MRF Melanoma Research Foundation



Every July, UV Safety Awareness Month serves as an important reminder that while sunshine is part of a healthy, active lifestyle, misinformation about ultraviolet (UV) exposure is putting a new generation at risk.

Across TikTok, Instagram and other social media platforms, harmful trends such as "tan maxxing" encourage users to intentionally seek intense sun exposure, spend time outdoors during peak UV hours and even avoid sunscreen in pursuit of a darker tan. These messages often portray tanning as healthy or desirable, despite decades of scientific evidence showing that a tan is actually a visible sign of skin damage caused by ultraviolet radiation. Unfortunately, this misinformation is reaching millions of young people at a time when melanoma rates among adolescents and young adults remain a significant public health concern.

The consequences are real. Nearly 90% of cutaneous melanoma cases are linked to ultraviolet (UV) exposure, making the vast majority of cases preventable through healthy sun protective behaviors. Yet social media continues to amplify myths that encourage unsafe sun exposure, particularly among Generation Z, who report high confidence in their sun safety knowledge despite significant gaps in understanding. Recent surveys from the American Academy of Dermatology found that misinformation has influenced many Americans to reduce or stop using sunscreen altogether, placing millions at increased risk for skin cancer.

This growing disconnect between evidence and online advice underscores why education has never been more important.

The Melanoma Research Foundation is committed to ensuring that children and families receive evidence-based, age-appropriate information before misinformation has a chance to take root. That's why the MRF developed SunAWARE™, a free K–5 educational curriculum that teaches lifelong sun-safe habits through engaging, interactive lessons. Designed for classrooms, camps, after-school programs and community organizations, SunAWARE empowers children to understand how UV rays affect the skin, recognize healthy sun protection behaviors and build habits that can reduce their lifetime risk of melanoma.

Importantly, SunAWARE also helps students develop critical thinking skills by addressing common tanning myths and teaching children how to recognize credible health information—an increasingly valuable skill in today's digital world.

As parents, educators, healthcare professionals and advocates, we all have a role to play in countering harmful online trends. Conversations about sun safety should begin early and continue throughout adolescence and adulthood. Every lesson taught, every myth corrected and every healthy habit reinforced has the potential to prevent future cases of melanoma.

Learn more about the MRF's free SunAWARE™ curriculum here.

This UV Safety Awareness Month, let's replace viral misinformation with evidence-based education. Together, we can help ensure that the next generation grows up understanding that healthy skin isn't about achieving the perfect tan—it's about protecting the skin you're in.

Kyleigh LiPira, MBA

CEO

Donor Spotlight: Kathy Magnum's Story of Hope



For Kathy Magnum, supporting the MRF is deeply personal. As a three-time Stage I survivor, Kathy understands firsthand the importance of early detection and access to effective treatment. While each diagnoses was successfully treated with surgical excision, her family's experience with melanoma has also included profound loss. More than 30 years ago, Kathy lost her cousin to the disease—before many of today's lifesaving treatment options existed.

Reflecting on why she continues to support the MRF, Kathy shares:

"I support the MRF because melanoma has had a profound impact on me and my family, as it has for so many others. I have been diagnosed with melanoma three times, the most recent being five years ago. Oddly enough, I feel like I'm one of the lucky ones because my diagnoses have all been considered Stage I that required excision, but no further treatment beyond that. My cousin, however, wasn't as lucky and died from the disease over 30 years ago, before many of the treatments that are available today were an option. All this underscores the importance of early detection, education and continued advances and breakthroughs in treatment as we work toward a future where fewer lives are lost to melanoma. While I hope I never hear a doctor tell me I have melanoma again, it's comforting to know that the MRF is doing critical work that will make any future diagnosis more manageable than ever."

Stories like Kathy's remind us why continued investment in melanoma research, education and advocacy is so important. We are deeply grateful for Kathy's generosity and commitment to helping create a future with better treatments, earlier detection and, ultimately, a cure.

Donate Today



National Make-A-Will Month: Leave a Lasting Impact on the Future of Melanoma Research

August is National Make-A-Will Month, a meaningful reminder that one of the most lasting ways you can support the causes you care about is through thoughtful estate planning. By including the MRF in your will or estate plans, you help ensure that future generations benefit from continued investments in groundbreaking melanoma research, patient education and advocacy. Legacy gifts play a vital role in advancing new treatments, supporting innovative research and moving us closer to a future without melanoma.

For MRF advocate and melanoma thriver Kristin McJunkins, making this commitment was inspired by her own melanoma journey:

"In 2008 when I was 38 years old, I was diagnosed with Stage IIIa cutaneous melanoma. After two surgeries, which included some lymph node removal, it was determined that I had clear margins. Following the surgeries, there were no other treatment options available to me because clinical trials were limited to people with later stages of the disease. Instead, I was given the standard protocol of interferon which, I was told, had a less than 10% chance of preventing future melanomas. In the years since, many treatment options have been approved by the FDA to treat melanoma, and this is because of robust research and clinical trials. For me, knowing there is a dynamic research pipeline has helped ease anxiety about improved treatment options for all melanoma patients. That is why I have included MRF in my estate plan; to help ensure good

research is funded with the goal of eradicating melanoma."

Kristin's story is a powerful reminder that today's research creates tomorrow's hope. By leaving a legacy gift to the MRF, you can help accelerate lifesaving discoveries and ensure that progress continues for every patient and family impacted by melanoma. Learn more about leaving a legacy below.

Learn More

Education Corner

Share Your Story: Help Raise Awareness About Subcutaneous Immunotherapy

The MRF is looking for melanoma patients who have received subcutaneous immunotherapy to share their experience in a short video testimonial. Your story can help educate and inspire others by providing a real patient perspective on navigating subcutaneous immunotherapy treatment. By sharing your experience, you'll help other melanoma patients better understand this treatment option and feel more informed as they navigate their own care.

Interested or know someone who may be a good fit? Please contact education@melanoma.org to learn more.

Accelerating Towards a Cure in Uveal Melanoma – Watch the Recent Ask the Expert Recap



On July 7, the MRF hosted the **"Accelerating Towards a Cure in Uveal Melanoma: The Adjuvant and Neoadjuvant Treatment Landscape"** Ask the Expert webinar sponsored by Immunocore, bringing together five leading uveal melanoma specialists for a conversation on the evolving role of adjuvant and neoadjuvant therapies in reducing recurrence risk. Panel facilitator Dr. Richard Carvajal was joined by Drs. Ivana Kim, Kamaneh Montazeri, Miguel Materin Shaheer Khan for a discussion that explored how these treatments may complement the strong local control already offered by radiation and surgery. We would like to thank Immunocore for their generous support of this webinar as well as our speakers for sharing their time and expertise with the uveal melanoma community, and to everyone who joined us live or has watched since. You can now view the recorded session below.

Watch Full Session



On July 21, the MRF hosted **Beyond the Bottle: The Science of Sunscreen Formulation, Sun Protection, and a Young Melanoma Survivor's Journey**, sponsored by Kenvue, exploring the science behind sunscreen formulation, the latest advances in sun protection technology and the critical role sunscreen plays in melanoma prevention. Dermatologist **Darrell S. Rigel, MD, MS**, a leading melanoma expert and one of the developers of the ABCDEs of melanoma detection, shared evidence-based guidance on how sunscreens are formulated, how they work and what patients and consumers should know when choosing sun protection.

The webinar also featured **Jarrett Birch**, a young melanoma survivor, who shared his personal melanoma journey and discussed the importance of sun protection from a patient perspective. Together, the presentations provided practical information for melanoma patients, caregivers, healthcare professionals and anyone interested in reducing their risk of skin cancer through effective sun safety practices.

We would like to thank **Kenvue** for their generous support of this webinar as well as our speakers for sharing their time and expertise with the melanoma community. Missed the webinar? Watch the recording below!

Watch Full Session



The Miles for Melanoma 5K Season is in Full Swing!

A huge thank you to our incredible Miles for Melanoma community for showing up, raising awareness and standing together in support of melanoma patients and families. We also want to extend a special thank you to our Chicago community for your understanding and support as we made the difficult decision to postpone our event this past month due to air quality concerns. We are actively working on a new date and will share updates as soon as they become available.

The road ahead is packed with opportunities to come together! Join us next in: Cleveland, OH (August 2), Philadelphia, PA (August 22), Twin Cities, MN (August 30), San Francisco, CA (August 30), New York, NY (September 19), Morristown, NJ (September 27), Seattle, WA (October 4), Los Angeles, CA (October 4) and San Diego, CA (October 17). Whether you're joining a team, fundraising, honoring a loved one or taking your first steps toward melanoma awareness, your participation makes an impact.

Find a Miles for Melanoma 5K Near You!

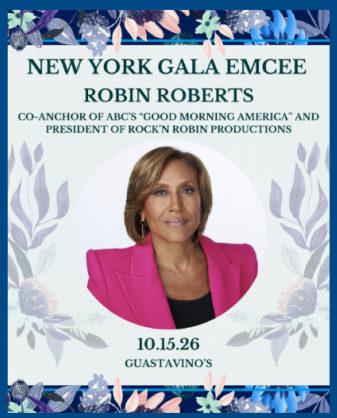
Denver Gala: 15 Years of Making a Difference



In less than two months, we'll gather for the 15th Annual Denver Gala on Thursday, September 24, at Asterisk Denver for an unforgettable evening celebrating the progress, passion and people who continue to drive the melanoma community forward. We are honored to welcome back Jacquie Palisi, Colorado native and melanoma warrior, as this year's emcee. With her inspiring story, authentic voice and unwavering commitment to raising awareness, Jacquie will help bring our mission to life throughout the evening.

More than a gala, this is a powerful opportunity to stand together for a shared purpose: advancing melanoma research, expanding patient education and strengthening advocacy efforts for everyone impacted by melanoma. Join us for an evening of inspiration, connection and impact. Together, we can help create a future where no one faces melanoma alone. Reserve your ticket or sponsorship today and be part of the movement.

Purchase a Ticket or Sponsorship



Robin Roberts to Emcee the 25th Annual New York Gala!

We are honored to welcome Robin Roberts, co-anchor of ABC's "Good Morning America" and President of Rock'n Robin Productions, as the emcee for our 25th Annual New York Gala on

Thursday, October 15, at Guastavino's. A celebrated journalist, bestselling author and cancer survivor, Robin has inspired millions through her resilience, authenticity and unwavering belief in the power of hope. We are thrilled to have her join us for this milestone celebration as we commemorate 25 years of the New York Gala and the MRF's 30th anniversary.

This unforgettable evening will celebrate the strength and spirit of the melanoma community—from courageous patients and devoted caregivers to visionary researchers and dedicated clinicians. Together, we will honor the progress made while raising critical funds to advance groundbreaking melanoma research, expand patient support and help drive us closer to a future without melanoma. Purchase a ticket or sponsorship today!

Purchase a Ticket or Sponsorship

#GetNakedJax: Six Years of Turning Hope Into Action



The 6th Annual #GetNakedJax returns on Thursday, October 22 at the TPC Sawgrass Lawn in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL! More than just an event, #GetNakedJax is a movement, bringing together the Jacksonville community with a shared commitment to advancing melanoma research and creating a future without melanoma.

What began with the goal of funding a single research grant each year has grown into an incredible legacy of impact. Since 2021, the #GetNakedJax community has contributed more than $875,000 to support groundbreaking melanoma research. In 2025 alone, this support helped fund a Career Development Award at Thomas Jefferson University, advancing innovative research focused on triggering melanoma cells to self-destruct, an exciting approach with the potential to shape the future of melanoma treatment.

Guests will enjoy an unforgettable evening featuring cocktails, dinner, live entertainment and meaningful connections with a community united by hope—all while helping fuel progress in melanoma prevention, treatment and awareness. Together, we're turning generosity into discovery and hope into action.

Learn More



The House Appropriations Committee Allocates $15 Million for the Melanoma Research Program in FY27

The House Committee on Appropriations held their full markup of the FY27 Defense Appropriations Bill at the end of June and outlined funding allocations for the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) within the Department of Defense (DoD). Unfortunately, the markup included a $25 million cut to the Melanoma Research Program (MRP), reducing the funding level to $15 million. The MRP has been funded at $40 million since FY22 through FY26. While this cut has advanced in the House, the Senate has yet to finalize its version of the spending bill.

If passed with a $15 million allocation, this would significantly stymy the progress of research advancing melanoma prevention, early detection and treatment for active military personnel, veterans, military families and the public alike. Melanoma is a unique and urgent threat to our military community as service members are 60% more likely to receive a diagnosis than the civilian population, while aircrew personnel are 87% more likely to develop melanoma.

Continued innovation in melanoma prevention, detection and treatment is only possible with continued investment in high quality research. Take action today and urge your lawmakers to protect $40 million for the Defense-funded Melanoma Research Program within the CDMRP.

Take Action

Upcoming Events

August 2: Cleveland Miles for Melanoma 5K

August 22: Philadelphia Miles for Melanoma 5K

August 30: Twin Cities Miles for

In the News

Can a 'life-changing sunburn' really give you cancer? The scary reality of skipping SPF - *NY Post*

William Shatner and daughter open up about each surviving Stage 4 cancer - *ABC News*

Melanoma 5K

August 30: San Francisco Miles for Melanoma 5K

September 19: New York Miles for Melanoma 5K

September 24: 15th Annual Denver Gala

September 26: Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins (Registration Opening Soon)

September 27: New Jersey Miles for Melanoma

October 4: Seattle Miles for Melanoma

October 4: Los Angeles Miles for Melanoma

October 15: 25th Annual New York Gala

October 17: San Diego Miles for Melanoma

October 22: #GetNakedJax

November 12: DC Wings of Hope

November 14: Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center (Registration Opening Soon)

Pallone, 15 Members Press Pentagon to Make Sunscreen Standard Issue for Servicemembers - *Pallone House*

Details on the Chicago Miles for Melanoma 5K event - *WGN 9 News*

Thanks to social media, tanning makes an unfortunate comeback among teen girls - *LA Times*

Cancer Vaccine Sustains 49 Percent Melanoma Reduction After 5 Years - *NYU Langone Health*

Sunscreen has never been better. But Americans are paying to tan - *Axios*

Skin Cancer: An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth a Pound of Cure - *Lawrence County Advocate*

New study reveals how controlling sunburn-triggered inflammation may prevent skin cancer - *U Chicago Medicine*

SkylineDx's Merlin CP-GEP Granted FDA Breakthrough Device Designation, Building on NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology Recognition in Cutaneous Melanoma Care - *SkylineDx*

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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