



Left: The Illumina team at last year's race. Below: Illumina Associate Director of Customer Success Elizabeth Boyer and Associate Director of Sales Aimee Keithly at the 2024 event. Photos by Illumina

## Fueling breakthrough research at Pedal the Cause

*The Illumina employee team reaches \$100,000 milestone, proving that every mile makes a difference in advancing lifesaving cancer research*

ON SEPTEMBER 20 AND 21, Illumina employees will join thousands of other participants in Pedal the Cause,<sup>1</sup> a cycling and fitness challenge that raises funds for cancer research. The event is held in St. Louis, Missouri, and is one of the few in the nation that gives 100% of the funds raised by participants directly to local cancer research centers, including Siteman Cancer Center and Siteman Kids at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

For longtime Illumina employees like Elizabeth Boyer and Aimee Keithly, the event is more than a ride. It's a way to honor loved ones, support lifesaving discoveries, and embody Illumina's mission to improve human health.

### Building a team, honoring a friend

Boyer, who leads Illumina's customer success and implementation team, has been with the company for 21 years. She first learned about Pedal the Cause through colleagues who would volunteer informally at local cancer fundraisers. Eight years ago, she helped establish Illumina's official team in St. Louis.

What keeps her motivated year after year is the memory of Walter Bass, a field service engineer at Illumina and Pedal the Cause champion who inspired

those around him before he died of prostate cancer in 2020. "It's a ride, not a race," Bass would say. That phrase is one the team carries forward with every mile.

Boyer says that she sees Pedal the Cause as a reflection of why she works at Illumina: "Cancer touches every family. This event reinforces why we do what we do, and why we work so hard to advance science."



In addition to riding, Illumina supports the community event by sponsoring activities such as the Kids

1. [pedalthecause.org](https://pedalthecause.org)

Challenge, where young riders receive superhero capes. “It’s about bringing joy in such a difficult time,” Boyer says. “Seeing children and families smile reminds us what this is really about.”



PHOTO BY ILLUMINA

*The kids' challenge during the 2024 event.*

### Riding with purpose

For Aimee Keithly, a commercial sales leader and 14-year Illumina veteran, Pedal the Cause is deeply personal. She

has participated for a decade, either cycling, running, or walking.

Cancer has touched nearly every corner of her life. Both of her parents were diagnosed; her father passed away at 63; and she has lost friends and colleagues to colon cancer, melanoma, and brain cancer.

“Pedal the Cause gives me purpose,” Keithly says. “Every mile I ride is for the people I’ve loved and lost, and for the research that brings hope to patients. It’s bigger than any one of us.”

### The Illumina impact

Since 2017, the Illumina St. Louis team has raised more than \$100,000 for cancer research, earning the Bronze Award from the event’s Lifetime Impact Society, which honors teams that achieve lifetime fundraising milestones. This year, 16 Illumina employees will ride, run, or walk together, continuing the legacy of impact.

Beyond the numbers, Pedal the Cause highlights Illumina’s culture of service and science. Every dollar raised supports cutting-edge studies, early-stage investigator grants, and breakthroughs that may otherwise go unfunded. To date, Pedal the Cause has funded more than 200 cancer research projects, turning community energy into transformative discoveries.

“Whether you are on a bike, at a walk, or cheering from the sidelines,” Boyer says, “you are part of something that is changing lives.” ♦