

The Tony Colannino Foundation

About Tony...

The Tony Colannino Foundation is a non-profit organization that was created in memory of Tony Colannino. As the former principal of John F. Kennedy High, Tony, or “Mr. C” as he was known to many, had a love affair with the school.

Tony attended John F. Kennedy as an adolescent, and returned there to pursue his teaching career after completing his university degree. He guided and inspired students for many years. Tony took part in student life, helping to bring the student body together as a whole. Tony later became the principal at John F. Kennedy, helping to not only bring the students and staff together as one, but guiding them on an administrative level as well.

In January of 2005, five months shy from retirement, Tony was diagnosed with a glioblastoma multiforme brain tumor. He underwent invasive brain surgery to remove the mass, and after eight months of hope, Tony succumbed to his illness and passed away on September 13th 2005. He left behind his wife Anna of 26 years, and his three children Iriana, Daniela and Gianmarco. Although saddened by their loss, this did not deter them from establishing the Tony Colannino Foundation in his memory.

Our Mission...

The mission of the Tony Colannino Foundation, which is a completely non-profit organization, is to increase the awareness in the devastating effects of brain tumors. It is through the efforts of the foundation that others will be helped, and it is only through investment in research that this hope can be realized.

Thus, on September 21st, the Tony Colannino Foundation was officially launched with a Black Tie Gala held to raise money for the Montreal Neurological Institute (MNI), the foundation's charity of choice. In its first event, the foundation raised an astonishing \$11,000, and all funds raised were donated to the MNI.

John F. Kennedy High School staff and students did not turn a blind eye to the foundation. On the contrary, they embraced the Tony Colannino Foundation, and always willing to help and never forgetting those who helped them, rallied together to raise more funds. Holding two dress-down days in the month of November, the entire student body helped raise \$2000 which was donated to the Tony Colannino Foundation, and which was in turn, donated to the MNI. The Tony Colannino Foundation has, to date, donated a staggering \$15,000 in its short time since being recognized as an official organization.

More Fundraising to Come...

We are thrilled to inform you that the MNI has established the Tony Colannino Fund. Money donated to this fund will be used exclusively for brain tumor research.

The foundation is currently planning their next event in hopes to not only raise more money for the Montreal Neurological Institute, but also in hopes of shedding more light onto this devastating disease.

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Glioblastoma Multiforme Brain Tumors and Tony's Story

Glioblastomas multiforme brain tumors are the most malignant of the gliomas, and are fast-growing astrocytomas that contain areas of dead necrotic tumor cells. Because of this, they usually spread quickly to other parts of the brain, and are difficult to treat. In adults, glioblastomas occur most often in the cerebrum, especially in the frontal and temporal lobes of the brain. People of all ages can develop astrocytomas, but they are more common in adults, particularly middle-aged men.

The life-expectancy of patients diagnosed with glioblastoma multiforme brain tumors is extremely short. Half of the patients diagnosed die within a year, while others survive no more than three years. The only treatments that stretch survival limits are exceptionally invasive surgeries to remove the tumor, and radiation treatment with the maximum tolerated dose; all of which lead to a painfully low quality of life. It is not uncommon for these tumors to recur after the initial treatment, and further treatment may be needed.

Such was Tony's story. He was hospitalized at Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont on January 12th, 2005, and underwent a series of scans and MRI's which revealed a large mass on the left side of his brain. Surgery was Tony's best option due to the location of the mass in his brain. Thus, on Monday, January 31st, 2005, he underwent invasive surgery, which according to his neurosurgeon, went well. Although optimistic, pathology results revealed the mass was a glioblastoma multiforme brain tumor. Radiation was recommended to remove any microscopic traces that were left of the tumor, and this Tony did willingly.

After a brief optimistic period, the tumor resurfaced larger than before. Tony's value of life diminished quickly after suffering from a massive seizure brought upon by the tumor,

and on September 13th, 2005, he succumbed to this disease exactly 8 months to the day of his diagnosis.

It is because of patients such as Tony that researchers are racing to find better therapies to stop or slow the growth of glioblastoma multiforme brain tumors.