My role as a pediatric oncologist launches me into the middle of people’s lives at a time when they are at their most vulnerable. I tell new patients and their families that they have cancer. I tell established patients and their families that they have been cured of cancer. I tell some patients and their families that they have failed all curative therapies and will not survive. My job is unique in so many respects; I cannot begin to explain my sense of privilege. As if that is not enough, I also get the opportunity to watch my patients and their parents manage their lives and the lives of their children during the treatment for this disease. Their courage and strength is both inspiring and humbling. I get the chance to make a difference every day.

Making a Difference

There are occasions in our lives when an opportunity comes by to make a difference.

The Clayton Dabney Foundation for Kids with Cancer makes a difference. We provide an opportunity for patients and their families to create everlasting memories. At a time in their lives when time is not on their side, we provide a gift or financial assistance allowing parents to spend time with their kids. We provided a piano to a little girl whose last wish was to learn to play the piano. We then got a teacher to go to her house and teach her to play. We waited until a mother expressed what she really wanted and then got it for her. Her wish was a washer and dryer, so she wouldn’t have to bring her dying child to the launderette or leave him at home while she did the laundry. We each find the wish request that defines the Clayton Dabney Foundation for us personally; whether it is taking an Olympic torch to a dying girl or paying the water bill so a boy at home on hospice care can shower and wash.

As chair of the CDF program committee, I have the chance to lead a dynamic group whose goals for the current year include: designing a CDF signature packet we will give to all families; upgrading the CDF Internet site; and capturing referrals for all patients within the state of Texas who would benefit from our help. As a member of its Board of Directors, I have the chance to help lead the Clayton Dabney Foundation for Kids with Cancer to a new level of service and commitment. As a member of Clayton’s Wings, I know my financial support goes directly to the kids and their families. In short as a member of this organization at any level, I get to make a difference to a group of extraordinary people in an extra-ordinarily difficult time of their lives.

“At a time in their lives when time is not on their side, we provide a gift or financial assistance allowing parents to spend time with their kids.”
In starting my year as Chairman of the Clayton Dabney Foundation, I want to acknowledge our special volunteers and generous donors. Without their extraordinary support, both in terms of time and money, the numerous families we have been able to help over the past five years would not have had the opportunity to create “everlasting memories” with their terminally ill children.

The CDF Board of Directors started 2002 with a heart-warming trip to Children’s Medical Center, delivering toys on Valentine’s Day. One of our program committee volunteers, Pat Satterwhite, R.N., through the Foundation, provides toys for every child following treatment on the CMC Oncology floor. I want to thank Pat for her hard work and to our Program Committee Chairman, Dr. Patrick Leavey, who developed this new project.

Our Program Committee is a very energetic group that includes two oncology pediatricians, nurses, a child life development specialist, social workers, the Executive Director of St. Paul Hospice, a hospital pastoral care specialist and numerous community volunteers. This group works with the needy families that face an overwhelmingly difficult time by educating us on how the Foundation can be of assistance.

Our Board of Directors is a unique group of volunteers who work tirelessly to help the families of terminally ill children. One of our Board members, Ann Delatour, was honored as an “Unsung Angel” by Pi Beta Phi Philanthropies for her work with the Foundation. We appreciate the strong financial support of Pi Beta Phi Philanthropies and the acknowledgement of Ann’s tireless work.

With Ann’s help, Janet McCarty and her committee successfully chaired the second annual Girl’s Party fundraising event, referred to this year as “Kissed by an Angel”. The event was held in February at the beautiful home of Mike and Mimi Nolan with more than 250 women attending. The Foundation is appreciative of Janet’s hard work and the generosity of the Nolan’s as well. The Girl’s Party, along with the CDF Golf Tournament held in October, serves as one of the key fund raising events, which continue to provide the necessary funds for the Foundation.

With your help, we look forward to another successful year in 2002. Again, I want to express a special thank you to all of our volunteers and donors who have supported the Clayton Dabney Foundation for Kids with Cancer. Thank you for providing “Medicine of the Heart”. You have made a difference in the life of many terminally ill children and have helped strengthen those families in the process.

Best regards,
Anne Helbing
Board Chairman

Contact us for information about Clayton’s Wings, our exclusive donor group.

Clayton’s Angels visit on Valentine’s Day

Everyone thinks of giving to the kids at Christmas. At the same time, the kids are in the hospital year round and welcome heartfelt attention more than once a year. With this in mind, each Valentine’s Day, Clayton’s Angels distribute toys to kids at Children’s Medical Center. CDF chooses Valentine’s Day because Clayton’s birthday was in February, and our heart logo design makes linking to Valentine’s Day a natural too.

Thank you for the kindness of employees at Lincoln Properties. Their toy donations for the past five years have enabled Clayton’s Angels volunteers to share these donated toys with the children. Drew Schunk, Vice-President with Lincoln Property Company, said, “Our employees are happy to contribute to such a worthwhile cause as the Clayton Dabney Foundation. We always look forward to seeing pictures of the children’s smiling faces.”

This year, with more toys, Clayton’s Angels increased the giving to kids and touched the lives of over 100 children and their families. Seeing the toys brought smiles to the children’s faces. To bring even a small amount of joy to a dying child and his family made it all worthwhile for the Angel volunteers and the employees at Lincoln Properties.

Clayton’s Angels, from left to right: Mike Russ, Brian Ficke, Ty Dabney, Rick Lafitte, Shelby Dabney, Scott Dabney, Anne Helbing, Joellen Goff, Melinda Russ, Jim Braden, Bill Jaspersen, Susan Roby.
“Kissed by an Angel”
Sponsored by Clayton Dabney Foundation for Kids with Cancer, “Kissed by an Angel” was an extremely successful fundraising evening of divine shopping, delicious food and fabulous friends! The fun festivities were held at the home of Mimi and Mike Nolan. This is the second annual Girl’s Party benefiting Clayton Dabney Foundation that anonymously provides assistance to needy families with children in the last stages of cancer.

A special thank you to our sponsors: Neiman Marcus Northpark, La Posada Resort and Spa Santa Fe, Four Seasons Hotel Austin, Southwest Airlines, Blair Delmonico, Dr. Pepper Bottling Group/Jim and Julie Turner, Estancia Home Collection, Margaux and Preferred Parking.

“Kissed by an Angel” Chair, Janet McCarty, sends a special thank you to the Event Co-coordinator, Leslie Ficke; Designer, Sherry Gottsaker and Vendor Liaisons, Beverly Lueckemeyer and Luann Lueckemeyer. Committee members were Margy Bryant, Kim Click, Ann Delatour, Michelle Dunlap, Katy Einspanier, Pam Ellerman, Trish Ellis, Dawn Fields, Rose Fitzgerald, Wendy Harris, Anne Helbing, Charlyn Holmes, Libby Lynch, Michelle Moussa, Katy Nichols, Mimi Nolan, Amy Perry, Ann Pogue, Sharon Quist, Jan Rice, Susan Roby, Christina Rook, Nancy Ross, Melinda Russ, Anne Taylor, LeeAnn Van Amburgh and Donna Williard.

Thank you to all committee members, volunteer bartenders, sponsors, donors, attendees and vendors. This celebration will be held again next year. Plan on joining us next year for great fun!
These are just a few of the families that have been supported by Clayton Dabney Foundation for Kids with Cancer.

- The father of a terminally ill seven-year old requested assistance with his home mortgage. A single parent, he wanted to take off work to be with his child during her last days. CDF paid the mortgage so Dad could be home with his daughter.
- An eight-year old had several relapses and knew she did not have much time left. She requested a shopping trip with her parents so she could buy some gifts for her family. Clayton Dabney Foundation provided the funding for the shopping trip.
- A party to celebrate his high school graduation and to celebrate his life was the request of a terminally ill 19-year-old. He invited family, friends and his marrow donor to the party. CDF covered the cost of the party.
- A single mom wanted to be off work to spend every hour with her 15-year-old on hospice. CDF paid the mortgage payment for 3 months so Mom could be off work and provide the every minute support that her child needed.

By providing this “Medicine of the Heart”, your donation gives comfort to these families when doctors and hospitals have no more to offer. With your help the Foundation will continue to touch lives and to provide special memories for needy families in our community who are facing the loss of a child.