

# Tudor Oaks Farm



*Story by* LISA STAMOS



PHOTO: GEORGE BURNS PHOTOGRAPHY

Dr. Stacie and Richard J Stephenson with their sons at home in Barrington.

# *Barrington Couple Leads the Critical Fight Against Cancer*

DR. STACIE STEPHENSON AND RICHARD J STEPHENSON HAVE  
DEDICATED THEIR LIVES TO SERVICE AND CANCER RESEARCH SUPPORT  
OFFERING A ROAD TO HOPE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

When Richard J Stephenson, founder of Cancer Treatment Centers of America, stepped out of the elevator and saw his future wife for the first time, it was love at first sight. Dr. Stacie Stephenson was preparing to give a lecture and had no idea who he was until he stepped forward and introduced himself. Once they got to know each other, the couple realized they shared a common passion: to improve people's lives—she is teaching about how to create true health through foundational lifestyle changes, and he is leading through his philanthropic support of health research and the creation of game-changing health institutions and non-profit organizations. The rest is history.



PHOTO: THOMAS BOYRON

Dr. Stacie and Richard J Stephenson say that Illinois is home in their hearts.

**T**HE POWER COUPLE, who live part-time in Barrington, have dedicated their lives to service. Dr. Stephenson, aka “Dr. Stacie,” is an integrative and lifestyle medicine doctor whose specialty is teaching people how to achieve glowing physical and mental health through foundational lifestyle changes, such as a whole-foods diet, regular movement, connection to others, and a commitment to self-care. Dr. Stacie takes a “facts first” approach to health information through the company she founded, VibrantDoc, and in the books she writes: “Glow: 90 Days to Create Your Vibrant Life from Within,” and “Vibrant: A Groundbreaking Program to Get Energized, Own Your Health, and Glow.” She

considers herself a perpetual student, always willing to learn more about new research, new ways of approaching old problems, and the debunking of questionable health information, all in the service of empowering people to own their health by making more intelligent, informed decisions about their care and lifestyle.

Philanthropist, entrepreneur, and global merchant banker Richard J Stephenson founded Cancer Treatment Centers of America in 1988, after the death of his mother from cancer. He then founded Gateway for Cancer Research in 1991, to support cancer research, so those like his mother could have a better prognosis. Mr. Stephenson considers himself to be a “servant

leader.” He prioritizes the growth, well-being, and empowerment of employees and those they serve by fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. At a recent fundraiser for Gateway for Cancer Research, Mr. Stephenson remarked: “There is no greater motivator of ethical behavior for me...and for each of you, I’m sure...than the principle my parents instilled in me from the earliest age—it’s called The Moral Code. It’s a simple, yet profoundly important compass for all facets of my life... and it’s this: When you see someone who is less well off than yourself...such as a cancer patient...and you’re in a unique position to do something about their plight... without harm to yourself... your family, or your Lord... you simply step into the opportunity and do what you can. That could mean giving your time or talent in service to others...or, like each of you here this evening... giving your treasure to help ease the pain and suffering of others.”

#### AT HOME IN BARRINGTON

Dr. and Mr. Stephenson complement each other perfectly. They both focus on the facts and always keep the well-being of the people and communities they serve at heart. Together, the Stephensons have been able to create truly positive change in the world, and they have no intention of slowing down. In the rare moments when they have time for themselves, the Stephensons enjoy the outdoor aspects of the places they live. Mr. Stephenson likes hunting, hiking, and boating. Dr. Stephenson loves being on the water and watching the seasons change. Adds Dr. Stephenson, “We both adore the equestrian lifestyle.”

They spend time raising horses on their working horse farm, Tudor Oaks. Both born in the Midwest, the Stephensons love the Barrington Hills community. Mr. Stephenson commented, “Illinois is home to Stacie and me in every sense of the word. While we may enjoy time in other parts of the country and we love travelling abroad, Illinois has our hearts.”

#### RAISING FUNDS FOR CANCER RESEARCH

Much of Stephensons’ effort and philanthropy is centered on their foundation, Gateway for Cancer Research. Dr. and Mr. Stephenson, as Vice Chair and Chair respectively, look forward each year to one of their most meaningful fundraising events: the Cures Gala. This landmark event is meant to

be a celebration for the brave doctors, patients, and donors who come together to create a world where cancer is no longer feared.

The most recent event was the 32nd Annual Gateway for Cancer Research Cures Gala, and the Stephensons are intimately involved at every step of the way, selecting menus, décor, and talent, to ensure the Cures Gala will be an unforgettable experience for a great cause, even recently hosting the Cures Gala at their home in Barrington Hills. On the red carpet, Dr. Stephenson remarked: “We love opening our doors to our friends and family, and we like to think of each person here tonight as a part of our Gateway family. Our guests will be delighted with great food, lovely company, and amazing entertainment, and a few other surprises, as well. But of course, we’re here tonight to support and provide hopeful, innovative, and breakthrough options to those facing cancer.”

### AN UNFORGETTABLE GALA EVENT

Guests were entertained throughout the evening by Stephenson friend Joey Fatone, who shared his personal connection to Gateway’s mission: “My mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. Thank God she is cancer free now!” Guests were treated to unforgettable performances by Vonzell Solomon, Taylor Dayne, and Robin Thicke.

At the close of the event, Dr. Stephenson addressed the donors: “The most amazing news to share is that in one inspiring evening, together, we raised \$3 million, which will directly fund vital cancer research! This is research that delivers hope to patients battling cancer today—patients like Valerie, who is participating in a Gateway funded trial, which has given her more time with her family and improved her quality of life as their fight continues. Without your support, this just isn’t possible.”

The Stephensons’ other major fundraiser is Gateway Celebrity Fight Night. The Celebrity Fight Night Foundation is an internationally recognized philanthropic organization that has generated more than \$90 million in charitable funding throughout its 27-year history. It has recently merged with Gateway for Cancer Research, putting the Stephensons at the helm of the Phoenix-based Celebrity Fight Night organization, whose charity events are synonymous with star-studded support for advances in health and well-being. Now, Gateway Celebrity Fight Night raises money exclusively for Gateway for Cancer Research and is the organization’s flagship event, raising millions of dollars for the cause and “delivering a knockout blow to cancer.”

### THE POWER OF GIVING

As someone who disseminates health advice through the media and in her books, the truth that giving is good for physical and mental health isn’t lost on Dr. Stephenson. “There’s a ripple effect to giving back,” she says. “One selfless gesture or gift has the potential to ignite a chain of giving and gratitude that can have an unbelievable impact. Helping others as they face an obstacle or hardship is a privilege that should never be ignored. At some point in life, we all need help. Giving back is one of the most basic, yet meaningful, expressions of our shared humanity.”



*Dr. Sameek Roychowdhury, MD, PhD, Head of Gateway for Cancer Research Peer Review*

## On the Front Lines with Gateway for Cancer Research

### FILLING THE CLINICAL CANCER RESEARCH AND TREATMENT GAPS

Gateway for Cancer Research goes where other organizations won't, funding clinical trials that are key to creating new, approved therapies that can change the face of cancer treatment as we know it. This includes telemedicine trials which bring treatments to patients' homes.

Gateway exclusively funds Phase I and Phase II clinical trials crucial to the discovery of innovative new treatments for all types of cancer. These trials are often overlooked by larger philanthropic and research-funding organizations because of their risk. Yet, without them, new therapies and treatments that later gain FDA approval might never be discovered.

“Gateway’s visionary investment for decentralized clinical trials is taking cancer research to the next level. This is on the cutting edge and will guide the pharmaceutical industry and academic medical centers towards the future of oncology drug development and importantly, reach patients that have the greatest need,” said Dr. Sameek Roychowdhury, MD, PhD, Head of Gateway for Cancer Research Peer Review.

Gateway also funds integrative oncology research that promotes treatment while supporting quality of life. Integrative medicine combines conventional treatments such as surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation with scientific, evidence-based therapies to mitigate side effects and improve tolerability while treating the specific cancer type. This eases the burden of treatment on both patients and their families.

Gateway is always and only about the patient, partnering with dedicated clinician-scientists at leading cancer centers and research institutions around the world. Having raised more than \$105 million for cancer research, advancing over 227 clinical trials, Gateway’s impact is significant.

Due to generous underwriting, 100% of funds donated go directly to the organization’s life-saving work. Gateway’s vision is to create a world in which a cancer diagnosis is no longer feared.



Gateway for Cancer Research President and CEO Natalie Stewart



Corrine Bush and Todd McPherson-Gray



Taylor Dayne



Robin Thicke, Vonzell Solomon, Richard J Stephenson, Dr. Stacie Stephenson, Taylor Dayne, and Joey Fatone



Robin Thicke rocks the Cures Gala Finale!



Lawrence Zarian



Maddy Oliver and Joey Fatone



ABOVE: Katie and Cory Rutledge  
LEFT: Brandon and Lorraine Richardson