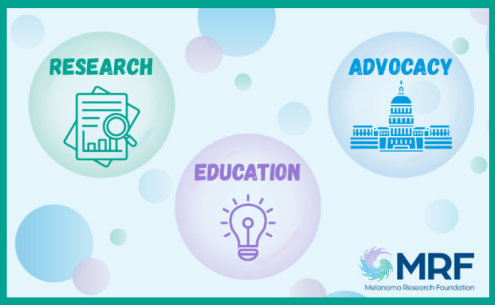
MRF Melanoma Research Foundation





At the MRF, our mission has always been clear: to eradicate melanoma by accelerating medical research while educating and advocating for the melanoma community. While groundbreaking treatments have transformed outcomes for many patients, prevention remains one of the most powerful tools we have to reduce the burden of this disease.

Today, we are proud to highlight our continued commitment to melanoma prevention through targeted research funding, public education initiatives and legislative advocacy.

Investing in Prevention-Focused Research

Prevention begins with understanding risk. That's why the MRF prioritizes funding innovative research aimed at identifying those most vulnerable to melanoma and uncovering strategies to reduce incidence and mortality.

Since 2020, the MRF has expanded funding for melanoma prevention research funding 20 grants totaling $690,000 with a focus on prevention of cutaneous melanoma and early detection of the rarer melanoma subtypes.

For example, Lisa Cannon-Albright, PhD of the University of Utah was awarded a 2025 Established Investigator Award for her research entitled, "Pedigree Approach to Identify Predisposition Variants for Lethal Melanoma". Funding for Dr. Cannon-Albright's work was secured by the family of Katie Morgan, a young woman who had lethal melanoma, who honored her inspirational legacy by funding melanoma prevention. This prevention-focused research initiative seeks to identify inherited genetic variants that may predispose individuals and families to the most aggressive forms of melanoma. By studying family pedigrees and genetic patterns, this project aims to:

- Improve identification of individuals at highest risk
- Enable earlier surveillance and intervention
- Inform personalized prevention strategies

- Ultimately reduce deaths from lethal melanoma

This type of research represents prevention at its most powerful stage—detecting risk before disease progression and equipping families and clinicians with actionable knowledge.

Through grants like this, MRF continues to invest in science that moves us closer to a future where melanoma can be predicted, prevented or detected at its earliest—and most treatable—stages.

SunAWARE™: Empowering Prevention Through K-5 Education

Research is only part of the solution. Prevention also requires public awareness and behavior change. The MRF's SunAWARE™ eLearning interactive educational program provides simple, science-based guidance to reduce ultraviolet (UV) exposure and promote healthy skin protection habits for children in grades K-5.

By delivering consistent, accessible prevention messaging, SunAWARE™ helps families, schools and communities adopt sun-safe practices that can dramatically lower melanoma risk over time. We encourage you to learn more about SunAWARE™ and bring this curriculum to your local community school district or youth-serving program.

Access SunAWARE

Supporting the SAFE Sunscreen Standards Act

The MRF advocated on behalf the Supporting Accessible, Flexible and Effective (SAFE) Sunscreen Standards Act, signed into law in November 2025. The SAFE Sunscreen Standards Act addresses the US Food and Drug Administration's regulatory issues and is critical to ensuring better access to safe and effective sunscreen products for all consumers. The SAFE Sunscreen Standards Act will pave the way for more sunscreen filters thereby addressing the concerns that many Americans have regarding current sunscreen products.

As melanoma is one of the most preventable cancers through sun safe practices such as the daily use of sunscreen of at least SPF 30+, the SAFE Sunscreen Standards Act will enable more sunscreen options, usage and ultimately melanoma prevention.

A Comprehensive Commitment to Prevention

From funding cutting-edge genetic research to expanding national education initiatives and shaping federal policy, MRF's prevention strategy is comprehensive and forward-looking. Each grant awarded, each educational program delivered and each legislative effort supported reflects our belief that prevention is essential to ending melanoma.

We are grateful to our donors, advocates, researchers and partners who make this work possible. Together, we are not only advancing treatments, we are working to stop melanoma before it starts.



Kyleigh LiPira, MBA

CEO



We are proud to congratulate this year's Medical Student Research Grant awardees, supporting the next generation of melanoma researchers and progress in the melanoma prevention, diagnosis and treatment landscape. The medical student research grantee recipients include:

Vincent Lok (University of South Florida); Samuel Kim (Oregon Health and Science University); Sara Schroder (Virginia Polytechnic and State University); Sabine Abukhadra (University of California, Davis); David Perez (The Brigham and Women's Hospital, Inc.); Natasha Barton (University of Colorado Denver); Lily Rajaee (University of California, Irvine); Joy Xie (Robert Wood Johnson Medical School); Karan Luthria (Columbia University); Suyon Kim (Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center); Delaney Ding (University of Florida); Geethanjali Annamalai (Thomas Jefferson University); Charles Lu (Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine); Bryan Weselman (Georgetown University); and Asghar Shah (Brown University).

This year's projects span a wide range of priorities, including research into rare melanoma subtypes and new approaches to improve immunotherapy response and overcome treatment resistance and efforts to strengthen prevention and early detection in underserved communities.

Together, these student-led projects represent important steps toward better understanding melanoma and improving outcomes for patients.

Learn more about this year's funded researchers and their projects on the funded research webpages.

Meet the Grantees

Education Corner



Building Community at Eyes on a Cure: Ocular Melanoma (OM) Patient & Caregiver Symposium

We invite the OM community to an informative weekend of learning, connection and support for this year's Eyes on a Cure: OM Patient and Caregiver Symposium held April 17-19 in Miami, Florida in collaboration with the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center and Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

Attendees will learn from leading OM experts in educational sessions covering treatment, monitoring, side effects, clinical trials and future directions. The weekend also includes guided discussions, support-focused spaces and interactive community activities designed to foster connection and encouragement.

Special thank you to our sponsors Ideaya Biosciences, Delcath Systems, Inc. and Castle Biosciences.

Learn More and Register Now

Double Check Your #HandsFeetNails

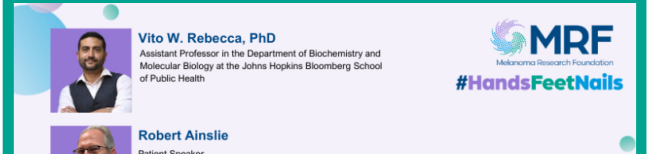


The MRF kicked off its first-ever Acral Melanoma Awareness Week campaign this month, bringing the community together to elevate awareness of this rare melanoma subtype through a week-long series of patient stories, educational resources and expert insights.

We shared powerful lived experiences from acral melanoma patients and caregivers, released updated educational materials including the new Acral Melanoma Fact Sheet and highlighted the inspiring journey of Ed and Antoinette White, an acral melanoma patient and wife/caregiver whose story reflects resilience, advocacy and hope following successful treatment with Tumor-infiltrating lymphocyte (TIL) cell therapy.

By amplifying voices across the acral melanoma community, we are strengthening understanding, support and research efforts for everyone affected by acral melanoma.

Understanding Acral Melanoma: Expert Insight and Patient Perspective





ASK THE EXPERT

Acral Melanoma: Insights from Research and Real Life

February 24, 2026 **7:00 PM ET**

In case you missed it — the Ask the Expert recording on acral melanoma is now available to watch. Leading researcher Vito W. Rebecca, PhD of Johns Hopkins University, is joined by acral melanoma survivor Robert Ainslie for an important discussion combining research expertise and real patient experience to help the community better understand this rare melanoma subtype.

Watch Here



This April, join us for Together Against Melanoma: Patient and Caregiver Symposia in collaboration with UNC Chapel Hill on April 6, from 11:30 AM to 4:30 PM ET.

This in-person educational program will bring together leading melanoma experts to share the latest updates in diagnosis, treatment advances and supportive care. Designed with patients and caregivers in mind, the symposium creates space to learn, ask meaningful questions and connect with trusted information to help you navigate your melanoma journey with confidence.

Learn More and Register

Share Your Experience Discussing Surgery with Your Melanoma Care Team

Adults age 18 and older who were diagnosed with melanoma within the past two years and have met with a surgeon about possible cancer surgery are invited to complete a brief anonymous 10-minute survey conducted by researchers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

For many melanoma patients, conversations about surgery can feel overwhelming and deeply personal. This study aims to better understand how treatment options are discussed and whether patient priorities and concerns are meaningfully included in those conversations.

Patient feedback may help researchers improve communication and support for future melanoma patients by navigating surgical decisions.

Take the Survey Here



Turn Your Passion into Impact: Join Our CommUNITY Fundraising Events

Community fundraising is a powerful way to give back and we can help turn your passion into real impact for melanoma research, education and advocacy. From music festivals and galas to races and local events, there are so many ways to get involved.

Upcoming events include Jam in the Streets in downtown Athens, Georgia, a multi-stage music festival featuring nationally known artists, local college bands, food partners, vendors and interactive community activities.

The Hope in Bloom Ball, hosted at Prestonwood Country Club in Cary, North Carolina, by the Reese Ward Foundation, is an elegant evening designed to inspire and uplift in a stunning, high-energy setting.

You can also lace up for the Stay Out of the Sun Run 5K at Cascade Lake Park, held in partnership with Mayo Clinic and focused on community awareness and action.

All of these events will donate a portion of their proceeds to the MRF. Interested in hosting your

own commUNITY fundraiser? Use our online toolkits for ideas, templates and tips to get started and make a difference.

Learn More!

Celebrate 2025, Join 2026: Miles for Melanoma Is Back!



Thank you for an incredible 2025 season of Miles for Melanoma. Because of you, this year was filled with powerful moments, community impact and lifesaving momentum. Watch the official recap video to relive some of the highlights and memories from across the country.

Ready for what's next? The new season is right around the corner and registration is now open for our first two races: Washington, DC (May 9) and New England, MA (May 16). Sign up now to start building your team and jump-start your fundraising!

More events — including Denver — are opening soon. Visit our Miles for Melanoma homepage to find a 5K near you and be part of the movement!

Register Now!

Celebrate our Anniversary Galas – Milestone Nights of Impact

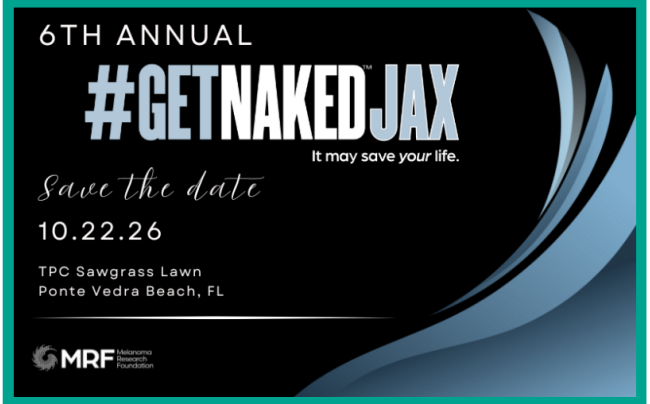


Get ready to celebrate two milestone nights of impact and inspiration! Join us for anniversary-year galas you won't want to miss — the 15th Annual Denver Gala at Asterisk on Thursday, September 24 and the 25th Annual New York Gala at our new venue, Guastavino's on Thursday, October 15.

These incredible evenings bring our community together to power progress in melanoma research, prevention and patient support. Guests will enjoy a lively cocktail reception, open bar, gourmet dining and a memorable awards program honoring leaders in the fight.

Be part of the energy, the purpose and the celebration. Secure your tickets or sponsorship today!

Get Your Tickets Here



Join Our Signature Event: 6th Annual #GetNakedJax at TPC Sawgrass in Jacksonville

We're also proud to spotlight one of our signature events — the 6th Annual #GetNakedJax in Jacksonville on October 22 at TPC Sawgrass. This high-energy evening unites the community around one powerful mission: to eradicate melanoma by funding groundbreaking research. With more than $875,000 already raised for lifesaving science, this premier philanthropic experience features craft cocktails, an elevated dining experience, live entertainment and a vibrant, purpose-driven crowd. It's more than an event — it's one of Jacksonville's most impactful nights of giving.

Become a Sponsor

Upcoming Events

March 1-3: MRF Advocacy Days

March 28: Jam in the Streets

March 28: Hope in Bloom Ball

April 6: Together Against Melanoma: UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center Patient & Caregiver Symposium

April 17-19: Eyes on a Cure: Ocular Melanoma Patient & Caregiver Symposium

May 8: Stay Out of the Sun Run

May 9: DC Miles for Melanoma 5K

May 16: New England Miles for Melanoma 5K

In the News

Real-World Data Support Clinical Benefit With Lifileucel in Previously Treated Advanced Melanoma — *OncLive*

Agent Orange herbicide linked to acral melanoma in U.S. veterans — *Oncology Central*

Groundbreaking cancer treatment given to Valley patient with metastatic melanoma — *ABC15 Arizona*

Love Is Blind star Emma Betsinger reveals heartbreaking story behind arm scars & admits marks leave her 'self-conscious' — *The US Sun*

Aura Biosciences expands evidence with new patient-reported outcome study in eye cancer — *The Globe*

MRF Melanoma Research Foundation

melanoma.org

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The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) is leading the melanoma community to transform melanoma from one of the deadliest cancers to one of the most treatable through research, education and advocacy.

The Melanoma Research Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

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