



# KORTNEY ROSE FOUNDATION

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**THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA (CHOP) DEDICATES A BRIDGE TO THE KORTNEY ROSE FOUNDATION IN HONOR OF KORTNEY ROSE GILLETTE**

**Oceanport, NJ – May 13, 2019** – Today, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) unveiled a plaque officially dedicating a patient bridge linking the hospital's South Tower to CHOP's pediatric oncology/bone marrow transplant unit, to honor Kortney Rose Gillette, the namesake of The Kortney Rose Foundation (KRF). The dedication ceremony also recognized the steadfast support of KRF's founders, Richard and Kristen Gillette, who, since 2007, have raised over \$2 million to support and accelerate the world-class research taking place at CHOP's brain tumor research program and through the CHOP-led Children's Brain Tumor Tissue Consortium (CBTTC), of whom KRF is a founding research partner.

The plaque can be found beside the entry door leading into the South Tower bridge, and reads, "This bridge is dedicated to The Kortney Rose Foundation for bridging the gap in pediatric brain tumor research in honor of Kortney Rose Gillette."

"We are grateful to the Kortney Rose Foundation for more than a decade of philanthropic support for the Children's Brain Tumor Tissue Consortium (CBTTC)," said Adam Resnick, PhD, Director of the Center for Data Driven Discovery in Biomedicine (D3b) at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Scientific Co-Chair of the CBTTC. "The cutting-edge research and innovation simply would not be possible without their belief in our vision and their partnership to help make it a reality."

Prior to being honored at the Kortney Rose Gillette bridge dedication ceremony, KRF Founder and Executive Director Kristen Gillette had the privilege of sharing Kortney Rose's story and KRF's mission to an assembly of over 50 research and administrative staff from CHOP's [Center for Data Driven Discovery in Biomedicine](#), the operations center for the CBTTC. This marked the first time a patient family was invited to join the Center's *All-Hands* staff assembly, which meets monthly to update staff of all new developments and breakthroughs happening in the lab, in the clinic, and across each of the Center's units of expertise. Ms. Gillette's presentation served as a moving reminder to the gathered laboratory and data scientists, some of whom may not often have the opportunity to interact directly with brain tumor patients/families, of how important their work is to families and how critical it is for the pediatric brain tumor research community to work together to more swiftly find cures and improve treatments for children suffering from these diseases.

In 2006, two weeks after her 9<sup>th</sup> birthday, Kortney Rose Gillette was diagnosed with a tumor in her brainstem specifically referred to as Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG). Soon after, Kortney became a patient at CHOP's brain tumor program. While at CHOP, Kortney's parents were shocked to learn that due to a lack of research, every child diagnosed with a DIPG tumor will die. Typical life expectancy is 9-12 months after a DIPG diagnosis. However, Kortney lived only four and a half months past her initial diagnosis.

After 30 years of minimal research on this rare brain tumor, and with a severe shortage in funding, there is still no effective treatment for DIPG. The Federal Government funds 98% of all cancer research in the U.S., but only 4% of the annual governmental research budget goes toward all pediatric cancer research.

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[thekortneyrosefoundation.org](http://thekortneyrosefoundation.org)



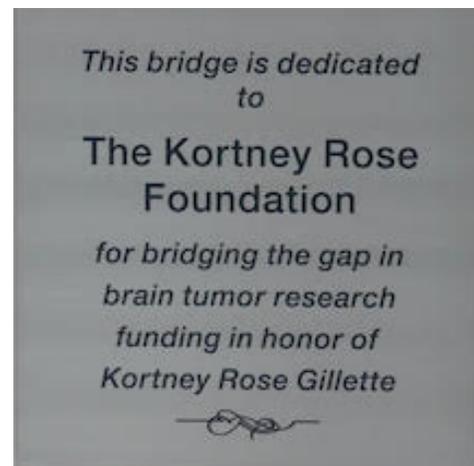
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*Kristen Gillette, Founder/Executive Director of KRF said, “When the doctors at CHOP told me that only 4% goes to all pediatric cancer research, I decided then and there I needed to do something. This percentage is backwards. More life years are lost when a child dies from cancer than when an adult does. Kids are the future. How can we not invest in them?”*

The CB TTC is made up of 17 global institutions and operates the world’s largest clinically annotated brain tumor tissue database and shares data via Cavatica, the first ever pediatric cancer data cloud pioneered by CHOP. These advancements, with support from KRF and involvement of the NIH’s Gabriella Miller Kids First Program, are having implications for broader pediatric cancer and structural birth defect research.

*The Kortney Rose Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charity created by Kortney’s parents after her death in 2006 from a rare brain tumor to create her legacy of helping other children through the promise of research. Since inception, the Foundation has built a playground in Kortney’s name, is responsible for over \$2 million donated to pediatric brain tumor research, was a founding funder of the CB TTC, and was one of the primary supporters of the pilot research study to come out of the CB TTC called “Open DIPG.” The Foundation was also instrumental in passing legislation naming May as Brain Tumor Awareness Month in the State of New Jersey.*

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