



MD Anderson pediatric lab named in memory of Addison Faith Bender

HOUSTON (Aug. 31) -- Friends, family, and supporters gathered at the MD Anderson Cancer Center Smith Research Building to dedicate the pediatric neuro-oncology lab to one special little angel: Addison Faith Bender.

Addi was just a toddler when a rare, aggressive brain tumor claimed her life. Since that day, Addi's parents, Tony and Amber Bender, vowed to carry on her fight and created Addi's Faith Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to ending childhood cancer.

Established in 2007, Addi's Faith Foundation funds childhood cancer research and provides emotional and financial support to families who are caring for a child with cancer. Since its inception, AFF has awarded \$1 million towards its mission of funding research and helping families.

"The only thing worse than hearing those four dreadful words, 'Your child has cancer,' is then learning that there is no cure," Addi's mom and co-founder of Addi's Faith Foundation Amber Bender said. "When we learned that less than 4 percent of research funding is allocated towards pediatric cancers, we knew we needed to do something to change that.

"We think our children deserve better, so we created Addi's Faith Foundation to step up and fight for these kids. We know there is a cure out there, and together we will find it."

Since 2008, Addi's Faith Foundation has funded the work of Vidya Gopalakrishnan, Ph.D., associate professor in pediatrics at MD Anderson Cancer Center. She has been developing a groundbreaking therapy for treating pediatric brain cancer that involves immunotherapy, an approach that is expected to boost effectiveness and minimize toxicity.

Thanks in part to Addi's Faith Foundation's support, this research has now entered into a Phase I clinical trial, a rarity in the world of pediatric brain cancer. Phase I is showing tremendous promise, and it is anticipated that this project will progress into Phase II within a year.

"Nothing will bring our daughter back, but we are truly honored to see that her legacy will live on," Addi's dad and co-founder of Addi's Faith Foundation Tony Bender said. "It means a lot to us knowing that her fight is continued behind the very walls of this lab that is now named after her.

"We humbly share this honor with the many people who have supported Addi's Faith Foundation throughout the years and look forward to hearing about the many wonderful discoveries that are yet to come."

The plaque on the wall just outside of the research laboratory reads:

Research performed in the laboratory is
supported by the generous donations from
Addi's Faith Foundation
Given in memory of
Addison Faith Bender
Dedicated to all children fighting cancer
And to those whose work will eradicate it.
There is a cure out there and
together we will find it.

Addi's Faith Foundation continuously strives to raise awareness and funding for pediatric cancers. Each year in November, it hosts Addison Faith Bender's Walk By Faith 5K Race/Walk at Sam Houston Race Park, drawing crowds of nearly 3,000. For more information about this and other events, log on to www.addisfaithfoundation.org.



Amber and Tony Bender, co-founders of Addi's Faith Foundation, gathered with friends, family, and supporters at the MD Anderson Cancer Center Smith Research Building to dedicate the pediatric neuro-oncology lab to their daughter Addison Faith Bender.

For more information, log on to AddisFaithFoundation.org and GeigerMediaGlobal.com.