Ever since professional tennis coach Dean Goldfine lost his mother to breast cancer in 1998, he’s been dedicated to raising funds to fight the deadly disease. In just three years he’s raised more than $300,000, of which he’s donated $200,000 to UM/Sylvester.

The annual Pat Goldfine Tennis Tournament, now in its third year, pairs up amateur tennis players with professional male and female tennis players for a competitively formatted pro-am. Andy Roddick, Jim Courier, and Mary Joe Fernandez are just a few of the tennis greats who have participated in the event. Each year it is followed by a private dinner and live auction for all participants and sponsors.

For two years now, UM/Sylvester has been the exclusive beneficiary of the event. This year’s tournament took place at the Westin Diplomat Resort and Spa in Hollywood. Goldfine, who currently coaches Todd Martin, is recognized as one of the most successful professional coaches in tennis. He’s also coached Aaron Krickstein and Mary Joe Fernandez.

His fundraising endeavor, a spin on the sport, is quickly gaining awareness as a smashing success for cancer research.

It was Bernard Fogel, M.D., dean emeritus of the University of Miami School of Medicine, who urged Renee and Jay Weiss to become involved with the University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center more than a decade ago. His request was one that would be met with unimaginable generosity and selfless dedication. Renee and Jay Weiss’ passion for the cause, and their tireless commitment to helping eradicate cancer and advancing both research and treatment at UM/Sylvester, made them the natural choice for the 2002 Caroline W. Halpern Award.

W. Jarrard Goodwin, M.D., F.A.C.S., director of UM/Sylvester, bestowed the highly coveted award upon the Bal Harbour couple last November at UM/Sylvester’s biennial “In the Garden” gala.

Caroline Halpern was a dedicated supporter of the University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center long before she became a patient. In fact, she supported the cancer center financially for years before beginning her own four-year battle with lung cancer.

As an administrator of the Woldenberg Foundation, a New Orleans-based foundation established by her uncle, Malcolm Woldenberg, Halpern helped direct an annual donation to the cancer center. After her death just six years ago, her children have carried on the support in the form of a donation in their mother’s honor. To date, that support has amounted to more than $1 million.

“My mother was so committed to UM/Sylvester,” says Minette Brown, Halpern’s daughter who lives in Plantation, Florida, and sits on the foundation board with her brother, Mark Halpern, of Surfside. “We do everything we can to perpetuate the gift.” Brown and her brother also sit on UM/Sylvester’s Board of Governors.

“She was a major supporter, yet a very private and very humble person,” says Brown. When her mother was diagnosed, Brown remembers her words as they walked through the cancer center’s lobby. “She said, ‘I was on the ground floor of all this, but I never dreamed I would be a patient.’”

Halpern was introduced to the cancer center by long-time family friend Jay Weiss. Brown says once he told her the story of the facility—then called the Papanicolaou Cancer Research Institute—and brought her in, she was hooked.

Halpern’s support of the cancer center was so meaningful, the hospital established an award in her name, the Caroline W. Halpern Award. She was the first recipient of the annual award, followed by Barbara Weintraub in 1994, Cy and Helene Sommerstein in 1996, the Grossman Family in 1998, and Jay and Renee Weiss in 2002.

“She really cared about UM/Sylvester,” says Brown. “She really made a difference.”