

HEALTHY LIVING

Couple focuses on customized cancer care

By: Alison Bailin Batz

Both award-winning medical researchers, they are among the most well-respected radiation oncologists in Arizona and partners at both Arizona Center for Cancer Care and Arizona Breast Cancer Specialists, which have offices located at 20950 North 29th Avenue in Deer Valley.

Together, their team of nearly 50 specialists serves patients in every inch of the Valley from Gilbert to Scottsdale to Peoria, and everywhere in between.

And, over the past year, they've worked hard to ensure they continue to expand their reach, as well as provide new technologies and critical medical trials far and wide.

"In 2013, for example, were we lucky to enter into a long-term relationship with Scottsdale Healthcare, wherein we were able to re-furbish, re-fit and then re-open both the radiation oncology offices at the Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center and Osborn Hospital campuses, respectively," said Dr. Chen, who served as Clinical Director of the Department of Radiation Oncology at Louis A. Weiss Memorial Hospital and as Assistant Professor of Radiation Oncology at the University of Chicago until relocating to Phoenix with Dr. Yang in 1999, being awarded an American Cancer Society Fellowship for clinical research in breast cancer along the way.

In addition, the dynamic duo also helped their team to bring critical technologies to the Valley as well, including most recently becoming the first group outside of an academic campus in the area to use a Pivotal™ treatment solution for prone breast cancer care, which offers a significant reduction in radiation to the heart and lungs, attainment of good dose homogeneity, minimized respiratory motion and reduced skin toxicity for patients.

"This is a critical technology for large-

breasted women that allow them to obtain treatment in the prone, or face-down, position," said Dr. Yang, who began his medical career at the University of Michigan, where he began research in cancer immunology and continued this at the University of Chicago, where he completed his residency training in Radiation Oncology in 1997.

He remained at the University of Chicago as both a National Cancer Institute research fellow in cancer immunology and then on staff specializing in the treatment of lymphomas and pediatric oncology before making the move to Phoenix with Dr. Chen. Once here, he became one of the first radiation oncologists in Arizona to use Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT), which is a more precise way of shaping the beams of radiation to conform to the target disease in the treatment of head and neck cancers, with great success.

But, while adopting advanced technology has played an important role in developing their practice in Arizona to nearly 40 locations in recent years, Drs. Chen and Yang believe strongly that educating the patients and their families is the first step toward a successful outcome.

"Time and patience for those in need is an essential component in his treatment of cancer patients," says Dr. Yang, who has been honored along with Dr. Chen as among "Arizona's Top Docs" by Phoenix Magazine several years over for their caring yet informative natures, as well as called upon by several local television stations and newspapers including the Arizona Republic for their insight to cancer care in the Valley and beyond.

Adds Dr. Chen, "Making time for our patients' families – and taking a holistic approach to caring for the whole person and those close to them through this hard time in their lives – is also of paramount importance to us."

And, while ensuring they give as much



Drs. Farley Yang and Luci Chen are not your average couple – or your average doctors.

time that is needed to their patients, they also feel as strongly about giving back – both time and money – to the local community as well.

Active donors and volunteers, as well as busy parents to two children, just some of the causes they are committed to include the American Cancer Society; Susan G. Komen for the Cure; the Tesseract School; Mothers Against Drunk Driving; the Salvation Army; Goodwill; Arizona Institute for Breast Health, which is a local nonprofit focused on offering newly

diagnosed breast cancer patients options before treatment free of charge; the Food Allergy Research and Education organization, which is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing about a clearer understanding of the issues surrounding food allergies and providing helpful resources; and Heifer International, a charity organization working to end hunger and poverty around the world by providing livestock and training to struggling communities.

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