

The Mike Slive Foundation is giving hope to the idea that prostate cancer will one day be a thing of the past in our lifetime.

IT HAPPENED OVER "COFFEE AND A NAPKIN," at Salem's Diner in Birmingham, Ala., when Mike Slive, retired Commissioner for the Southeastern Conference (SEC) met good friend Ed Meyerson for breakfast. A favorite local haunt for both men, Salem's was perhaps an unlikely venue to launch an impactful foundation for prostate cancer research and education. But on that morning in 2017, it was the perfect venue.

Slive, who was at that point in late-stage prostate cancer, listened attentively to Meyerson's pitch to form the foundation. That was the easy part. Convincing Slive to put his name on the foundation was the tough part. "My father was a humble man," said daughter Anna Slive Harwood, who serves as Executive Director of the Mike Slive Foundation. "Naming a foundation after him wasn't his style, but he recognized the immediate national impact we could have to educate men and their families about prostate cancer. He didn't want anyone else to go through all that he went through with this disease."

As former SEC commissioner, Slive's name was not only familiar, but carried plenty of weight in the college sports arena. Meyerson swayed Slive to use his good name for the benefit of helping other men prevent the disease. In short order, Slive signed on, serving as its first president.

Slive became passionate about educating men about the disease. "It was the most important thing in his life, outside his family," said friend and legendary sports journalist Paul Finebaum, who also serves on the foundation's advisory board. "Mike wasn't in this profession for the money or the fame, it was to make a difference. I think this foundation is his real mark

Unfortunately, Slive passed away from prostate cancer at age 77 in 2018 and didn't live long enough to see the enormous amount of good his namesake foundation has done since then. But if he were still here, he'd no doubt be incredibly proud. "He would be overwhelmed and humbled to see the response people have had to the foundation. To have raised over \$3 million in just six years is a tribute to his legacy and the importance of this cause," Slive Harwood said.

Slive planned to create an advisory board with national reach and prominence. "We talked about in the hospital. Even when he was fighting for his life, he was planning for tomorrow," said Slive Harwood. "Dad was excited to build a national advisory board of his friends and colleagues who could help us get the word out about prostate cancer.

FOX Sports Executive Vice President Larry Jones is one of those people Slive wanted on the advisory board. "I treasured my close business and personal relationship with Mike Slive. The last time I was with him, we talked about how pervasive prostate cancer was and the importance of getting the message out about testing and early detection. The formation of his foundation was to ensure his mission to eradicate prostate cancer would be fulfilled," said Jones. "Mike's remarkable intellect and compassion to help others lives on through the foundation's campaign for greater awareness and early detection of this disease.

Archie Manning, former NFL quarterback and patriarch of the Manning football legacy, and advisory board member, agrees with this. "Knowing the love and respect people have for Mike, I'm not surprised by how impactful and successful the foundation has been so far," he said. "This is a cause we need to rally around and get the word out.

FUNDING RESEARCH

The mission of the Mike Slive Foundation is twofold: To save lives by raising awareness of prostate cancer and to fund cutting-edge research. Its vision is to eradicate prostate cancer as a major public health threat in our lifetime.

Back on that day in Salem's Diner, Slive and Meyerson — who lost his father to the disease — began outlining just how to go about accomplishing these goals and vision. They began by building a board of directors, including Dr. Edward Partridge, former Executive Director of the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB and past President of the American Cancer Society National Board of Directors, who helped develop their grant funding program. Slive and Meyerson also recruited Anna and several other prominent local business leaders to help round out the original executive committee.

'All the work done to help us raise the money we raised in those first couple of years was entirely by our board and volunteers," said Slive Harwood,





"and we dedicated that money to funding research grants. We had such early success that we knew we were onto something."

Following Mike's death in 2018, the foundation hit big thresholds for fundraising as a nonprofit, and the team knew it was time to develop more infrastructure around their efforts. This included adding a staff, led by Slive Harwood as Executive Director, and including Emily Capilouto as Director of Education and Outreach in the fall of 2019. "We have raised over \$3 million and with that funded 22 research grants," Slive Harwood explains. "We award these in \$50,000 pilot research grants to allow a researcher to take their idea and find proof of principal."

Ideally, this seed money will help the researchers then demonstrate their findings and gain further financial backing from the National Institutes of Health. "This is critically important in the research process," said Slive Harwood.

Hopeful recipients apply for the foundation grants via a proposal, and after review by the Medical Advisory Committee, receive the foundation's backing. In 2021, four different researchers benefited from the funding, as did six others in 2020.

Among the research supported by the foundation are projects like that of Kerry Burnstein, Ph.D., of the Department of Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology at the

University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine. Burnstein's work hypothesizes that a protein called KIF20A is a critical promoter of castration resistant prostate cancer (CRPC). Burnstein proposed targeting the protein as a potential method for treating CRPC and metastatic CRPC.

Other grant recipients have included Dennis Adeegbe, Ph.D., of the Moffitt Cancer Center. His work focused on validating and targeting immune signatures in the tumors of African American prostate cancer patients. African American men are more than twice as likely as white men to develop the disease. Adeegbe is investigating whether the immunological profile of prostate cancer in African American men harbors features that might inhibit the immune response. He hopes to shed light on whether targeted treatment in this population could be worthwhile.

All the research funding is aimed at finding improved treatments and eventually, a cure. "I believe we can find a cure in the near future so that men won't have to face this disease," said Slive Harwood. "My father used to say he was doing this so that no other man had to go through all that he did, and I think we can get there."

FUNDING EDUCATION

While the foundation began with

ABOUT MIKE SLIVE

In the South, few people have more name recognition than the SEC Commissioner, and when he held that position from the years 2002 to 2015, Mike Slive understood that. Yet even in such a position of influence, Slive maintained his kind, humble presence everywhere he went. Locals often rubbed elbows with Slive at Birmingham's Salem's Diner, where he frequently made the rounds of the restaurant, coffee pot in hand, refilling empty cups.

Underneath his low-key austere, however, Slive was a leader, raising the SEC's profile in college football, and championing the creation of the College Football Playoff. During his tenure, he also helped increase the SEC's annual revenues from \$96 million to \$455 million. He also oversaw the creation of the SEC Network in 2014, which brought the league's games into millions of homes across the country.

During his career in sports, Slive also served as founding commissioner of two conferences, the Great Midwest Conference and Conference USA. Prior to his work in college sports, Slive worked as an attorney and district court judge in New Hampshire.

Slive never lost the humility and work ethic he gained in childhood, working in his father's Utica, N.Y., butcher shop. Becoming the first member of his family to graduate from college, Slive carried those lessons and ethics with him throughout his adulthood and career.

On a personal level, Slive was married more than 49 years to wife Liz, was father to Anna (Slive Harwood), who today runs his eponymous foundation, and grandfather to Abigail. His legacy lives on through the Mike Slive Foundation.



funding research, the board soon recognized that education was equally important. "I think prostate cancer is where breast cancer was 25 years ago," said Slive Harwood. "Men kind of shut down when they receive the diagnosis and don't talk about it. We want to help educate men about their risks and the importance of early detection for prostate cancer."

As Slive Harwood points out prostate cancer is a detectable cancer. "There are so many other types of cancer that we can't screen for," she said. "The fact that there's a simple PSA blood test for prostate cancer, I often say to men — 'why wouldn't you get checked?' That's why education about early detection is so important."

When detected early, prostate cancer is nearly 100% treatable". "It goes back to the question of, if you're over 40, why not have a conversation with your doctor about your risk, and when you should get screened?" asks Slive Harwood. "That's what we want men to understand. If even 10 men get screened from our efforts, we've potentially saved 10 lives."

Syracuse University's men's basketball Coach Jim Boeheim, who serves on the foundation's advisory board, understands well the importance of screening. Diagnosed in 2002 with prostate cancer, the coach is still thriving 20 years later thanks to his vigilance in screening. "I had a family history, so I knew I needed to get my PSA tests regularly," he explains. "We found it early enough to treat and that gave me a good chance at survival."

To accomplish the education component of the mission, the foundation has sponsored a myriad of activities to reach its target audience. One of the more traditional avenues is the "I'm with Mike 5k," held each Father's Day weekend. Both in-person in Birmingham, and virtually around the country, the 5k run/walk event has reached all 50 states. The aim is to raise awareness of the disease around Father's Day weekend.

In 2021, the foundation partnered with the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement within the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB, the Urology Health Foundation, and the Urology Centers of Alabama to bring education and screening programs to men in 26 counties across Alabama during Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. The effort included free PSA screenings to men age 40 and over. The partnership represented the intersection of the foundation's research and education efforts, as its genesis was a research project funded by the foundation and led by Dr. Monica Baskin, formerly at the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB.

There's also the annual "Beyond Blue" benefit to raise funds for prostate cancer research. Held at the Protective Life Stadium Club and hosted by ESPN's Laura Rutledae. attendees could bid on an array of desirable items and sports experiences, with all proceeds going toward funding prostate cancer research and programs to educate men and their families about prostate cancer.

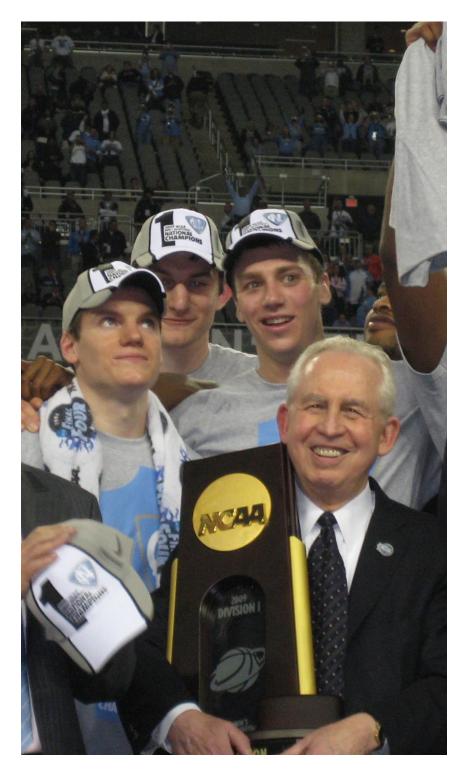
Additional efforts during 2021's Prostate Cancer Awareness Month included a virtual speaker series. the result of a foundation partnership with the Laura Crandall Brown Foundation and the Forge Breast Cancer Survivor Center. Researchers have discovered that breast, gynecological and prostate cancers share certain gene mutations. The speaker series reached shared audiences and supporters, with the hope that could further amplify the educational messaging surround the diseases.

The foundation also launched a Mike Slive Foundation license plate option in the state of Alabama. Not only do most of the funds raised from the purchase of the plates help do some good, but also the distinctive plate design helps spread the message of awareness throughout the state.

There also have been annual Mike Slive Invitationals, featuring top-rated collegiate basketball matchups and offering free PSA screenings for men on site. The 2019 edition featured Final Four team Auburn versus conference champion St. Louis. Broadcast on ESPN2, it reached 86 million households, raising awareness of the disease.

Perhaps the foundation's most unique approach to prostate cancer education so far has been its "Block Cancer" initiative. During the past two basketball seasons, more than 27 different colleges and universities participated in the effort with games airing on ESPN, the ACC Network, the Big Ten Network, and SEC Network and more. The effort spanned 30 days and reached millions of fans. "It started with one basketball game and then just spread to other schools," said Slive Harwood. "Participating teams pick one game in February and designate it as a 'Block Cancer' game. We give them information to share during the game to inform men about their risks for prostate cancer "

The foundation also began an annual partnership with Auburn



University's men's basketball program in 2020 at their annual AUTLIVE cancer game. All men in attendance over the age of 40 had the opportunity to receive a free PSA test. In 2020, of 84 men tested, 10 were abnormal; in 2021, COVID prevented the event. But they were back in 2022, testing 86 men at one game. Of those, eight were abnormal.

Auburn men's basketball Coach Bruce Pearl, and friend of the Mike Slive Foundation, said the testing honors Mike Slive's life. "We literally saved some lives with this testing," he said. "We lost Mike in the prime of his life, much too soon. That's the reason I participate in this effort." In all, the education arm of the Mike Slive Foundation is reaching thousands of men to teach them about prostate cancer, and the importance of early detection. "Mike Slive is someone who gave more to the world than he took," said Big Ten Commissioner Kevin Warren, another member of the foundation's advisory board. "His legacy is a perpetual wink to all of us to be mindful of the importance of health and proper examinations."

STILL WORK TO BE DONE

At only six years old, the Mike Slive Foundation is just getting started, and the team is well aware of how much work lies ahead to change the paradigm around the disease. Efforts have included building a board of well-recognized advisors and a rock-solid executive committee. Noteworthy advisory members include Manning, Jones, Finebaum and Warren; Bill Battle, a former football Head Coach at the University of Tennessee and former Athletic Director at the University of Alabama; and several others.

The foundation also is supported by a host of corporate partners

UNDERSTANDING PROSTATE CANCER

Because to date education surrounding prostate cancer has lagged behind other common cancers like breast cancer, many people don't have a good understanding of its warning signs and symptoms. In its earliest stages, there may be no symptoms at all. However, once it has moved into more advanced stages, that may change.

Prostate cancer occurs in the prostate, a small gland in the male reproductive system. Symptoms of prostate cancer as it advances may include:

- Changes in urination, such as a need to urinate frequently and/or urgently. It may also be difficult to start or hold back urination.
- Difficulty in having or maintaining an erection.
- Pain or stiffness in the lower back, hips, pelvis or thighs.

Keep in mind that, while these conditions may indicate prostate cancer, they can also be symptoms of other conditions, making it vitally important to see a doctor with the onset of any of the above.

Risk factors for developing prostate cancer increase with age — while only one in 10,000 men under the age of 40 will develop it, that number grows to one in 39 for men ages 40 to 59, and one in 14 in the 60 to 69 age group. Some 40% of all prostate cancers are diagnosed in men under the age of 65.

Black men are at a much greater risk of developing the disease at one in seven versus one in eight white men. This group has the highest death rate of any racial or ethnic group. As a result, the medical community recommends that Black men and men of African descent talk to their doctors about beginning screening at age 40.

Genetics and family history can also increase risk factors, and this includes families with a history of breast, colon and ovarian cancers. If you have a family history of these cancers, discuss the potential of genetic counseling or testing with your doctor. If you have a father or brother with prostate cancer, your risk is doubled, and men with two or more relatives with a history of prostate cancer are nearly four times as likely to receive a prostate cancer diagnosis.

While genetic factors have an outsized role in prostate cancer risk, lifestyle factors can also impact risk. Studies have revealed that obese men may be at higher risk of having more advanced prostate cancer and are more likely to die from the disease than leaner counterparts. On the other end of the spectrum, studies have shown that men who exercise the equivalent of one to three hours of walking each week have an 86 percent lower risk of aggressive prostate cancer. A heart-healthy, anti-inflammatory diet can help prevent many types of cancer, including prostate, as can reducing stress, stopping or never starting smoking, and getting enough exercise on a regular basis.

Knowing your risk factors, tools for reducing the likelihood of prostate cancer, and consulting with your doctor on when to begin screening are your best options that can help prevent the disease. If detected early, however, there are proven treatments to bring you back to full health.

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and sponsors, including Medical Properties Trust, Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl, Regions Bank, Dr Pepper, Buffalo Rock, and INFLCR, among others. It's a far cry from the days when the foundation operated off the ideas on a napkin and an all-volunteer team.

Put together, all those serving with the foundation make up a formidable opponent to prostate cancer. But they have their work cut out for them.

Currently, one in eight men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and the disease claims a life every 15 minutes. Black men are more than twice as likely to develop prostate cancer as their white counterparts. It is the second most common type of cancer among men after skin cancer.

The good news is that, caught early, prostate cancer is very treatable. The five-year survival rate when caught early is close to 100%, which is why awareness and education are critical.

Going back to the example of breast cancer education and research efforts, since 1990, there has been roughly a \$600 million increase in funding for the disease. In that time, mortality rates have fallen by more than 40%. The Mike Slive Foundation hopes to bring prostate cancer on par with breast cancer in terms of funding, research and drops in mortality rates.

LOOKING AHEAD

Each year on the anniversary of her father's death, Slive Harwood writes an annual letter to donors about the foundation's efforts. "It's an appeal for funding, yes, but it's also very personal," she said. "This past year I wrote about my father's kindness, and I think that really resonated with people. There's a lot of negativity in the world right now. We all feel better when

we can do something for someone else — to help make a difference. Perhaps that's why we had a great response, including from people who have never given."

Going forward, that's the kind of momentum the foundation hopes to continue. In Mike Slive's words before he passed, "The goal is to create a foundation that lasts for a very long time. Beyond my time."

Friends, family members and all who knew Mike Slive feel confident that's exactly what will happen. Now with national reach, the foundation is having a significant impact on prostate cancer. "His role being the most powerful person in intercollegiate sports at a time of important growth will always be there," said Larry Templeton, former MSU Athletic Director and current foundation board member. "But I think when it comes to fighting this disease, he's the guy that lit the torch to get us all moving."

Warren agrees. "The foundation serves as an affirmation and example of Mike Slive's essence."

IN MIKE SLIVE'S WORDS:

"THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF THE
END OF PROSTATE CANCER."





SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE SALUTES

THE MIKE SLIVE FOUNDATION

AND SUPPORTS ITS FIGHT TO ERADICATE PROSTATE CANCER





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DID YOU KNOW?

- 1 IN 8 MEN WILL BE DIAGNOSED WITH PROSTATE CANCER IN THEIR LIFETIME
- PROSTATE CANCER IS THE 2ND MOST COMMON FORM OF CANCER AMONG MEN AFTER SKIN CANCER
- HAVING A DIRECT RELATIVE WITH PROSTATE CANCER MAKES ONE TWICE AS LIKELY TO BE DIAGNOSED WITH IT
- RESEARCH SHOWS THE FIVE-YEAR SURVIVAL RATE FOR MEN WITH PROSTATE CANCER IS NEARLY 100%
- EARLY DETECTION AND AWARENESS IS CRITICAL