



HAYNE PALMOUR IV FOR THE U-T

“Cycling gave me the ability to ... have hope that I would continue to live a normal life,” Duran said.

CYCLIST

FROM B1
tween 35 and 85 miles on any given week on one of the six different bikes in his garage.

“Cycling gave me the ability to believe and have hope that I would continue to live a normal life,” he added.

Now, Duran is using cycling to raise funds for cancer research as part of the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network community, or PanCAN, a pancreatic cancer patient advocacy organization.

Duran’s struggle to discover what was wrong with him is typical of pancreatic cancer, which is often hard to diagnose. It’s also the reason why he is so passionate about giving back through PanCAN.

Pancreatic cancer is considered the world’s toughest cancer, with few effective treatments and no early detection method, according to PanCAN.

While it is the 11th most commonly diagnosed cancer, it is the third leading cause of cancer death in the nation. The five-year survival rate for pancreatic cancer is just 11 percent.

About 80 percent of all pancreatic cancer research funding comes from the federal government, so when federal funding increases, so does the five-year survival rate, according to PanCAN.

This week is PanCAN’s Action Week, during which advocates from across the country rally to increase the federal investment in funding for pancreatic cancer research.

“You want to be able to survive because every day researchers and scientists come out with new methods of treatment,” Duran said. “Through the help of PanCAN and the surge in federal funding, it’s finally happening, and I’m so happy to be

part of it.”

This year, PanCAN is working to increase investment in the Pancreatic Cancer Research Program at the Department of Defense from \$15 million to \$20 million and secure \$49 billion for the National Institutes of Health base budget, including \$7.76 billion for the National Cancer Institute, for pancreatic cancer research.

It’s survivors like Duran who Angie Becorest, sponsorship chair of the San Diego affiliate of PanCAN, considers role models to others.

“Having a recurrence four times and each time just putting a smile on his face and having a positive attitude, he’s definitely somebody that I look up to and is very inspirational,” she said.

Becorest, a 25-year pancreatic cancer survivor herself, says what’s most important is letting people know that survivors do exist and there is support out there for them.

Along with pancreatic cancer research, PanCAN funding goes toward various free support programs for patients, like Know Your Tumor, where patients can get molecular profiling of their tumors to help provide insight and treatment options to their health care teams.

Duran says that his pancreatic cancer diagnosis was both one of the worst things that has ever happened to him and one of the best.

“It’s made me who I am today by being able to help the community,” he said. “Without PanCAN, without my cycling and without the community that’s helped me, I really wouldn’t be here right now ... As long as they’re continuing to fight, I will continue to fight. And if I can no longer continue to fight, I know they will continue to fight.”

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