



Rob Callard: Riding with
hope and gratitude

Description

Chez Nick's restaurateur embarks on yet another cancer fundraiser

On the weekend of **September 21 to 23**, the **2nd Annual Cedars Ride for Hope and Gratitude** benefiting the **Cedars-Laneville Cell Therapy Initiative** will take place in picturesque Montebello, Quebec.



Rob Callard

One of this year's participants is Chez Nick's **Rob Callard**, a seasoned veteran when it comes to cycling fundraisers and cancer survivor.

Back in early 2009, overweight and tired of feeling unwell and lethargic, Rob Callard set out to finally abandon dieting and adopt a lifestyle that he hoped would last a lifetime. Getting on a bike and riding every night helped him improve his physical fitness and lose more than 80 pounds in two years.

In September 2009, thanks to the weight loss, he discovered a tumour on his abdomen, which was quickly diagnosed as an advanced form of incurable but treatable non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. "It was a setback from the positive changes that had taken place that year but I was willing to face this challenge head-on", recounts Callard.

Since 2009, he has participated in 14 charity events that have collectively raised more than \$300,000 for cancer-related research.

In 2011, a year after successfully completing treatments, including having his stem cells harvested and banked away, he decided to give back by participating in his first charity bike ride for cancer research, with friend Dave Wiggins by his side.



The following year, he decided to form a team within the **Ride to Conquer Cancer**, which was aptly named **Team Hope and Gratitude**. “These are the words I live by everyday, and they are a constant reminder of the hope that we conquer this complicated disease, and the gratitude for life and for the wonderful people I have met and surround me in my life”, explains Callard.

Since 2009, he has participated in 14 charity events that have collectively raised more than \$300,000 for cancer-related research. More than 30 individuals have become members of the team over the past six years, and have forged lifelong friendships out of this. “The culture of “HG” as we call it, keeps growing and I am proud to share it with all of those who show an interest,” says Callard. “My partnership with the Cedars Cancer Foundation is the next logical step in the Hope and Gratitude journey. A wonderful organization, which understands the meaning of these words, and a perfect fit to ensure that my mission to raise money for cancer research continues.”

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The Ride for Hope and Gratitude is a proud supporter of the Cedars-Laneville Cell Therapy Research through the **Ensign Ewart Research Fund**, created in memory of Rob’s father William Ewart Callard and administered by him. The mission of this ride is to raise funds for the creation of a new Cell Therapy Unit under the direction of **Dr. Pierre Laneville** of the **McGill University Health Centre** in Montreal QC, administered through the Cedars Cancer Foundation. By establishing this unit, doctors, researchers and patients will benefit from this promising and burgeoning area of research in the fight against cancer. Last year, the inaugural ride raised close to \$60K.

Cell Therapy / Immunotherapy has shown incredible advances in the treatment of blood cancers and other applications and is being utilized as an alternative to certain forms of chemotherapy. The money raised goes directly to the advancement of cell therapy research under this initiative.

To support Rob in the **2nd Annual Cedars Ride for Hope and Gratitude** visit [his donation page](#).

For more information about the **Annual Cedars Ride for Hope and Gratitude** visit [give.cedars.ca](#)

Feature image: courtesy Cedars Ride for Hope and Gratitude

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