

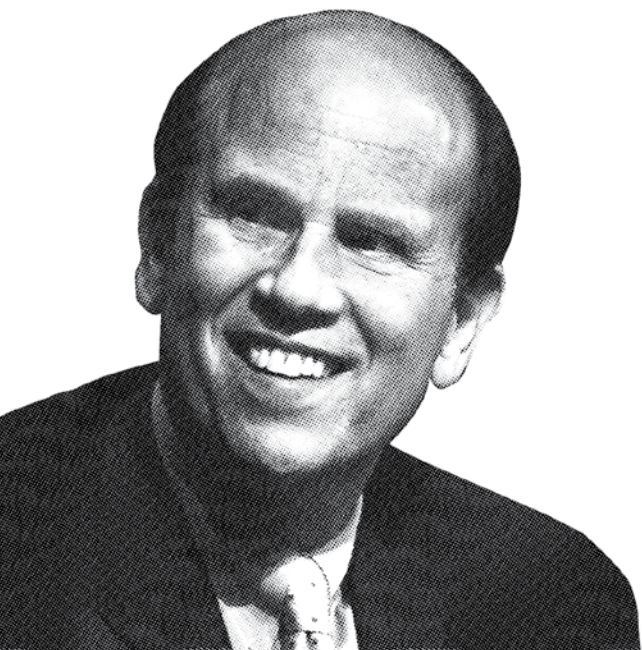
Achieving Faster Cures

Mike Milken

Chairman
Milken Institute

In 1993, more than two decades after we began support of medical research and shortly after my own cancer diagnosis, I attended a conference at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. Looking around, I realized there were no researchers from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC), another leading research institution. When I asked why, I received a quizzical look and was told: “Because they’re the competition.”

Not to patients, I thought.



By the time we hosted our first Scientific Retreat less than a year later, we'd solved this problem. To receive funding from us, investigators had to share their work — even with other institutions. (For those who said their research was too valuable to share before publication, we told them they obviously didn't need our support; within months, they all came around.) And not only did we invite major research institutions, we also brought in industry. The late Dr. Bill Fair, then chief of urology at MSKCC, told me it was the first time he'd been to a conference with for-profit companies.

On the Retreat's opening day, the researchers sat with other researchers (usually from the same institution) and industry representatives with each other. For-profit research was viewed as beneath and behind the work being done in the university setting. On the second day, after some of the impressive presentations from biotech and pharma companies, everyone began to mingle. It was clear to all participants that they could accomplish more working together than individually.

A couple of years later, collaborating became even easier when our board member Andy Grove (then chairman and CEO of Intel) helped connect basic, translational and clinical researchers around the world in real-time through the Internet — a practice we take for granted today. Working with someone in a different part of the world became as easy as working with someone down the hall.

All of this happened in the precursor organization to *FasterCures*, and that collaborative spirit is in our organizational DNA. The Research Acceleration and Innovation Network (TRAIN) was created as the *FasterCures* hub for sharing best practices across nearly 100 leading disease-specific organizations. The Center for Strategic Philanthropy (created at *FasterCures* and now its own Milken Institute center) focuses on helping givers maximize their impact by coordinating efforts across many research organizations. Our public policy and education initiatives over the years, including the 2011 Lake Tahoe Retreat and the 2012 Celebration of Science, have helped refocus the nation's commitment to bioscience. The Consortia-pedia program helps form meaningful collaborations, and our Patients Count initiative puts patients and their families at the center of medical research.

And, of course, this collaborative spirit is in full effect at our annual Partnering for Cures conference, as we welcome nearly 1,000 leaders from across the research ecosystem — medical and scientific investigators, patients, government officials, investors, philanthropists, CEOs from biopharma and medical device companies, insurers, health-care providers and heads of research centers and other nonprofits. These leaders forge partnerships dedicated to a singular goal: reducing death and suffering.

Independently, we can chip away at this challenge. **Together, we'll solve it.**

