, Suite 205  
Edmonds, WA 98020  
USA

**Phone:** Call us at (425) 778-8660  
or toll free (888) 462-9368

**E-mail:** [info@themaxfoundation.org](mailto:info@themaxfoundation.org)

**Online:** Look for the Contribute link at [www.themaxfoundation.org](http://www.themaxfoundation.org)

### Subscription

*This newsletter is a free publication offered by The Max Foundation.*

**To Subscribe:** e-mail us at [info@themaxfoundation.org](mailto:info@themaxfoundation.org)

## The Max Foundation Memorial Wall

The Memorial Wall honors people from all the corners of the world who have fought cancer. If you would like to add your loved one to the wall, please visit our website and click on the Memorial Wall link.

## Facts & Data

- Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide. From a total of 58 million deaths worldwide in 2005, cancer accounts for 7.6 million (or 13%) of all deaths.
- More than 70% of all cancer deaths in 2005 occurred in low and middle income countries. Deaths from cancer in the world are projected to continue rising, with an estimated 9 million people dying from cancer in 2015 and 11.4 million dying in 2030.

### Source:

World Health Organization. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs297/en/index.html> (2006, June 12)