



Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 24, 2013

Record Level in Melanoma Research Grant Applications for 2013 *JMNMF Research Scholarship Awards – Experience Increased National Expansion*

Westminster, MD – The [Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation](http://www.melanomaresource.org) (JMNMF) received 44 applications for the nationally competitive, “Research Scholar Awards” (RSA) to exceptional graduate student researchers at leading cancer centers across the U.S. The 2013 pool brings to nearly 150 program participants from nearly 50 melanoma research institutions since the RSA inception in 2006. JMNMF’s research grants, increased dramatically, by nearly 30% in 2012 (following a 40% funding increase in 2011), to significantly enhance the potential for advancements in the melanoma cancer field and encourage a larger number of students to choose melanoma research as their professional career path.

The 2013 RSA pool of university-affiliated, National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Designated Cancer Centers or Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) members, include:

- Baylor College of Medicine - Dan L. Duncan Cancer Center
- Boston University School of Medicine - Boston Medical Center
- Dartmouth College - Norris Cotton Cancer Center
- Duke University - Duke University Medical Center
- Harvard University - Dana Farber/Harvard Cancer Center
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology - Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at MIT
- Medical College of Wisconsin - Cancer Center at the Medical College of Wisconsin
- Northwestern University - The Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center
- New York University - NYU Cancer Institute
- Oregon State University - Knight Cancer Institute
- Penn State University College of Medicine - Hershey Cancer Institute
- Sanford-Burnham Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences - Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute
- Thomas Jefferson University - Kimmel Cancer Center
- University at Buffalo - Roswell Park Cancer Institute
- University of Connecticut - Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center
- University of Iowa - Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center
- University of Massachusetts Medical School
- University of Miami - Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center
- University of Minnesota - Masonic Cancer Center
- University of New Mexico - UNM Cancer Research & Treatment Center
- University of North Carolina - Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center
- University of Pittsburgh - University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute
- University of South Florida - H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center
- University of Texas - MD Anderson Cancer Center
- University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio - Cancer Therapy & Research Center
- University of the Sciences in Philadelphia - The Wistar Institute
- University of Virginia - University of Virginia Cancer Center
- Vanderbilt University - Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

The Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation

...the voice for melanoma prevention, detection, care and cure!



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As first in the U.S. to fund graduate student melanoma researchers, the JMNMF program was initially piloted with the Johns Hopkins Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center in 2006, and expanded nationally to benefit the broader academic, scientific, clinical and patient communities.

According to Regina Shannon Bodnar, JMNMF Chair, *“Our Foundation’s ‘Research Scholar Awards’ accomplishes one of our most prominent mission-specific objectives; and, does so through a signature program to answer a very serious, grassroots-level need. We must inspire interest in melanoma research among the brightest young minds that are considering, or are within, the nation’s cancer research pipelines, to pursue a career in melanoma research. We’re so much closer to understanding the disease, identifying means for effective treatments and, most importantly, finding a cure.”*

The Foundation continues to experience tremendous growth in this valuable student research program in both depth and breadth of funding, and in the diversity of candidates and institutions participating. Nothing more greatly impacts the research communities’ collective efforts, than the existence of a broad national base of independent and collaborative melanoma research programs which is firmly evident in the JMNMF 2013 “Research Scholar Award” program year. The 2012 [RSA research summaries and award ceremony photos](#) are available online at www.melanomaresource.org.

All 44 RSA candidates will be objectively evaluated in two stages utilizing a quantifiable rating spreadsheet tool: First, independently by the RSA Professional Advisory Board members; and, secondly, on an independent basis by the Foundation’s RSA Committee comprised of Board of Director members. Independent results for both groups will then be separately compiled and utilized by the RSA Committee for final awards discussion and selection for announcement on March 4, 2013.

Five broad candidate evaluation categories include: Scope & Innovation; Feasibility; Organization; Future Collaboration & Application; and, Overall panel/committee recommendations of individual applicants to also rule out any applicant/evaluator bias/conflicts. Though difficult, the final evaluations and awards are the result of a broad collective analysis.

The Foundation continues to refine and improve the process in each successive award year. All RSA recipients, and the entire pool of applicants, represent the forefront of compelling research to further the understanding of melanoma biology, develop effective treatments and, to definitively find a cure.

The JMNMF also proudly recognizes the RSA Professional Advisory Board that unselfishly review student researcher applications thoroughly, and provide extensive expertise and professionalism in objectively evaluating candidate applications.

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In 2013 the RSA Board members were expanded to accommodate the program's growth, and are as follows:

Rhoda M. Alani, M.D.
Herbert Mescon Professor and Chair
Department of Dermatology
Boston University School of Medicine
Dermatologist-in-Chief
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Paul B. Chapman, M.D.
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Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
Professor of Medicine, Weill Cornell Medical College
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Jeffrey E. Gershenwald, M.D., FACS
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Houston, TX

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University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
Director, Melanoma Program
University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute
Pittsburgh, PA

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School of Medicine at Dartmouth
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Microbiology, Immunology
and Cancer Biology, UVA School of Medicine
Department of Microbiology and Immunology
Norris Cotton Cancer Center
Lebanon, NH

Gavin P. Robertson, Ph.D.
Professor, Pharmacology, Pathology, Dermatology
and Surgery
Dept. of Pharmacology and Penn State Cancer Institute
Director, Penn State Melanoma Center
Director, Penn State Melanoma Therapeutics Program
Director, Foreman Fdn. Melanoma Research Laboratory
Penn State University
Hershey, PA

Yardena Samuels, Ph.D.
Head, Molecular Cancer Genetics Section
National Human Genome Research Institute
National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, MD

Jedd D. Wolchock, M.D., Ph.D.
Director, Immunotherapy Clinical Trials
Associate Attending Physician, Melanoma-Sarcoma Svc.
Assoc. Director, Ludwig Ctr. for Cancer Immunotherapy
Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
New York, NY



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JOANNA M. NICOLAY MELANOMA FOUNDATION

The [Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation](http://www.melanomaresource.org) is a non-profit public charity founded in January, 2004 to foster melanoma education, advocacy and research. In just eight years, the Foundation has grown dramatically to become an influential voice in the melanoma community and is now established as a national, and international, “voice for melanoma prevention, detection, care and cure.”

The Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation is proud of [numerous achievements to date](#) that include:

- Underwriting melanoma research at numerous prestigious cancer centers across the U.S., through the Foundation’s Research Scholarship Awards (RSA) earned by the best and brightest young graduate student scientists, to advance discovery of effective treatments and, ultimately, a cure for melanoma;
- Successfully launching and expanding a comprehensive High School health curriculum, “Teen Skin Cancer & Melanoma Awareness,” for the key demographic of students (and their families), to learn the deadly risks of melanoma skin cancer and “UV-safe” preventative and detection practices;
- Ongoing targeted initiatives, and multi-channel outreach, to ensure broader national awareness of melanoma prevention and detection by the general public; and,
- Providing a broad spectrum of essential advocacy and care resources for patients and the entire melanoma community.

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JMNMF CONTACT:

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