

Meet the New Leader of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

Read the first day message from E. Anders Kolb, MD, new president and CEO of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS).

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Greetings,

For as long as I can remember, I wanted to be a doctor—a dream encouraged by my grandfather who nurtured my love of science and by my parents who valued service. I specialized in pediatric hematology oncology because its complexity offered the perfect mix of science and mission while offering the opportunity and imperative to help families in crisis. Today, after twenty-one years of research and clinical practice, I am honored and humbled to step into my new role as President and CEO of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS), an organization also deeply devoted to science and mission, and one that is driving phenomenal impact for blood cancer patients and families.

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to lead this world-changing organization and build on the amazing legacy of Dr. Lou DeGennaro, who retires after nearly nine years as President and CEO (and a total of eighteen years working at LLS). Dr. Lou has been an innovator and inspiration to the science and healthcare industry and to me personally. I am so appreciative of the guidance he's offered over the last few months as I've prepared for this day. And now as he transitions into an advisory role, I feel fortunate to have his wise counsel over the next few months.

I have experienced first-hand the transformational power of LLS. As a clinician-scientist who has dedicated much of my personal and professional life to fighting blood cancers, I've been amazed by the number of groundbreaking targeted therapies that have been developed over the past several years with LLS support. As a long-time LLS volunteer, I've witnessed what's possible when people come together to advance innovative science, influence changes in public policy and provide direct support to families dealing with a blood cancer. No one covers these areas better than LLS. My volunteer experiences at LLS have been lifechanging for me and helped me understand the organization from many perspectives—as chair of my local region, as an Of the Year candidate (now known as Visionaries of the Year), as a participant in many Light The Night and Team In Training events and as co-chair of LLS PedAL, the first-of-its-kind global master clinical trial for Pediatric Acute Leukemia. To work arm in arm with the PedAL team toward fundamentally changing how children with acute leukemia are treated has been the highlight of

my academic career.

And now, it is a privilege beyond anything I could have imagined to be entrusted to lead such an amazing and talented LLS staff and to partner with volunteers, donors and other key constituents as we work together to broaden the organization's mission impact and sphere of influence.

Our success in realizing the full impact of LLS's mission is not attainable without all of you. I am excited to partner with you as we propel LLS into the future. Relationship-building and collaboration are important to me and something I strive for personally every day in my career. I thank all of you for bringing your talents and dedication to LLS's life-saving mission, and I look forward to what we will achieve together.

Together we will build on the success that LLS has had in advancing therapies and progress for blood cancer patients through research, support services and advocacy. We will continue the great work that LLS has started in tackling health disparities, not only as a mission imperative but as a research objective. As innovative therapies become more expensive for patients, many are not able to afford them, or may not be able to participate in clinical trials happening far from home. We must continue working toward reaching patients where they live and making sure that all patients have access to the innovative, lifesaving therapies that LLS funds.

I am proud to have you by my side as we reinforce and grow LLS as a world leader in blood cancer philanthropy and impact. As Amy Poehler once said at a commencement ceremony, "Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you, spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life." And I would add to that, it will also change the world.

Looking forward to the change we will make together!

In service,

Andy

ANDERS KOLB, MD
President & CEO
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

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