

# CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

## A transplant patient helps fund the heart failure research of Nir Uriel, MD



Rob Gentile

A massive heart attack in early 2016 put Rob Gentile into a coma for four days. When he awoke, he learned his heart was so severely damaged that he wouldn't live long without a transplant.

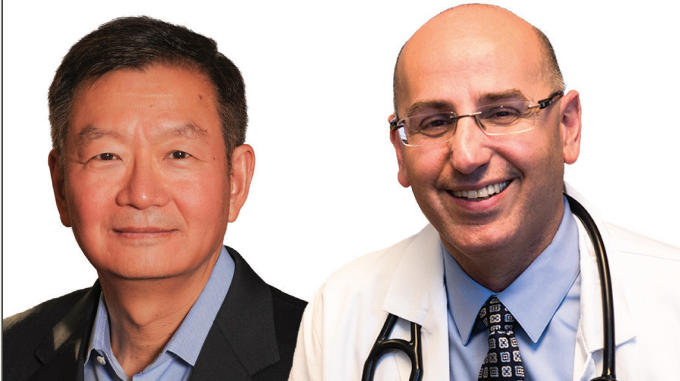
He contacted several major transplant centers, but the options presented to him were bleak. Never could he imagine that in just a few months he would be up and fully functioning again with a new heart.

Yet he was, thanks to physicians at the University of Chicago Medicine and an innovative, lunchbox-size heart-pumping device that kept him mobile and able to exercise while he waited for a heart.

Today, a year after his transplant, the fit 57-year-old sales engineer is back home in North Carolina with his wife and daughter. His employer is suburban Chicago-based National Material Company, and owner Michael Tang is a University of Chicago Medical Center trustee. When news of his long-time employee's mounting health crisis reached him, Tang urged Gentile to consult Nir Uriel, MD, director of heart failure, transplant and mechanical circulatory support.

"Had Michael not reached out to help me, I would not be here today," Gentile said. "And had Dr. Uriel and his team followed

| BELOW | Michael Tang and Nir Uriel, MD



the norm and not gone the extra mile, I would not have been transplanted."

To enable him to meet pre-transplant qualifications, Gentile opted to participate in a clinical trial of a novel mechanical assist system, NuPulseCV iVAS. The device is implanted through a two-inch incision and the external pump weighs only six pounds.

"Our hope is that this approach will improve life for patients with advanced heart failure," said Valluvan Jeevanandam, MD, chief of cardiac surgery. Although this initial trial is focused on hospitalized patients awaiting a heart transplant, "we designed the iVAS to help patients get out of the hospital and enjoy life at home," Jeevanandam said.



**Michael Tang taught me a great life lesson about the power of giving back.**

**ROB GENTILE**

Having fought to find quality health care for their daughter, who has a neurological disorder, Gentile said, "My wife and I can easily tell the difference between physicians who are simply performing duties and those who are purpose-driven, committed, passionate and determined to not only do their best for patients, but to see them as people with hopes, dreams, a life and family who depend on them. That's what I found at UChicago Medicine."



More about our transplant program and the innovative device that kept Rob Gentile alive while he waited for a new heart

<http://www.URL.com>