

**THE MIKEY CZECH FOUNDATION**  
**P.O. BOX 1717**  
**NEW CANAAN, CT**  
[www.mikeyczech.org](http://www.mikeyczech.org)  
**203-769-8401**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE MIKEY CZECH FOUNDATION CONTRIBUTES \$1 MILLION TO DIPG RESEARCH AT DANA-FARBER CANCER INSTITUTE**

*New Canaan, CT – March 29, 2017* – The Mikey Czech Foundation, Inc. (the “Foundation”, [www.mikeyczech.org](http://www.mikeyczech.org)) a 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation established by Stephen J. and Jennifer L. Czech to finance medical research for pediatric brain tumors, announced a \$1,000,000 gift to Pediatric Medical Neuro-Oncology at Dana-Farber, headed by Mark W. Kieran, MD, PhD, and located in Boston, Massachusetts. The gift is the largest-ever single donor gift dedicated to Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma research in Dana-Farber’s history. The proceeds of the gift are designed to further the research and development of remedies for Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (“DIPG”) pediatric brain tumors, the type of tumor that claimed the life of James Michael “Mikey” Czech in 2008 at age 11.

DIPG brain stem tumors affect the cranial nerves of children, ages 3 – 16 years old, destroying the nerves that supply the muscles of the eye and face, and muscles involved in swallowing. Symptoms include double vision, inability to close the eyelids completely, "drooping" on one side of the face, and difficulty chewing and swallowing. The tumor also affects the "long tracks" of the brain, with resultant weakness of the arms or legs and difficulty with speech and walking. As the tumor grows, children initially lose their ability to use their limbs. Thereafter, they sequentially lose their ability to swallow and breathe. Notwithstanding their physical deterioration, the children maintain their mental faculties and are fully cognizant of what is happening to them. Survival past 12 to 14 months is uncommon, and new approaches to treating these tumors are urgently needed as no known effective therapies currently exist to treat DIPGs.

“The assets required to cure DIPGs consist of: (a) a sustainable funding source; (b) world-class neuro-oncologists; and (c) state-of-the-art research facilities,” said Steve Czech, Mikey’s father and Chairman & Co-Founder of The Mikey Czech Foundation. “We intend to be the sustainable funding source and we believe that Dr. Kieran, his colleagues and Dana-Farber represent the “best-in-class” with respect to pediatric neuro-oncology research and state-of-the-art research facilities. This gift is our second of what we hope will be a series of gifts, comparable or larger in size, designed to eradicate this heinous disease”.

In addition to his efforts with the Foundation, Steve Czech is the Managing Partner and Chief Investment Officer of Czech Asset Management, L.P., a credit focused alternative investment manager based in Greenwich, CT with approximately \$4.3 billion of committed capital under management and significant co-investment capacity. In an effort to establish a sustainable funding source for DIPG research, Mr. Czech contributes a percentage of his personal income to DIPG research.

“Funding from The Mikey Czech Foundation is critical because it will allow us to continue to conduct research to define the underlying molecular changes in DIPG that have previously made these tumors so resistant to therapy,” said Mark W. Kieran, MD, PhD, director of Pediatric Medical Neuro-Oncology, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. “These efforts are already having an impact. The first national clinical trial of biopsy of DIPG and molecular classification followed by treatment individualized to the specific aberration in each patient’s tumor (the first such trial in the world) has already been completed. Out of these efforts came the discovery that DIPG occurs as three different variants with unique molecular signatures that have different mutations, some of which were unique to DIPG and unknown in any other cancer. Dana-Farber is now developing targeted therapies against these mutations in the hope that we can finally begin to make a significant impact in the treatment of this disease. All of this effort came from the dedication of patients, their families and foundations, including The Mikey Czech Foundation, and would not have been possible without them.”

“DIPG is a devastating disease for pediatric patients and their families. With The Mikey Czech Foundation’s funding, Dr. Kieran can continue his important research and hopefully one day find a cure for DIPG, said Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, President and CEO of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute,

**About The Mikey Czech Foundation:** The Mikey Czech Foundation, Inc. (the “Foundation”) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation established by Mikey’s family to finance medical research for pediatric brain tumors, including Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (“DIPG”) pediatric brain stem tumors. DIPG brain stem tumors are extremely rare. Approximately 300 cases per year are reported nationwide, which unfortunately, relegates this form of cancer to “orphan” status within the medical research community, as too few children develop these type of brain tumors to warrant the necessary investment of scarce medical research dollars to find a cure. The Foundation will approve grants to support research at healthcare, education and medical research facilities throughout the United States to assist research in this area.

**About Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (“DIPG”):** Brain stem tumors affect the cranial nerves, causing symptoms related to the nerves that supply the muscles of the eye and face, and muscles involved in swallowing. These symptoms include double vision, inability to close the eyelids completely, “drooping” on one side of the face, and difficulty chewing and swallowing. The tumor also affects the “long tracks” of the brain, with resultant weakness of the arms or legs and difficulty with speech and walking. As the tumor grows, children initially lose their ability to use their limbs. Thereafter, they sequentially lose control of their ability to swallow and breathe and begin to have alterations in heart rate. Notwithstanding their physical deterioration, the children maintain their mental faculties and are fully cognizant of what is happening to them.

Symptoms usually worsen rapidly because the tumor is rapidly growing. The patient's symptoms often improve dramatically during or after six weeks of radiation. Unfortunately, problems usually recur after an average of six months, and progress rapidly. Survival past 12 to 14 months is uncommon and almost all children have succumbed to the disease by 2-3 years. New approaches to treating these tumors are urgently needed.

**About Dana-Farber Cancer Institute:** From achieving the first remissions in cancer with chemotherapy in 1948, to developing the very latest new therapies, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute is one of the world's leading centers of cancer research and treatment. It is the only center ranked in the top 4 of *U.S. News and World Report's Best Hospitals* for both adult and pediatric cancer care.

Dana-Farber sits at the center of a wide range of collaborative efforts to reduce the burden of cancer through scientific inquiry, clinical care, education, community engagement, and advocacy. Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's Cancer Center provides the latest in cancer care for adults; Dana-Farber/Boston Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center for children. The Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center unites the cancer research efforts of five Harvard academic medical centers and two graduate schools, while Dana-Farber Community Cancer Care provides high quality cancer treatment in communities outside Boston's Longwood Medical Area.

Dana-Farber is dedicated to a unique 50/50 balance between cancer research and care, and much of the Institute's work is dedicated to translating the results of its discovery into new treatments for patients locally, and around the world

**About Stephen J. Czech:** Steve Czech has over 28 years of credit and corporate finance experience as well as a long record of establishing and running direct lending credit funds. His experience includes sourcing, structuring, underwriting, monitoring and restructuring corporate loans. Prior to forming Czech Asset Management, Steve was employed by several prominent firms, including, but not limited to, Morgan Stanley, Credit Suisse Group AG, Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette ("DLJ") and Banc of America Securities LLC. Czech and his family are significant donors to, and advocates of, causes related to: (i) terminally-ill children, (ii) active-duty and retired Navy SEALs and their families; (iii) first-responders (ie: Police, Fire and EMTs); and (iv) scholarships for underprivileged high-school students throughout the United States. Czech is the founder and Co-Chairman of The Mikey Czech Foundation, a member of The Navy SEAL Foundation National Leadership Council, a member of the Advisory Board of The University of Chicago Booth School of Business, a Laureate member of the Dean's Society of The University of Chicago Booth School of Business, a member of Villanova University's President's Club & Parents Executive Committee, a member of the Aesclepien Society of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and a member of the Dana-Farber Presidential Visiting Committee for Pediatric Oncology. Czech is also the Chairman of the Board of Alfred Angelo, Inc. Czech received a B.S. from Marquette University and an MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

**About Czech Asset Management, L.P.** Czech Asset Management, L.P., with approximately \$4.3 billion of committed capital under management and significant co-investment capacity, is a Greenwich, CT-based direct lending firm engaged in providing privately negotiated, asset-based and cash-flow first and second lien secured floating rate senior secured loans primarily to U.S. middle market companies that generate annual revenue of \$75.0 million to \$500.0 million+ and annual EBITDA of \$7.5 million to \$50.0 million.

**Contact:**

**Stephen J. Czech**  
**Chairman & Co-Founder**  
**The Mikey Czech Foundation, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 1717  
New Canaan, CT 06840  
Phone: 203-769-8401  
Email: [sczech@sjccapital.com](mailto:sczech@sjccapital.com)