MRF Melanoma Research Foundation



In 2026, Rare Cancer Day officially is observed on September 23, moving from its previous observance of September 30. At the MRF however, we elevate awareness and the importance of early detection and drive progress for the rarer forms of melanoma including - ocular, mucosal, acral lentiginous and pediatric – through funding for medical research, providing educational resources and supporting advocacy for this community every day.

The mission critical work we do every day would not be possible without generous supporters like you helping to fund our efforts in melanoma research, education and advocacy. Together, we can foster a world in which we eradicate rare melanomas. To make a tax-deductible donation to specifically support a loved one battling a rarer form of melanoma, click below.

Donate Today

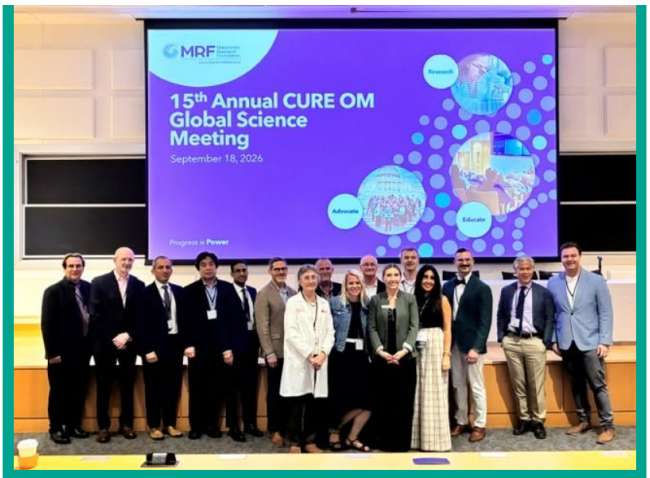
Enabling Rare Melanoma Treatment Progress through Research

The MRF is committed to supporting medical research that solves the unique challenges that the rarer forms of melanoma pose including diagnosis, treatment and outcomes. To date, the MRF has provided over $4 million in funding to support 66 research grants focused specifically on the rarer subtypes of melanoma. Collectively, these grants explore promising new therapies, investigate genetic and molecular drivers of rare melanoma subtypes and ultimately improve outcomes for patients who have very limited standard treatment options. The MRF recently launched its Request for Proposals (RFPs) in support of our Career Development Award which includes a specific topic proposal carve out for research applications with a focus on mucosal melanoma.

We implore you to review a few research grants focused on the rare melanomas that have been recently funded through your generous support:

- Vision Loss After Plaque Radiotherapy for Posterior Uveal Melanoma – Melanoma Research Foundation
- Identification of molecular pathways that drive uveal melanoma metastasis – Melanoma Research Foundation
- Neoadjuvant immunotherapy and radiotherapy for mucosal melanoma – Melanoma Research Foundation
- Cutaneous Genital and Acral Melanoma Treatment Trends and Outcomes – Melanoma Research Foundation
- Unveiling the Genetic Landscape of Pediatric Melanomas and Precursors – Melanoma Research Foundation

Convening Leading Ocular Melanoma Researchers at the CURE OM Global Science Meeting



This month, the MRF's CURE OM initiative convened over 70 ocular melanoma (OM) researchers, clinicians and industry partners at Thomas Jefferson University for the 15th Annual CURE OM Global Science Meeting. Topics presented included deepening our knowledge of how genetics can help us better detect and understand OM, new treatment targets for advanced OM and exciting updates around TIL (tumor-infiltrating lymphocyte) therapy. The annual meeting allows experts to collectively share their research in an effort to expand treatment options and early diagnosis capabilities to provide more hope for those living with this rare melanoma subtype.

Educating and Empowering the Rare Melanoma Community

Education and patient engagement are at the cornerstone of the MRF's mission. We provide no-cost educational materials and resources to rare melanoma patients, caregivers and healthcare providers through the Education Institute. These include accessing our on demand Ask the Expert webinars which explore a myriad of topics to patient and caregiver guides and specialized content for the rare melanoma subtypes.

You can view a few of our most recent educational resources below:

- CURE OM – Melanoma Research Foundation
- Ocular Melanoma Patient and Caregiver Guide
- Understanding Metastatic Uveal Melanoma
- Ask the Expert: Accelerating Towards a Cure in Uveal Melanoma
- Meeting Report From the 2025 Cure Ocular Melanoma (CURE OM) Global Science Meeting, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, October 2025
- Mucosal Melanoma: Know the Signs, Know the Support
- Ask the Expert: Mucosal Melanoma: Current and Emerging Treatments, Research and Patient Perspectives
- Ask the Expert: Acral Melanoma: Insights from Research and Real Life
- Pediatric Self Screening Guide

Advocating for the Rare Melanoma Community

The MRF is also deeply committed to enabling federal and state level policies and legislation that enable progress for the rare melanoma community. Each year through our Advocacy Days program, launching March 7-9, 2027, we advocate for federal research funding through the Melanoma Research Program (MRP) within the Department of Defense's Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP). This funding includes specific topic proposals earmarked to support research for the rare melanoma community.

To become more involved with our advocacy program, click here.

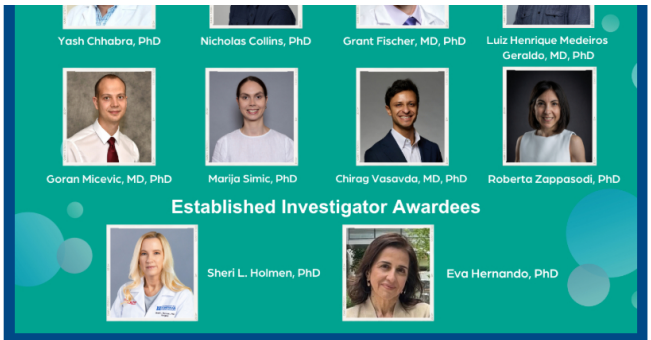
Kyleigh LiPira, MBA

CEO

SPOTlighting Melanoma Research

Announcing the 2026 MRF Career Development and Established Investigator Awardees





We are pleased to announce and congratulate the newest MRF awardees including eight Career Development Awards (CDA) and two Established Investigator Awards (EIA). These awards enable researchers from across the nation to explore a multitude of innovative topics that will lead to more treatment progress, deepen our understanding of the rare melanoma subtypes and foster more hope within the melanoma community. The grantees' research span topics such as testing the tumor environment to better predict and thwart tumor progression, overcoming immunotherapy resistance in melanoma, exploring new drug therapies for acral and ocular melanoma, identifying new approaches to disabling tumor metastasis in the brain and more!

To date, the MRF has funded more than $29 million in research resulting in over 400 projects and 31 clinical trials. We thank the many generous donors whose support of our research grant program is critical to advancing treatment progress for the melanoma community.

Learn More about MRF Funded Research

Requests for Proposals: Applications for 2027 Melanoma Research Funding are Now Available

The MRF is deeply committed to supporting groundbreaking and innovative research. Applications are now open for two grant opportunities, including Medical Student Research Grants and Career Development Awards.

Review the respective RFPs for more details including purpose, eligibility and pertinent award submission deadlines. Applications must be submitted via Proposal Central.

Learn More

Education Corner

New Educational Resource! Subcutaneous Immunotherapy for Melanoma: What You Need to Know



Immunotherapy is a type of treatment that activates your body's own immune system to help fight disease. For people with melanoma, it can help the body recognize and attack melanoma cells. Immunotherapy is often given by intravenous infusion, while subcutaneous immunotherapy is given as an injection just under the skin.

To help patients and caregivers better understand this treatment option, we've created the Subcutaneous Immunotherapy for Melanoma: What You Need to Know infographic. This easy-to-follow resource covers:

- What subcutaneous immunotherapy is
- How and where it is administered
- Who may be eligible for treatment
- Potential benefits and possible side effects
- Key differences between subcutaneous injections and intravenous (IV) treatment

Whether you are newly diagnosed, considering treatment options or supporting a loved one, this guide can help you feel more informed and empowered throughout your melanoma journey.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to Bristol Myers Squibb for their support through a grant to help us provide accessible educational resources to the melanoma community.

View and download the infographic at no cost to learn more about subcutaneous immunotherapy.

Access the Subcutaneous Infographic

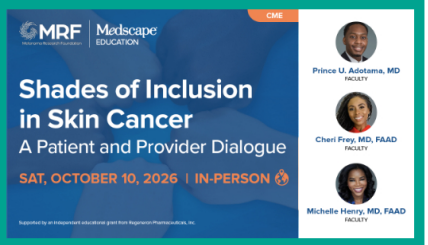


Register Today: Join the Next Together Against Melanoma Patient & Caregiver Symposium

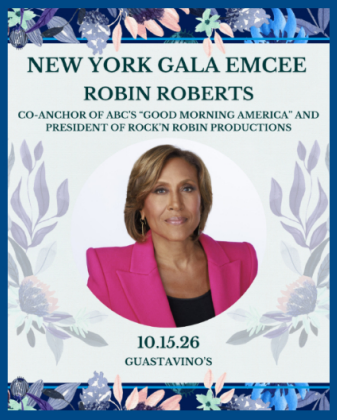
We're thrilled to welcome melanoma patients, caregivers and thrivers to the next installment of our Together Against Melanoma Patient and Caregiver Symposium on November 14 at the Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center in Jacksonville, FL. This one-day free event will feature valuable insights into melanoma research and the latest advances in treatments while fostering learning, support and connection. We look forward to seeing you there. Register today to save your seat.

Register Today!

MRF to Co-Host Skin Cancer Health Equity Workshop



On Saturday, October 10, the MRF and Medscape Education will co-host an interactive workshop titled, "Shades of Inclusion in Skin Cancer: A Patient and Provider Dialogue," in conjunction with the Skin of Color Update (SOCU) Meeting. This workshop focuses on health equity in skin cancer care and will use case-based learning with clinical experts and patient advocates to explore disparities, implicit bias and barriers to care in managing melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers across diverse populations. MRF Board Member, Dr. Michelle Henry, will be among the esteemed featured speakers at the workshop.



2 Weeks Away: Secure Your Tickets to the 25th Annual New York Gala!

We are thrilled to welcome the melanoma community to the 25th Annual New York Gala on **Thursday, October 15** at **Guastavino's** to celebrate progress, honor champions and fuel the fight against melanoma.

This year, we are proud to honor Miguel A. Materin, MD, with the CURE OM Vision of Hope Award for his exemplary patient care, groundbreaking research and scientific leadership. EltaMD Skin Care will receive the Corporate Leadership Award for their longstanding commitment to sun safety and skin health. Whitney Bowe, MD, FAAD will be presented with the Excellence in Prevention Award for her unparalleled dedication to the prevention of melanoma and the compassion with which she treat her patients. And finally, Jason Chambers, Sara Corrado and Lindsay Held will be honored with the Courage Award for their remarkable strength and resilience in their melanoma journeys.

We're also thrilled to collaborate with renowned contemporary artist Peter Tunney, whose bold and uplifting work has inspired collectors around the world. As part of this special collaboration, just 100 signed copies of **Peter's exclusive coffee table book** will be available for purchase through the Gala website. Filled with artwork, personal stories and unique ephemera from Peter's life and career, this one-of-a-kind book offers an intimate look into his creative world. Guests can choose between the "FEAR LESS" purple edition or "LOVE MORE" red edition, while supplies last.

Purchase Peter Tunney Signed Coffee Table Book

Guests can select to add on the Signed Peter Tunney Coffee Table Book when purchasing their Gala ticket(s). Already purchased your Gala ticket? You can still add a signed Peter Tunney Coffee Table Book to your order **here**.

And, of course, we're thrilled to welcome Robin Roberts, co-anchor of ABC's Good Morning America and President of Rock'n Robin Productions, as our event emcee!

Tickets are limited, and this milestone Gala is just two weeks away. Don't miss your chance to be part of this unforgettable evening! For more information about the New York Gala, to purchase tickets, explore sponsorship opportunities, add your signed Peter Tunney book or make a tax-deductible donation, click below.

Purchase a Ticket or Make a Donation!

Help Keep the Progress Going: 3 Weeks Until #GetNakedJax



(Left to Right: Bill Daly, Survivor and Host Committee Member, Kyleigh LiPira, MRF CEO and Jason Sessions, MRF Board Member and Event Co-Chair)

In just **THREE WEEKS,** join us for the 6th Annual #GetNakedJax on **Thursday, October 22** in Jacksonville, FL! This unforgettable evening unites the melanoma community with a unilateral purpose: funding innovative research that provides hope for those impacted by melanoma. Since 2021, the #GetNakedJax community has raised more than $875,000 for critical melanoma research, helping fuel discoveries and advance new treatment options for people facing this disease. Every ticket, sponsorship and donation helps keep that progress moving forward.

A Survivor's Story

Bill Daly, a Stage 4C metastatic melanoma survivor, knows firsthand why research matters. After receiving immunotherapy treatment that saved his life, Bill became deeply involved with the MRF and the #GetNakedJax community. As last year's patient speaker, #GetNakedJax is especially meaningful because the funds raised directly support research into novel therapies such as immunotherapy that ultimately lead to better patient outcomes. Now, Bill is asking our community to fund more progress. Your contributions could help give another patient and family the hope and opportunity Bill received. Click below to watch Bill's story!

Watch Bill's Story

This year's #GetNakedJax event will support a Career Development Award for researcher **Luiz Henrique Medeiros Geraldo, MD, PhD** of the NYU Grossman School of Medicine. Dr. Geraldo's research will explore the tumor environment and a new mechanism to turn resistant tumors into ones that respond effectively to melanoma therapies. The ultimate goal of Dr. Geraldo's work is to develop new therapies for melanoma patients that increase survival.

Purchase a ticket, become a sponsor or make a donation—every contribution helps fund critical research and supports the fight against melanoma. Get your tickets or make a donation below.

Purchase a Ticket or Make a Donation

An Incredible Evening in Denver!



(Left to Right: Lori Rosemond, RN, Jacquie Palisi and Arielle Gold)

Denver, we cannot thank you enough for supporting the 15th Annual Gala! We had an incredible evening celebrating this amazing community, and we're so grateful to everyone who helped make it so special. Over the past 15 years, our Denver community has raised nearly $5 million to fund critical melanoma research, provide vital educational resources for patients and families and

critical melanoma research, provide vital educational resources for patients and families and strengthen advocacy at both the state and federal levels. Thank you for showing us that Progress Is Power.

And the impact **doesn't have to stop with Gala night!** You can continue making a difference by helping us **Fund a Grant for Mathieu Desaunay, PhD, of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai**. Your support can help fund his Career Development Award and advance important melanoma research.

Looking for a little Gala fun for yourself? You can also purchase an **Authentic Flavors of Tuscany getaway for $2,600**, featuring seven days and six nights in Cortona, Italy, with accommodations for two, a Tuscan wine tasting, a cooking show with dinner and wine and more. Plus, there are still a few **Cards for a Cure** gift cards available! Check out the remaining gift cards, grab one while you can and support the MRF at the same time.

Learn More!



The final stretch of the 2026 Miles for Melanoma 5K season is here!

We're heading into the home stretch, but there's still time to lace up, rally your people and join us on the course! This fall and winter, we'll be hitting the road in Seattle, WA (Oct 4), Los Angeles, CA (Oct 4), San Diego, CA (Oct 17), Atlanta, GA (Nov 8) and Fort Myers, FL (Dec 12).

And we're not done yet! Our February 2027 events will open for registration later this fall, so even more opportunities to make every mile count are on the way. Whether you're running in honor of someone you love, celebrating a survivor, supporting a patient or family or simply showing up for the melanoma community, your steps make a difference. Register today, start fundraising and help us finish the 2026 season strong! Together, we can turn every mile into momentum for a future without melanoma.

Learn More!

The MRF Hosts the Annual Global Melanoma Coalition Meeting



In September, the MRF convened members of the global melanoma community to Baltimore, MD, for the annual Global Melanoma Coalition (GMC) meeting, a two-day gathering focused on connection, education and collaboration.

The meeting brought together melanoma patient advocacy organizations from across the globe including the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Portugal, Armenia, Brazil, Italy, Israel and Austria. Together, attendees shared insights, strengthened partnerships and explored ways to advance melanoma education, expand patient support and improve access to care worldwide.

We are grateful to our sponsors at Iovance, Bristol Myers Squibb, Immunocore, Regeneron, Ideaya and Skyline for their support of the Global Melanoma Coalition.

Upcoming Events

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: 6th Annual

In the News

Bob Miller Oysterfest Celebrates America's 250th in Maplewood with "Stars, Stripes and Shells" - *TAP into SOMA*

Maplewood Oysterfest Returns for 11th Year to Raise Funds for Melanoma Research - *Essex Local*

What Do Phase 3 mRNA Vaccine Results Mean for Melanoma? - *Oncology News Central*

#GetNakedJax

November 8: Atlanta Miles for Melanoma 5K

November 12: DC Wings of Hope

November 14: Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center

December 12: Fort Myers Miles for Melanoma 5K

Drug combination study reveals new clues to treatment resistance in deadly melanoma - *Medical Press*

Tebentafusp Sustains Survival Benefit at 5 Years in Metastatic Uveal Melanoma - *Cancer Network*

Social media is promoting harmful attitudes towards sun exposure - *The Guardian*

Myth or Fact: What You Actually Need to Know About Sun Protection - *The Educated Patient*

Sunscreen, a Low-Cost Tool for Skin Cancer Prevention, Is Slated for an Upgrade - *Weill Cornell Medicine*

Does sunscreen cause cancer? How do we get vitamin D if we use sunscreen? Addressing sunscreen myths - *The Ohio State University*



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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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