Dear Friend,

As the world is aware, the federal government was recently shut down for over two weeks. Employees, families and businesses around the nation felt the impact. But what wasn't as widely understood was the impact on the melanoma community. When the government stops working, critical research and medical agencies no longer receive funding. That means our world-famous National Institutes of Health (NIH) essentially stopped functioning. During this recent congressional impasse, the NIH could not accept new patients into the hundreds of clinical trials taking place for people with cancer, nor review new proposals for research or incoming research results - some of which are specifically for melanoma. I personally know many people whose lives have been saved by these trials; preventing new enrollees means others might not have the opportunity to see if emerging treatments could save their lives.

Although the federal government is now "up and running", the shutdown called attention to the critical role innovative research plays in our health. The seemingly ever-present fiscal crisis and increasingly limited budgets have a direct and taxing effect on oncology research. Less and less funding is being allocated to our federal research institutions, like the NIH's National Cancer Institute (NCI), which is the largest provider of grants to researchers and cancer centers across the U.S. At a time of rapid scientific discovery in melanoma biology and treatment, this makes other research funding sources even more necessary.

The MRF continues to fund more melanoma research every year. In 2013, we were able to increase funding 40% over that of 2012 - and we strive to increase this percentage even more in 2014. With your help, we are working to prevent additional diagnoses through education and advocacy, and improve treatment options for those with melanoma through support for research from the laboratory through clinical trials. Please - as the end of the year approaches - consider expanding your support of the MRF's mission: research, educate and advocate. Here's how.

Sincerely,
Tim
New MRF Board Members

The MRF is pleased to announce two new members of the Board of Directors: Cheryl Stratos and Stephen Greene.

Cheryl, a Stage IV cutaneous melanoma survivor, has a long history of working in the nonprofit sector, helping her clients meet their fundraising and business goals. She has been actively involved with the MRF as a volunteer for several years and shared her personal experience with melanoma in the last issue of *MRF Matters*. Click [here](#) to read it. Cheryl lives in Virginia with her husband and her dog, Zoe.

Stephen is Vice President and General Counsel of G&W Laboratories, Inc. in New Jersey. He performs pro bono legal work for various nonprofit organizations in addition to his work with the MRF. Stephen and his wife, Margo, who works in the nonprofit sector, have three grown children and one grandchild.

Click [here](#) to read their bios and to learn about the rest of the MRF Board of Directors.

CURE Ocular Melanoma's 2nd Anniversary

October marks 2 years since the launch of the MRF's ocular melanoma (OM) initiative, [CURE OM](#).

Since its creation, CURE OM has:

- Raised over $800,000 dedicated for OM research (read the official announcement [here](#))
- Awarded $650,000 to researchers through an international and interdisciplinary peer-reviewed grant process
- Hosted 4 international, interdisciplinary scientific meetings
- Hosted 2 international patient & caregiver meetings in partnership with leading cancer centers
- Created 6 educational webinars
- Developed an international patient & caregiver steering committee and an international & interdisciplinary scientific steering committee
- Developed partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations focused on accelerating research, including the National Cancer Institute, The Cancer Genome Atlas and The Society for Melanoma Research
- Created a substantial online and social media presence, allowing people to obtain up-to-date OM information and receive support.

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Find the MRF online!
Additionally, the MRF recently announced its 2013 research grant recipients which included 2 specific to OM. The 2 OM grant recipients are Dr. William Tansey from Vanderbilt University Medical Center and Dr. Richard Carvajal from Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Click here to learn more about the MRF’s 2013 research grant recipients.

To learn more about CURE OM, click here. Read past issues of Eye on OM, the CURE OM quarterly e-newsletter.

The MRF, CURE OM & the Society for Melanoma Research

The MRF is a long-time collaborator with the Society for Melanoma Research (SMR). Each year, SMR hosts the world’s largest meeting of international and collaborative melanoma researchers and oncologists. The 10th international SMR meeting is on November 17-20 in Philadelphia, PA.

The MRF has a new partner for this year’s conference - the National Cancer Institute (NCI). For the first time, the MRF’s CURE OM, NCI, and SMR are co-sponsoring a full day international workshop focused specifically on ocular melanoma, titled “Emerging Research in Uveal Melanoma and Implications for Treatment.”

Workshop attendees will include researchers, government leaders and industry representatives who will present research and work to identify gaps and collaboration opportunities for the future. The workshop provides a forum for ongoing partnerships among leaders in the OM field, who are dedicated to accelerating research that will translate into improved outcomes for people affected by this rare form of melanoma.

Melanoma in the News

A recent study found some melanoma patients taking ipilimumab demonstrated extended survival rates of up to 10 years, which is incredible news. Other important new research announced the discovery of a biomarker that could help predict if melanoma patients with the BRAF mutation will respond to BRAF-targeted treatment.

The issue of banning minors from indoor tanning beds continues to get media attention across the U.S. Mayor Bloomberg of New York recently announced a major new campaign that will increase regulations of tanning salons and tighten up underage tanning. The New York Health Department is expected to adopt the new proposed regulations.

To read more recent news about melanoma, click the links below.

"Melanoma Patients May Benefit From New Biomarker," Medical News Today

"Kevin Nealon to Host Second Annual Celebrity Golf Classic to Benefit Melanoma Research Foundation," ABC13 WSET.com

"Mayor Launching Crusade Against Tanning Salons," New York Post

"Melanoma Survival Up to 10 Years for Some Taking Ipilimumab," Dermatology Times

"5 Tanning Myths Exposed," USA Today
"Next Frontier in the Move to Ban Tanning Beds," Wall Street Journal (Australia)

"Indoor Tanning for Teens May Soon be Illegal," WLNS.com (Michigan)

"Week of Kona: MRF Director on Endurance Athletes and Skin Cancer," EndurancePlanet.com

"MD Anderson Study Reveals How Program Improves Sun Protection Practices Among Children of Melanoma Survivors," Bio News


"Uveal Melanoma Samples to be Stored for Future Research," Healio.com