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Thanks to ICRF supporters like you, people like me are alive today.

I hope the New Year finds you all in good health and enjoying success despite these challenging times. As we are all too aware, good health can never be taken for granted. This is the reason I am writing to you. I am seeking your help to support an institution that means so much to me, Israel Cancer Research Fund (ICRF).

With the help of G-d, my fantastic doctors and nurses, family and friends, and cutting-edge, spectacularly effective cancer therapies based on ICRF research, this past summer I celebrated six years since starting the battle to overcome my multiple myeloma, my cancer diagnosis. After nine months of chemotherapy and a bone marrow transplant, I achieved my dream of being Minimal Residual Disease negative. In plain language, MRD negative means that with the most sensitive laboratory tests available, the pathologists in the lab can't find even one cancer cell when examining more than 100,000 cells in my bone marrow. As a doctor and hematologist, this is absolutely amazing, and not too long ago, this was unimaginable!

None of my success would have been possible without the fantastic research by Nobel Prize laureates, Aaron Ciechanover and Avram Hershko, two Israeli scientists supported by ICRF, as well as their American colleague Irwin Rose. These three gifted men discovered the "ubiquitin proteasome pathway", setting the stage for the breakthrough class of drugs that have granted a second life to myeloma patients around the world. Not a day goes by when I am not mindful of and extremely grateful to everyone who has helped me to stay alive.

So, how exactly does one say, "Thank you?" Of course, it depends on what we are grateful for. If someone holds the door open for you, a simple "Thank you" is sufficient. But if someone helps to save your life, can one ever really repay the debt? This is why I work tirelessly to support ICRF and why I am writing to you.

Since you are in the Soff family circle as family members and friends, I hope that you will consider donating to the "Soff Family and Friends Fund" within ICRF. Our goal is to raise \$150,000. To most of us, that is a lot of money. But I believe that as a team, we can easily achieve this. Why this number? This will provide a three-year Career Development Award for a new Israeli cancer scientist. What greater gift can we imagine? Our collective effort will allow one more young Israeli scientist to build his or her career.



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If we can do this, think of the promise of a lifetime of research and discovery that we can help launch. Once we achieve the funding, I will be involved in reviewing and selecting one of the most meritorious applications, adding one more person to the growing Israeli cancer research community.

No charity is more worthy of your support than ICRF. For generations, cancer charities would ask the public for support in memory of relatives or other loved ones who lost their battle with cancer. But I am asking you to consider something different. Think about the family and loved ones who are winning their war with cancer! The ones who have survived! Over recent years, I have gradually realized that I know many family members and close friends who have beaten cancer. Actually, more than I have lost! Friends and family of all ages now use the “cure” word after their Cancer word. Yes, cancer continues to wreak havoc on too many; however, we are starting to see people we know who have been diagnosed with cancer now winning their battle. They are not simply living a few months longer than anticipated; they are overcoming cancer, resuming their normal lives and sharing in life’s beautiful milestones.

Please join me in making a difference. You can help support the “Soff Family and Friends Fund” by either visiting <https://www.icrfonline.org>, clicking “Ways to Give” and selecting the Soff Family and Friends Fund, or by using this link: <https://www.icrfonline.org/the-soff-family-and-friends-fund>. You can direct any questions you may have regarding the link and donations to Alan Herman at alan.herman@icrfonline.org. Please donate what you can, to honor the lives of the cancer survivors who we know, memorializing those who have not survived, and adding to the prayer that more cancer patients in the future will join the ranks of the survivors.

With my eternal gratitude,
Gerald A. Soff, M.D.