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SPOTLIGHT

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March 2018

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Today is Rare Disease Day!



Today, February 28, is [Rare Disease Day](#), a global day of awareness for both the general public and policy makers about rare diseases and their impact on patients' lives.

Awareness is especially important in the melanoma community because each of the subtypes of melanoma face challenges in prevention, research and treatment due to a lack of understanding about the disease.

- **Cutaneous melanoma** makes up only 1% of all skin cancer cases, but it is by far the deadliest type. At a time when the incidence of other cancers is decreasing, [melanoma rates are on the rise](#) at epidemic rates.
- **Mucosal melanoma** makes up only 1% of melanoma diagnoses and occurs on mucosal surfaces of the body such as the mouth, sinuses, nasal passages, ano-rectal region and more. The MRF's mucosal melanoma community recently came together to [raise funds](#) and successfully produce a [mucosal melanoma educational video](#) to increase education and awareness about this particularly aggressive form of melanoma.
- **Ocular melanoma (OM)** represents approximately 3-5% of melanoma cases. The MRF's [CURE OM](#) initiative is dedicated to supporting the researchers, physicians, patients and survivors fighting the disease through events like the upcoming [Eyes on a Cure: Patient & Caregiver Symposium](#).
- **Pediatric melanoma** is diagnosed in approximately 500 children in the US each year. Because it is rare

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Upcoming Events

March 4-5 - [MRF Advocacy Summit & Hill Day](#)

March 24 - [Warriors Against Melanoma Trivia Night](#)

April 7 - [Patient Symposium: Los Angeles, CA](#)

April 14 - [Patient Symposium: Atlanta, GA](#)

April 19 - [Wings of Hope for Melanoma Gala - Denver, CO](#)

April 20-22 - [Eyes on a Cure: Patient & Caregiver Symposium](#)

April 28 - [Miles for Melanoma Boston](#)

May 5 - [Miles for Melanoma DC](#)

May 19 - [Miles for Melanoma Los Angeles](#)

June 2 - [Miles for Melanoma Chicago](#)

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and can look different that melanoma in adults, pediatric melanoma is often [overlooked or misdiagnosed](#). The MRF is committed to the pediatric melanoma community and proud to share stories of young warriors like [13-year-old Ross](#) and host these inspiring families at annual events like the [Advocacy Summit & Hill Day](#) and [Pediatric Melanoma Summit](#).

events@melanoma.org so we can include it on our calendar!

2018 Medical Student Research Grants Announced

The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) is pleased to announce the recipients of the [2018 Medical Student Research Awards](#). In furtherance of its commitment to advance melanoma science and support the most promising researchers at every stage of their careers, this funding represents the largest number (11) of Medical Student research grants awarded in a single year and provides physicians in training a career path for research in melanoma.



One of [multiple types of research funding](#) offered by the MRF, the Medical Student Research Award is a research grant supporting medical students who propose to conduct clinical or laboratory-based melanoma research with an established investigator. Eligible areas of research can include the prevention, biology or treatment of melanoma and may focus on the study of cutaneous, ocular, mucosal or pediatric melanoma.

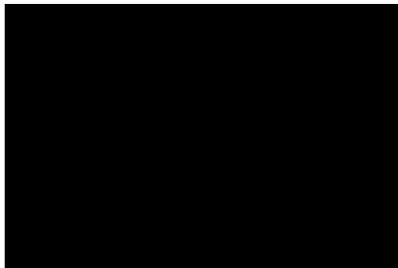
[See the Medical Student Research Award recipients in the MRF Research Center!](#)

DC Wings of Hope for Melanoma Gala

"I rejoice in seeing my patients not just surviving, but thriving."

-Michael Atkins, MD, 2018 Humanitarian Award recipient

On February 24, 2018, members of the melanoma community in our nation's capital came together for the 8th Annual DC Wings of Hope for Melanoma Gala. It was a truly inspiring evening to celebrate heroes in the melanoma community, recognize the tremendous progress that has been made in melanoma research and treatment and to look ahead to the work that remains.



The 2018 Humanitarian Award was presented to Michael B. Atkins, MD, deputy director of the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, in recognition of his unparalleled dedication to the prevention and treatment of melanoma and the compassion that has been a hallmark of his career in patient care. The Courage Award was presented to 14-year-old melanoma survivor Melanie Wightman for the bravery and high spirits she exemplified in her courageous fight.

Later in the evening, Hall of Fame baseball player and melanoma survivor Mike Schmidt joined award-winning CNN journalist Fredricka Whitfield on stage to share his powerful story and the importance of the MRF's mission to lead the way in the fight against melanoma.



With more than 300 supporters in attendance, the DC Wings of Hope for Melanoma Gala raised over \$100,000 and will have a lasting impact on future progress for the melanoma

community. Thank you to everyone who came together for a wonderful and important event!

[Want to get involved? Check out upcoming Wings of Hope for Melanoma galas in major cities across the US!](#)

Melanoma in the News

Below is a sample of recent melanoma and indoor tanning news.

["New Study Shows Repurposing Leukemia Drugs May Prevent Melanoma Metastasis,"](#) *University of Kentucky News*

["Pharmacist Finds Skin Cancer on Woman Getting Flu Shot,"](#) *KHOU 11*

["The Melanoma Research Foundation Supports Cancer Patients & Caregivers Throughout Treatment & Recovery,"](#) *DatingAdvice.com*

["A Group of Auburn Grads Developed a Rare Eye Cancer, and Scientists Want to Know Why,"](#) *Ledger-Enquirer*

["Researchers Find Noninvasive Way to Diagnose Deadliest Form of Skin Cancer,"](#) *WPLG Local 10*

["For Rare Melanoma, Checkpoint Inhibitors May Hold Substantial Promise,"](#) *National Cancer Institute*

["The Nanorobots That Could Choke Out a Tumor,"](#) *Healthcare Analytics News*

["Obesity Associated with Longer Survival for Men with Metastatic melanoma,"](#) *Medical Xpress*

["The 'Ugly Duckling' Rule in Melanoma Self-Exam,"](#) *Medscape*

["Should Children Be Able to Use Tanning Beds,"](#) *KSDK 5*

["Chemotherapy-Immunotherapy Combination Aims to Knock Out Melanoma with a One-Two Punch,"](#) *Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center*

["Array Melanoma Drugs Show Significant Survival Versus Roche Drug in Study,"](#) *Reuters*

["CBS 42 Investigates Rare Cancer Mystery in Auburn,"](#) *CBS 42*

["Maryland Gov. Hogan Announces He Has 'Non-Serious' Skin Cancer, Urges Use of Sunscreen,"](#) *WJLA*

["Bill Aims to Ban Use of Tanning Beds by Indiana Teens,"](#) *FOX 59*

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