

Walter J. Urba, M.D., Ph.D.

Director, cancer research, Robert W. Franz Cancer Research Center at Earle A. Chiles Research Institute, Providence Cancer Center

Education and training

- B.S., Rutgers University
- Ph.D., UCLA School of Medicine
- M.D., University of Miami
- Post-graduate work, National Cancer Institute

Why Providence?

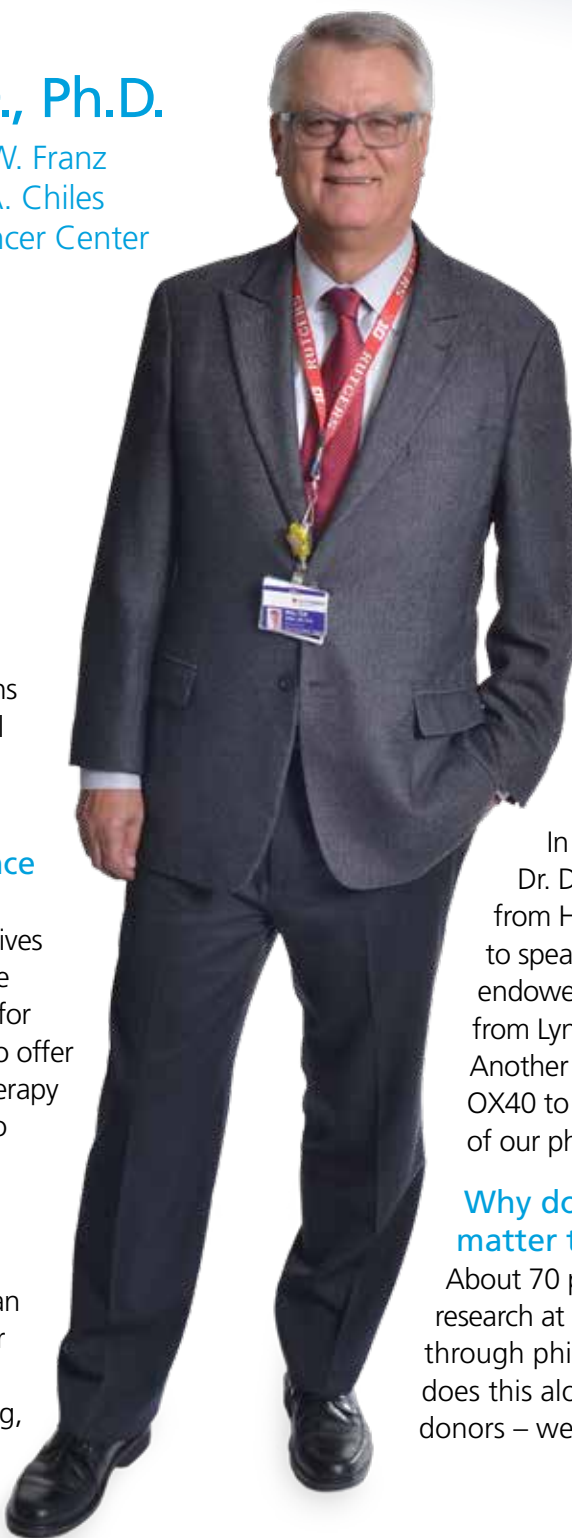
The opportunity to build an immunotherapy research program from scratch was a great attraction. Other key reasons were the vision and support of hospital leaders and major philanthropists Earle M. Chiles and Robert W. Franz.

What's your dream for Providence Cancer Center?

Our goal is to make a difference in the lives of our patients. This includes leading the first immunotherapy global clinical trial for patients with melanoma and working to offer patients a new OX40-based immunotherapy developed in our labs. We're working to develop new cancer therapies that help patients worldwide.

What are your hobbies?

Spending time with my grandsons, Ethan and Caleb – swimming, playing catch or chess, going to movies and attending their sporting events. I also enjoy reading, especially biographies and history.



Who were your mentors?

My mother and father. Her battle with breast cancer had a major influence on how I care for my patients. And I'm fortunate to have had many professional mentors throughout my career.

What's a favorite Providence memory?

In 1998, my mentor, Dr. Dan Longo, came here from Harvard Medical School to speak when I received an endowed chair in cancer research from Lynn and Jack Loacker. Another highlight was getting OX40 to the clinic with the help of our philanthropic community.

Why does philanthropy matter to your work?

About 70 percent of cancer research at Providence is funded through philanthropy. None of us does this alone. Scientists, doctors, donors – we're all a team.