

## Bob Frascino

### An HIV-positive Robin Hood

A pediatrician-turned-immunologist, Dr. Bob Frascino was one of the first physicians in the Bay Area to treat HIV/AIDS patients in the early 1980s. Now he is a kind of HIV-positive Robin Hood, soliciting money from the pharmaceutical companies whose AIDS drugs he once researched and giving it to grass-roots AIDS agencies.

Frascino was running an AIDS clinic at what is now known as the Camino Medical Group in Sunnyvale when he was infected by a needle stick in 1991. As his health began to fail, he stopped treating patients, turning instead to HIV prevention and education efforts. Today, he takes 26 pills a day to keep the virus — and various side effects — in check.

Frascino has raised more than \$1 million for AIDS service groups through the Robert James Frascino AIDS Foundation, which he started with his longtime partner, Dr. Steven Natterstad, in 1999. They began with a simple fundraising concert — both are accomplished pianists — in their Los Altos home. Frascino taps his pharmaceutical company connections for money and accepts donations on the foundation's Web site ([www.concertedeffort.org](http://www.concertedeffort.org)).

Frascino believes his unique perspective as both AIDS specialist and patient — “I see things from both sides of the examining table,” he says — helps him direct the foundation's money where it's needed most. Recipients have included the pediatric AIDS program at Children's Hospital of Oakland, AIDS Legal Services of San Jose and an AIDS hospice in Los Angeles that once depended on the foundation for nearly all of its budget.

“It's amazing how many different organizations we've been able to touch by doing this,” said Frascino, 53. “Whatever I give out, I get back a thousandfold.”

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