8th Annual Eyes on a Cure: Patient & Caregiver Symposium

Upcoming Events

October 6 - Chicago Patient Symposium*

October 11 - Wings of Hope for Melanoma New York Gala

November 3 - St. Louis Patient Symposium*

October 24-27 - SMR International Congress

March 9-11, 2019 - MRF Advocacy Summit & Hill Day

April 5-7, 2019 - Eyes on a Cure: Patient & Caregiver Symposium

*MRF Patient Symposium not specific to ocular melanoma

Save the date! The Melanoma Research Foundation's CURE OM initiative is excited to announce that the 8th
Annual Eyes on a Cure: Patient & Caregiver Symposium will be on April 5-7, 2019 in Raleigh, NC. This free educational symposium is hosted in collaboration with Duke University and the University of North Carolina.

Mark your calendars now, and stay tuned for more details and a draft agenda coming soon!

Want to help make this the best event yet? Join the Patient Symposium Planning Committee! Email Lauren Johnston, Program Officer for Rare Melanoma Subtypes, at ljohnston@melanoma.org to get involved.

15th Annual SMR International Congress

The 15th Annual Society for Melanoma Research (SMR) Congress will meet on October 24-27, 2018 in Manchester, England. This international gathering of melanoma experts will begin with an ocular melanoma-focused scientific meeting hosted by the MRF’s CURE OM initiative on October 24. During this meeting, guests will be able to hear updates on the CURE OM patient registry from Dr. Marlana Orloff, Dr. Richard Carvajal and Dr. Bertil Damato. Along with these representatives, additional professionals will share updates from their own research and explore future opportunities for collaboration. Researchers who are attending this month's Congress are encouraged to register and bring their important perspectives to the CURE OM meeting.

Progress Towards the CURE OM Patient Registry
Ahead of presenting to the international OM community at this month's SMR Congress, the CURE OM Patient Registry Steering Committee, comprised of ocular melanoma patients, caregivers, clinicians and researchers, has been hard at work over the summer.

Across 4 meetings held in August, committee members worked to define specifications of registry design, develop a study protocol, establish data sharing policies and foster collaborations with academic and international partners. The MRF commends the hard work and ongoing efforts of the Patient Registry Steering Committee, and looks forward to sharing their latest work following the SMR International Congress.

MRF Research Grants Update

Last month the MRF announced the recipients of 8 new research grants, 3 Established Investigator Awards and 5 Career Development Awards. Included in this latest round of funding was Alison Skalet, MD, PhD, who was awarded a Career Development Award for her proposal to study a biomarker in the blood that may lead to earlier detection of uveal melanoma and serve as a predictor for the aggressiveness of the disease.

Career Development Awards support researchers who are early in their career and have not yet established strong federal funding. These grants
provide an important foundation for the most promising melanoma research, and the MRF is proud to support Dr. Skalet's work and eager to follow the results of this study.

The MRF is committed to advancing research progress in ocular melanoma. While cutaneous melanoma has seen tremendous advances in recent years, rare subtypes like ocular melanoma represent an urgent need for additional research and more effective treatments. Since the creation of the CURE OM initiative in 2011, the MRF has funded over $1.4 million in research specifically for ocular melanoma and will continue to lead our community towards a cure.

Visit the CURE OM Research page to see the ways that CURE OM advances ocular melanoma science!

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**Advocacy and Patient Support Highlights**

- Earlier this week, members of the Auburn Ocular Melanoma Page traveled to New York to film an episode of the Dr. Oz Show focusing on ocular melanoma. Members of the CURE OM community met at the studio bright and early that morning to ensure they would be in the audience to show their support. The episode will air on October 19 and the links to view it online will be available at that time. CURE OM is grateful to Ashley, Juleigh, Allyson and Lori, as well as Dr. John Mason and Dr. Marlana Orloff for participating and bringing national attention to ocular melanoma, and to the CURE OM community for their amazing show of support!

- The third annual #EyeGetDilated campaign kicks off on November 1! The focus of this
campaign is to increase awareness of eye health and to encourage everyone to include a dilated eye exam in their annual wellness routine. Stay tuned for more information and to learn how you can get involved!

- Save the date! Are you passionate about advocacy in the melanoma community? Make your voice heard! Join the MRF in Washington, DC on March 10-11, 2019 for the 9th Annual MRF Advocacy Summit & Hill Day. Melanoma advocates from across the country will come together on Capitol Hill to meet with their lawmakers to discuss critical issues facing the melanoma community. It is so important that ocular melanoma perspectives are included in these meetings - you will be the voice of the OM community!

- The MRF Buddy Program needs OM buddies! If you are interested in giving some time back to the OM community, please consider this opportunity. Buddies are there to help new patients navigate the challenges of facing melanoma and to offer support from someone who can relate and give practical advice along the way. This can be especially important in the OM community, as their MRF Buddy may be the only other person a patient or caregiver knows who understands ocular melanoma. For more information on joining this free support program, please click here.

**Coming Up on the CURE OM Calendar!**

The Second Annual Your Next Step is the Cure 5k is almost here! On Saturday, October 6, this wonderful CommUNITY Fundraising event benefiting the MRF's CURE OM initiative will take place in the beautiful Suncoast region of Florida. Hosted by longtime CURE OM supporters Bernadette Boyle and Linda O'Brien, this year's run/walk is shaping up to be even better than last year's inaugural and hugely successful event. The MRF will be on site to join in the celebration, and registration is still open for those who would like to be a part of an amazing experience. If you won't be in the area but would like to show your support, you can still donate here.
On Thursday, October 11, the melanoma community will come together to celebrate our heroes and raise critical funds for life-saving research at the 17th Annual Wings of Hope for Melanoma New York Gala. During this inspiring evening, the MRF will present Dr. David Abramson, Chief of Ophthalmic Oncology Service at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and Professor of Ophthalmology at Weill-Cornell Medical Center, with the CURE OM Vision of Hope Award. This is the largest Wings of Hope gala of the year and tickets are selling fast - purchase yours today and join us on October 11 for an unforgettable evening!

Just two days after the Wings of Hope for Melanoma Gala, we’re trading our dress shoes for sneakers at the Miles for Melanoma NYC 5k. The CURE OM community will be well represented by teams like EYES on a CURE OM NYC and Team Cure OM Pack Leaders, raising awareness for ocular melanoma and important funds for OM research. Additionally, the MRF is proud to recognize 4 members of the CURE OM community at the event: Dave D’Arco, Linda Tajerian Martinez and Anne Marie Montijo will receive Courage Awards for their incredible bravery when facing OM and the many ways they support others in our community. The CURE OM Vision of Hope Award will be presented to Dr. Paul Finger in recognition of his work in the fields of ophthalmology and medical oncology as well as his defining commitment to outstanding patient care. The MRF is honored to recognize these outstanding individuals - register today and join us for the celebration!

**Ocular Melanoma & Eye Health in the News**

Below is a sample of recent ocular melanoma news.

“Astronaut Serena Auñón-Chancellor Examines Her Eyes,” NASA

“Scientists Identify Weak Point in Deadly Eye Melanoma,” Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

“Early Study Results Positive for AU-011 in Patients with Choroidal Melanoma,” Healio

“Advances and Combinations Raise Sights on Uveal Melanoma,” Cure

“Auburn to Fund Research for Ocular Melanoma,” CBS
“Dozens of Auburn University Alumni Suffering Deadly Eye Cancer in Desperate Race For A Cure: ‘Our Lives Are At Stake,’” People

“Jackie Stiles, Still Fearing for Her Life, is On a Mission to Inspire Everyone She Meets,” Springfield News-Leader

“Aura Biosciences Announces Update of Clinical Safety and Efficacy Data on Lead Candidate AU-011 for Choroidal Melanoma,” Aura Biosciences