

Lillis, Nicole

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Physician Teaches Valuable Lesson of Giving Back

Martin Belson, M.D., encounters several of our cancer patients in the Emergency department. However, his care extends beyond the ED. He is passionate about supporting these kids beyond their medicinal needs, which is one of the reasons he started the non-profit organization, Kids Against Childhood Cancer (KACC).

Together with his two daughters, Brooke (12) and Anna (9), and 14 of their friends, KACC has raised more than \$7,000 for the Aflac Cancer Center, and the members are learning a valuable lesson about giving back.

"I started KACC to give my daughters and their friends an opportunity to learn how to organize and execute fundraisers as a team in a fun, but constructive way. Most importantly, I want them to discover the value of giving back and helping others kids in need," Dr. Belson says. "Through KACC, the girls learn more about childhood cancer and ways to get involved in the fight against it."

KACC has five elected officers, serving as president, vice president, treasurer, secretary and photographer. Dr. Belson helps facilitate the meetings, with the ultimate goal that over time, the members will run things with minimal input from him. The group meets quarterly to plan activities and fundraising events that raise money to buy items on the "Wish List," created by Children's staff and patients.

So far, the girls are off to a great start. In April, KACC raised more than \$6,000 through the Stone Mountain Cancer Climb. Family, friends and the members of the community pledged various amounts for the girls to climb to the top of Stone Mountain. All 16 girls made it to the top, and 10 climbed the mountain twice. Earlier this year, KACC raised \$1,300 from a car wash.

Dr. Belson is proud of the girls for what they have accomplished and for what they've learned about helping others.

"KACC has taught me how to work as a team and take the initiative to lead a group. Most importantly, it's taught me about the struggles kids my age with cancer have to go through every day. I never really understood what an impact we can have on their lives, but giving them CDs and games can distract them from sorrow or pain they might be feeling," says Dr. Belson's daughter, Brooke.

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