



Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2012

Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation Announces 2012 Scholarship Awards 29% Increase in Melanoma Research Funding Grants Awarded Across the U.S. 60% Growth in Candidates, 75% Growth in Research Institutions Participating

Westminster, MD – The Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation (JMNMF) awarded nine \$10,000, nationally competitive, “Research Scholar Awards” (RSA) to exceptional graduate student researchers at leading cancer centers across the U.S. The JMNMF 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 2012 RSA applicant pool and cancer research centers represented grew to include 42 of the country’s most promising young melanoma researchers, and 28 prominent National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Designated Cancer Centers or members of the Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI). As first in the U.S. to fund graduate student melanoma researchers, the JMNMF program is celebrating the program’s sixth anniversary. The Research Scholar Award 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 Robert E. Nicolay, JMNMF Chairman, “Our Foundation’s ‘Research Scholar Awards’ are invaluable at the grassroots level, to specifically grow interest in melanoma research, at qualified cancer centers across the country. If we can attract the brightest minds that are considering, or are already within, the nation’s cancer research pipelines, to pursue a career in melanoma research – we’re that much closer to better understanding the disease, identifying the means for effective treatments and, most importantly, finding a cure for this deadly and very prevalent disease.”

In 2012, the JMNMF is very pleased to award the following students and their institutions:

- Kevin Basile, Thomas Jefferson University - Kimmel Cancer Center
- Chin-Ying Chung, Penn State University College of Medicine - Hershey Cancer Institute
- Eleanor Clancy-Thompson, Dartmouth College - Norris Cotton Cancer Center
- Maryann Mikucki, University of Buffalo - Roswell Park Cancer Institute
- Judith Murphy, Weill Cornell Grad. Sch. of Medical Sciences - Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
- Kim H.T. Paraiso, University of South Florida - H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center
- Khvaramze Shaverdashvili, Case Western Reserve Univ.-Case Comprehensive Cancer Ctr.
- Nicholas Theodosakis, Yale Univ. School of Medicine - Yale Comprehensive Cancer Ctr.
- Chentian Zhang, Boston University School of Medicine - Boston Medical Center

The Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation

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



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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.

The following academic/cancer research centers were represented by 2012 RSA applications:

- Baylor College of Medicine – Dan L. Duncan Cancer Center
- Boston University School of Medicine – Boston Medical Center
- Case Western Reserve University – Case Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Dartmouth College – Norris Cotton Cancer Center
- Gerstner Sloan-Kettering Grad. School of Biomed. Sciences – Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Ctr.
- Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center – Louisiana Cancer Research Consortium
- Mount Sinai School of Medicine – Tisch Cancer Institute – Mount Sinai Medical Center
- New York University School of Medicine – New York University Cancer Institute
- Northwestern University – Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Penn State University College of Medicine – Hershey Cancer Institute
- Rutgers University – The Cancer Institute of New Jersey
- Sanford-Burnham Grad. School of Biomedical Science – Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute
- The University of Kansas – University of Kansas Cancer Center
- Thomas Jefferson University – Kimmel Cancer Center
- University of Buffalo – Roswell Park Cancer Institute
- University of California Irvine – Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center
- University of Miami – University of Miami Health System – Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center
- University of New Mexico – University of New Mexico Cancer Research & Treatment Center
- University of Pennsylvania – Abramson Cancer Center
- University of Pittsburgh – University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute
- University of Rochester – University of Rochester Medical Center
- 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 Virginia Cancer Center
- Virginia Commonwealth University – Massey Cancer Center
- Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences – Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
- Yale University School of Medicine - Yale Comprehensive Cancer Center

The JMNMF applauds all and outstanding recognition is well-deserved by each of these institutions for encouragement of their participating RSA graduate candidates. And, equally important beyond RSA funding, 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 2012 "Research Scholar Award" program year.

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The JMNMF also proudly recognizes the RSA Professional Advisory Panel that unselfishly review student researcher applications thoroughly, and provide extensive expertise and professionalism in objectively evaluating candidate applications. In 2012 the RSA Panel 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
Boston Medical Center
Boston, MA

Marcus Bosenberg, M.D., Ph.D.
Associate Professor Dermatology and Pathology
Melanoma Program, Yale Cancer Center
Yale University School of Medicine
New Haven, CT

Jeffrey E. Gershenwald, M.D., FACS
Professor of Surgery
Professor of Cancer Biology
Depts. of Surgical Oncology and Cancer Biology
Medical Director, Melanoma and Skin Center
The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
Houston, TX

Meenhard Herlyn, D.V.M., D.Sc.
Caspar Wistar Professor in Melanoma Research
Director, The Wistar Institute Melanoma Research Center
Professor and Co-program Leader, Tumor Microenvironment
and Metastasis Program
The Wistar Institute
Philadelphia, PA

John M. Kirkwood, M.D.
Usher Professor of Medicine, Dermatology and
Translational Science
Vice Chair for Clinical Research, Dept of Medicine
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
Director, Melanoma Program
University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute
Pittsburgh, PA

Gavin P. Robertson, Ph.D.
Prof. of Pharmacology, Pathology, Dermatology and Surgery
Department 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

All 42 RSA candidates were objectively evaluated in two stages utilizing a quantifiable rating spreadsheet tool: First, independently by the RSA Professional Advisory Panel members; and, secondly, on an independent basis by the Foundation's RSA Committee comprised of Board of Director members. Independent results for both groups were then separately compiled and utilized by the RSA Committee for final awards discussion and selection.

Five broad candidate evaluation categories included: Scope & Innovation; Feasibility; Organization; Future Collaboration & Application; and, Overall panel/committee recommendations of individual applicants that also ruled out any applicant/evaluator bias/conflicts. Each category for all applicants was scored within a range of metrics to reach a summary score. Though difficult, the final evaluations and awards are the result of a broad collective analysis.

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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.

JOANNA M. NICOLAY MELANOMA FOUNDATION

The Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation 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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