You're receiving this email because of your past support of melanoma research and the Melanoma Research Foundation. Don't forget to add info@melanoma.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox.

You may unsubscribe if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

Dear Friend,

The New Year is already off to a strong start, but I want to take a minute to look back at 2012. This past year we saw meaningful advances in melanoma research, including promising results with new drugs and combinations currently in clinical trials. The MRF funded a major study, evaluating dozens of potential new drugs in various combinations. This will lay the groundwork for the next generation of therapies.

Through the MRF’s Melanoma Patient Information Page (MPIP), Facebook page, and in-person symposia, the number of people who accessed information on how best to manage their melanoma increased dramatically in 2012.

Last year, too, the MRF forged new strategic partnerships that resulted in a Miles for Melanoma at Universal Studios 5K run/walk in Hollywood, skin checks at over a dozen IRONMAN® events, and a celebrity-studded golf tournament hosted by actor Kevin Nealon. These partnerships helped us raise the profile of melanoma nationally and globally.

Perhaps most importantly, unprecedented numbers of MRF volunteers were engaged in across the country. They trained to become a "phone buddy", offering peer-to-peer support to other patients and caregivers. They traveled to DC to tell their story to Congress. They held community-based fundraising events, all the while informing the public about melanoma.

In 2013, we will likely see two new drugs for melanoma approved by the FDA, and will see a number of important clinical trials become active. Miles for Melanoma events will increase by 50% this year, and the MRF will hold our first National Volunteer Summit. The melanoma community is mobilized as never before, and the impact will be huge. Looking back at 2012, and looking forward to 2013, I am more hopeful than ever. I hope you share that optimism, and that you will continue to do what you can in the fight against this deadly disease.

January 2013

New Chair of the MRF Board
$800,000 in Ocular Melanoma Research Grants
Free Educational Webinar - Managing Melanoma in a Quickly Changing Landscape
First Annual National Volunteer Summit

Melanoma in the News

Upcoming Events

Learn more about our community events and informative seminars on metastatic melanoma, current treatment approaches and clinical trial updates.

February

2/5 - CURE OM’s Dr. Sara Selig Speaks at OcuMelUK (Liverpool, UK)
2/6 - UNC Melanoma Patient Day (Chapel Hill, NC)
2/11 - LIVE Webinar: Understanding the Treatment Landscape

March
Sincerely,

Timothy Turnham
Executive Director

New Chair of the Board, Steve Silverstein

On January 1, the MRF Board of Directors appointed its new chair, Steve Silverstein. Steve is intimately familiar with the fight against melanoma. He was diagnosed with Stage IV melanoma nine years ago and began treatments of Interleukin-2 (IL-2), a therapy designed to activate his entire immune system in a fight against the melanoma cells, shortly after his diagnosis. Following months of intense immunotherapy, he was pronounced cancer-free.

Steve is one of the lucky ones. Only about 5% of people treated with IL-2 respond that completely. He was given a second chance and he is dedicated to helping give others their second chance.

Please join the MRF in welcoming Steve as the organization’s new chairman of the board!

Read Steve’s letter to the MRF community.

$800,000 in Ocular Melanoma Research Grants

The MRF’s ocular melanoma (OM) initiative, CURE OM (Community United for Research and Education of Ocular Melanoma), has secured $800,000 to fund research in just the first year since the program’s creation! The funds will support proposals to advance research into new and better treatments, and eventually a cure, for OM.

The first two recipients of the CURE OM Research Grant Awards are Dr. Levi Garraway from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Broad Institute of Harvard and M.I.T. and Dr. John Sondek from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr. Garraway, a world renowned and extensively published researcher in melanoma, will focus on identifying new gene mutations in OM as well as identifying new drug targets. Dr. Sondek, also world renowned and established in the field of g-proteins, will focus on the development of drugs aimed at targeting specific mutations known to exist in 80% of all ocular melanomas—mutations in the g-proteins, GNAQ and GNA11. Both Dr. Garraway and Dr. Sondek will receive $200,000 over two years.
The MRF extends its gratitude to Mark and Alison Weinzierl in Texas, the Isaacson family in Massachusetts and Guerbet, Inc., a leader in the medical device industry, for their generous donations, which made the research grants possible. The Weinzierls and Isaacsons have both been impacted personally by OM. Guerbet has dedicated $100,000 over four years for a research grant in honor of Dr. David Eschelman, an interventional radiologist from Thomas Jefferson University known for his dedication and hard work in the OM field.

Read the official release here.

Free Webinar: Managing Melanoma in a Quickly Changing Landscape

The MRF is hosting a free webinar on February 11 at 11 a.m. EST for people with melanoma, caregivers and medical professionals to discuss the latest in treatment options, what you should know about accessing care, and why clinical trials are especially relevant to people with melanoma. The webinar, "Managing Melanoma in a Quickly Changing Landscape: Understanding the Latest Treatment Options"

Three of the top melanoma experts will be presenting during the live webinar:

- **Lynn M. Schuchter, M.D.**, Chief, Hematology Oncology, University of Pennsylvania Department of Medicine
- **Michael B. Atkins, M.D.**, Deputy Director, Georgetown-Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center
- **Anna C. Pavlick, D.O.**, Co-Director, New York University Langone Medical Center Melanoma Program

Don't forget to register! People who are educated and informed about their care options tend to live longer and better lives.

*The MRF is able to offer this important educational webinar thanks to support from Genentech.*

First Annual National Melanoma Volunteer Summit - Washington, DC

Join fellow advocates in the fight against melanoma at the MRF’s first annual national volunteer summit in Washington, DC from March 16-17! During this FREE two-day summit, volunteer trainers will provide proven tips for hosting your own local fundraising events (including coordinating a committee, handling the event logistics and finances), working with the media, social media best practices, how to influence change on Capitol Hill and MUCH MORE!

This is a great opportunity to share ideas and best practices,
network with other volunteers from across the U.S., participate in training sessions, and learn valuable skills that will help you make the biggest impact possible.

Hotel accommodations and most meals provided by the MRF.

Hurry! Space is limited so register today by emailing Mary Mendoza, National Director of Volunteer Services at volunteer@melanoma.org.

Melanoma in the News

Since the start of 2013, melanoma has been featured front and center in some of the nation's leading news outlets, like the New York Times, ABC News, and more. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) released a special report announcing overall cancer rates declined from 2004 through 2009 but not melanoma. In fact, NCI reports melanoma is increasing in incidence and mortality!

Other top stories included the discovery of new mutations in driving malignant melanoma by Dr. Levi Garraway of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Broad Institute of Harvard and M.I.T., the unreliable and potentially damaging nature of melanoma detection apps for smart phones, Genentech moving forward with Phase III of a combination trial testing two drugs against melanoma, and more coverage of the dangers of indoor tanning, including reactions to the indoor tanning industry's association, the American Suntanning Association.

"U.S. Cancer Deaths Continue Long-Term Decline," NCI Cancer Bulletin


"Skin Cancer Kills," Women's Health

"Dermatologists blast tanning industry campaign to play down skin cancer fears," NBCNews.com

"Tanning Propaganda: It's Coming!," Cosmopolitan's Conversation Starters blog

"Life-Saving Melanoma Treatment Delayed When Smartphone Apps Get Diagnosis Wrong," Medical News Today

"Genentech launches Phill for melanoma combo with GSK in hot pursuit," FierceBiotech