



## UCI's Fourth Annual Anti-Cancer Challenge Covers New Ground

*Virtual event raises a record \$735,000 for university cancer research*

ORANGE, CALIF., Nov. 16, 2020—Compelled by a global pandemic to reimagine the 2020 UCI Anti-Cancer Challenge, event planners devised an eight-week virtual program that paved the way for the most successful challenge year to date.

Pivoting from a traditional one-day festival attended by thousands to eight weeks of virtual webinars and fitness challenges, the fourth annual Anti-Cancer Challenge united people in 45 states and Canada in a movement to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer. Over the course of the challenge, participants raised an event-record \$735,000 for promising cancer research at the UCI Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center.

“When we moved to a virtual event that respected social distancing, we hoped the boundary-less format would attract people who had not previously considered involvement,” said Dr. Richard A. Van Etten, director of the Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center and founder of the Anti-Cancer Challenge. “As it turns out, many of this year’s riders, runners and walkers were new to the Challenge. We are happy to see the movement expand and excited about the innovative cancer research that will move forward because of this year’s participants and donors.”

Participants began the day with the Anti-Cancer Challenge opening ceremony, hosted by Monster Energy, which streamed online. Two-time UFC Bantamweight Champion Dominick Cruz and KTLA meteorologist Henry DiCarlo served as emcees and country music artist Rick Monroe performed the national anthem for the program. Throughout the day, people posted personal stories of achievement and support.

“It’s humbling to hear and read the stories of the cancer survivors and loved ones who support the Challenge,” said Jennifer Sarrail, executive director of the Anti-Cancer Challenge. “Our sponsors generously helped to defray virtual event costs so that 100 percent of the funds participants raise can go directly to research that may change the stories of people diagnosed with cancer. We are grateful to these sponsors, and to our UCI Health research partners, for their roles in advancing the promising studies that will lead to even more positive stories in the future.”

This year’s Anti-Cancer Challenge offered participants the opportunity to earn prizes for miles logged in weekly virtual fitness challenges. Participants collectively logged more than 25,000 miles on routes they chose to raise awareness and funds for cancer research. During the same period, the public was invited to weekly webinars featuring expert UCI faculty speaking on health topics such as melanoma, nutrition and sleep.

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Anti-Cancer Challenge sponsors for 2020 included Monarch Beach Resort, LA Fitness, Hensel Phelps, Allergan, McCarthy, US Motor Works, DPR Construction, Royal Caribbean International, Sindoni Consulting and Management Services, Sabra Health Care REIT, A Snail's Pace, Kitchell, Anaheim Ducks, AC Hotels by Marriott, Glaxo Smith Kline, Doubletree by Hilton, Lumitron, Abbvie. Partners in Research include Monster Energy, Kingston Technology, Lynn Capouya Inc. Landscape Architects and the following Challenge teams: In Memory of Vincent Kong, Team Grandma Marcia, Team Benjamin, Props Family and Goon Family.

For information on 2021 Anti-Cancer Challenge sponsorships, email [Anti-CancerChallenge@uci.edu](mailto:Anti-CancerChallenge@uci.edu) or call 714-456-7171.

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