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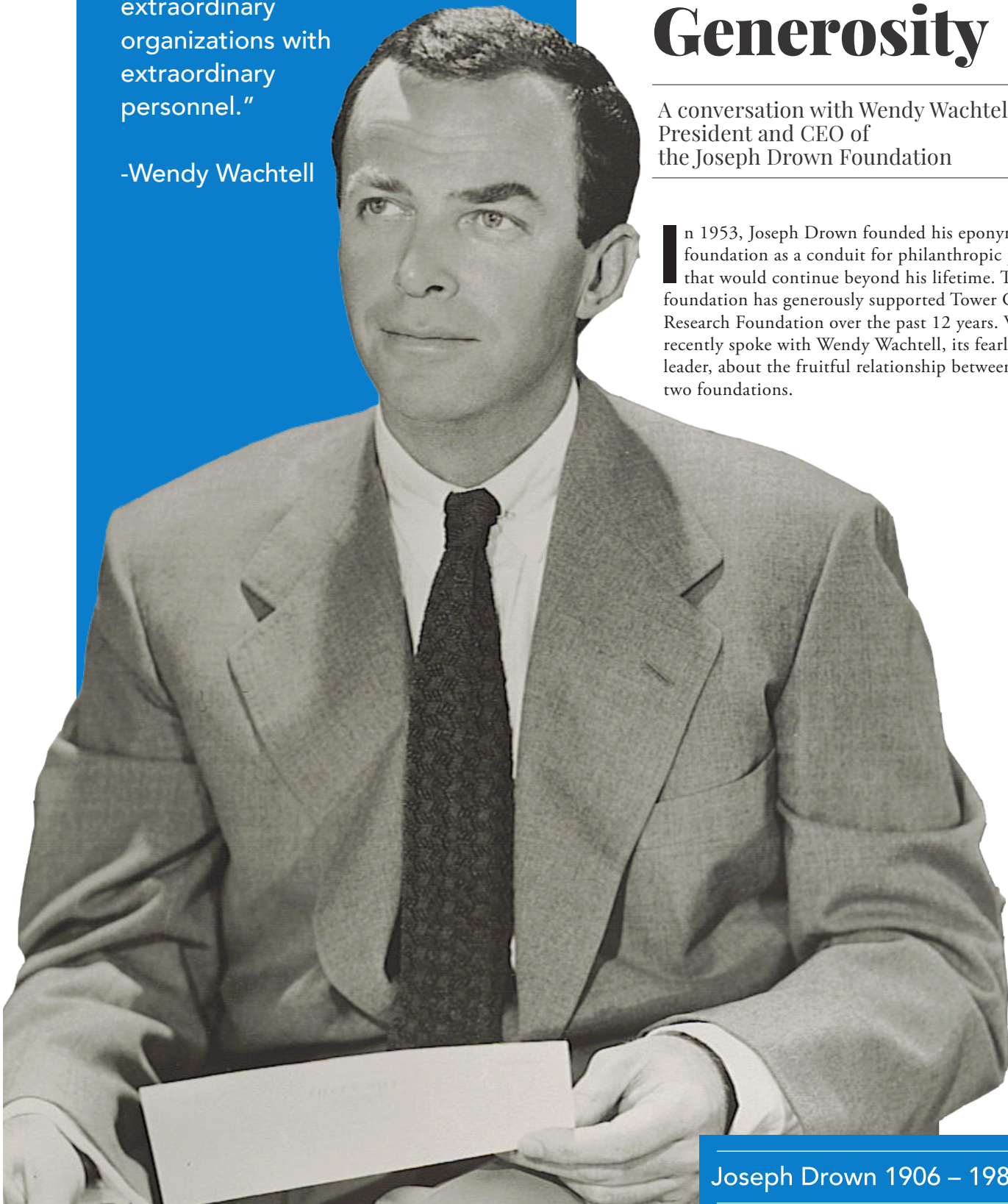
-Wendy Wachtell

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# Exercising Generosity

A conversation with Wendy Wachtell, President and CEO of the Joseph Drown Foundation

In 1953, Joseph Drown founded his eponymous foundation as a conduit for philanthropic pursuits that would continue beyond his lifetime. The foundation has generously supported Tower Cancer Research Foundation over the past 12 years. We recently spoke with Wendy Wachtell, its fearless leader, about the fruitful relationship between the two foundations.



Joseph Drown 1906 – 1982

Joseph Drown acquired his wealth through a long career in the hotel industry – perhaps best known by his creation of Los Angeles’ Hotel Bel-Air, a getaway steeped in old Hollywood history. To continue Drown’s philanthropic legacy, the Joseph Drown Foundation supports projects and organizations that tackle issues of particular importance to its founder.

Wendy Wachtell, the Joseph Drown Foundation’s President and CEO, has been with the foundation for the past thirty years, after working on Capitol Hill and for CBS. “All of these look at the same issues, just from different angles - legislation, media and funding,” Wendy says. She oversees the Joseph Drown Foundation’s annual distributions to non-profit organizations in Los Angeles as well as its investment portfolio. “I have had the most extraordinary career. Before coming to the Joseph Drown Foundation, I had never worked in philanthropy, but I came from a philanthropic family and learned the importance of giving, of being involved.” Under Wendy’s watch, the Joseph Drown Foundation distributes approximately \$7 million annually, including its generous grants to Tower.

Philip Magaram, husband of Tower board member Sally Magaram, and longtime counsel to Joseph Drown, introduced the Joseph Drown Foundation to Tower. Phil and Sally met Tower board member David Ruderman and his wife Judy in a waiting room, when both Sally’s father and Judy were being treated for cancer

at Cedars-Sinai. The Magarams and the Rudermans quickly became friends, and it wasn’t long before Sally was asked to join the Tower board. Sally’s zeal for Tower’s work was contagious. Phil came to share her enthusiasm, and ultimately bridged the gap between the Joseph Drown Foundation and Tower.

Like Joseph Drown, Phil has always been very philanthropic. “Phil often had passion about issues that he brought into the Joseph Drown Foundation. He came to us bubbling over with enthusiasm and had much to say about what he learned from Sally, about the work that Tower was doing. He encouraged us to get involved, and we’ve been a supporter of Tower ever since,” explains Wendy.

For six years, beginning in 2006, the Joseph Drown Foundation helped Tower cover its operating expenses, allowing Tower to strengthen its foundation and concentrate on its core mission, to help fund innovative cancer research and to support those who have received a cancer diagnosis. Next, the Joseph Drown Foundation provided a grant to allow physician and researcher Philomena McAndrew, MD, to pursue her research. Since that first foray, the Joseph Drown Foundation has provided Tower numerous grants to address the most pressing needs in cancer research and patient support.

Recently, the Joseph Drown Foundation granted \$100,000 to Tower, \$75,000 of which funded the Cancer Rehabilitation Fitness Program for Cancer Survivors,

which provides a safe and welcoming program promoting tailored exercise and wellness for cancer patients. In the two-plus years of the program, it has helped approximately 150 patients to develop and maintain healthy lifestyles. The program has had a significant impact on its participants, who find increased strength, mobility, and an opportunity to connect with others. “The exercise program - low-tech and direct - has had a huge impact on the patients. Unlike medical treatment, with which patients cannot see the impact for years, the participants can immediately see the results,” says Wendy. “A cancer diagnosis is truly transformational, and the fitness program is similarly life-changing. We can see it in the patients’ faces, in their movements, and in their survival rates.”

In addition to generously supporting the fitness program, the Joseph Drown Foundation has been supporting the Jack Mishkin Discovery Fund. This fund in Mesothelioma research is an on-going project in partnership with Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. The Fund brings together researchers that collaborate across disciplines to investigate how mesothelioma begins, how it grows, and how to halt its progress.

“We always look forward to working with Tower. It is a great joy to find extraordinary organizations with extraordinary personnel,” Wendy continues. “Tower is clearly committed to working hands-on with the grantees and with us. The Joseph Drown Foundation is delighted to support Tower.”

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