Last year was an incredibly busy year for the melanoma community and for the MRF. Capturing all of the activity of a year like 2013 in a short article is impossible, but here are a few highlights:

**Research**

The biggest news in the research field is the progress being made to provide better treatments for patients. Two new drugs were approved by the FDA in 2013, and then just this January, those drugs were approved as a combination therapy – the first-ever approved combination in melanoma. The largest global meeting for cancer doctors, ASCO, was full of data about melanoma treatments and therapies. The most highly attended sessions were around a new class of drugs called anti-PD-1. Studies of two of these drugs showed response rates in excess of 40% - more than twice as high as other drugs boosting the immune system. One has received Breakthrough Therapy designation by the FDA. The other great news came from a study of a drug called a MEK inhibitor in patients with ocular melanoma. The positive results of this early study suggest that this kind of drug may be an effective therapy for this rare form of melanoma.

The MRF is active on multiple research fronts. The MRF was instrumental in having melanoma included in a major program from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) called The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA). The idea is to describe the DNA of many tumor samples and create a genetic "map" that can be used to improve prevention, early detection and treatment. In 2013, the MRF pushed further to have ocular melanoma (OM) included as a rare tumor type for this study, and CURE OM staff and researchers have been instrumental in organizing the effort to secure tumor samples. CURE OM also partnered with the NIH and the Society for Melanoma Research (SMR) to host a full-day workshop focused specifically on OM. The meeting had over 140 participants – the largest international scientific gathering focused on OM in the world!

2013 marked the addition of two more clinical trials to the one that was started in 2012 to total three clinical trials through the MRF’s Breakthrough Consortium (MRFBC). The focus of these trials is to test three different ways to delay resistance to BRAF inhibitors and prolong patient lives. Approximately 50% of melanomas have BRAF mutations so understanding development of resistance is important.

The MRF grant program had a record-breaking year as well, with research commitments more than 40% larger than any previous year. This additional support came at a good time, as requests for funding were at an all-time high, as illustrated by the 158 applications. Due to the generosity of many, many donors, the MRF was able to fund a number of exciting research projects, including several in the OM arena. Our commitment to OM research is now at $800,000 – an amazing contribution that has already stimulated the research community to focus in this area.

**Education**

The underlying philosophy of the MRF’s education program is that patients who are well informed and well supported live longer, better lives. 2013 was another example of finding creative ways to provide that support, including partnerships with continuing medical education providers, the SHADE Foundation, Cancer Support Communities, and Cancer Commons, just to name a few. Educational symposia were held in seven different cities across the country, including 65 sites for the MRF’s annual national conference and 15 virtual Web conferences. The MRF is dedicated to improving the diagnosis of melanoma, advancing patient care, and preventing the disease by educating the public through awareness campaigns about risk factors, including the dangers of tanning.
MELANOMA RESEARCH AWARDS

Awards (continued from page 1)

the U.S. and many of them were recorded and made available on the MRF’s website. One of those symposia was specific to ocular melanoma and held at MD Anderson in Houston, TX. In addition to our in-person events, the MRF hosted five educational webinars and a teleconference, all of which are available on our website for future playback for patients and their loved ones.

The most substantial effort of the year, though, was the complete re-design of the MRF website. Traffic to melanoma.org had grown so quickly over the last few years that the structure of the site simply could not handle the volume. The site was not optimized for mobile devices, which the way people reach the site, and it was not facilitated for people with vision impairment. Volunteers and staff worked countless hours to shape a new website and the results are outstanding. The new site has won multiple awards, and currently receives 160,000 unique visitors a month, 30% of whom live outside the United States. These numbers prove that we are making a difference in both the melanoma community as well as with increasing awareness among the general public.

The new website also incorporated an important new feature – an order form for all of the free print educational materials we offer. Users can now view all of our patient education and awareness items, and place their orders using our online order form. These materials are used at schools, health fairs, doctor’s offices and fundraisers throughout the country and are sure to have an impact on this terrible disease.

Advocacy

The MRF served as a vocal and strategic advocate for the melanoma community in several critical efforts. In 2011 the FDA heard testimony about the need to regulate tanning beds more stringently, and the MRF has continued to press the agency for action. In July 2013 a new set of draft guidelines were issued. The MRF and others led a campaign to generate thousands of letters supporting these tougher guidelines. Additionally, the MRF’s CURE OM initiative is working with key players in the pharmaceutical industry and others to expedite clinical trial advancement and treatment for OM patients.

The MRF helped communicate new sunscreen guidelines to the broader community, and joined a coalition to push for new and better sunscreen products. A number of states and some cities passed regulation of tanning bed use by minors, and MRF volunteers were active, vocal and visible in those efforts.

Hill Day has become an annual event for MRF volunteers, who are trained and then sent out to meet with people on Capitol Hill. A key message to lawmakers is the importance of funding melanoma research through the Department of Defense (DOD). Melanoma is one of a handful of cancers eligible for funding through a special program in the DOD, and in 2013 the pool of money available grew from $15 million to $25 million. Given that melanoma receives about 20% of the funding, this is a major contribution to the research effort.

These highlights only touch the surface of what was accomplished in 2013. Last year’s successes will be hard to match, but with support from passionate donors, volunteers, and advocates, we can continue to create a new reality for melanoma patients.

MRF EVENT UPDATE

Miles for Melanoma 5k Run/Walk at Universal Studios

Registration for the 3rd Annual Miles for Melanoma 5k Run/Walk at Universal Studios is now open! Together, the first and second Miles for Melanoma 5k Run/Walk at Universal Studios raised over half a million dollars for melanoma education, prevention and early detection. Now we hope to raise over HALF A MILLION DOLLARS just from this year’s event! Join us on May 4, 2014 in Los Angeles to make a difference in the fight against melanoma.

Each year, thousands of melanoma survivors, advocates, caregivers, celebrities and running enthusiasts attend this exciting event! Past celebrity attendees include: Rob Lowe, Jason Biggs, Sean Astin, Jason George, Vin Diesel, Molly Sims, Kellie Martin, Fred Savage, Soleil Moon Frye, Brecin Meyer, and more!

Be sure to visit the Miles for Melanoma 5k Run/Walk at Universal Studios event information page on melanoma.org or email MFMUniversal@melanoma.org.
The MRF’s patient education program is based on the conviction that patients who are well-informed and well-supported live longer and better lives.

MESSAGE FROM THE MRF Board Chair

Dear Friends,

These are exciting times in the melanoma community! In the past three years, four new drugs and the first-ever FDA approved combination therapy have become available to melanoma patients. Before 2011, the last drug approved was in 1998.

At the Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) we have had a very productive year in support of our mission to advance melanoma research, education and advocacy. We increased our research funding by 40%! In addition to our core basic science areas, we are expanding our efforts into translational and clinical research. We convened our Scientific Advisory Committee and Melanoma Research Foundation Breakthrough Consortium (MRFBC) and asked them to develop a list of unmet needs in melanoma research. We have now issued a special call for proposals designed to address those needs.

The MRFBC is running three trials of unique approaches to curing melanoma. The Consortium has become a clearinghouse for data and a place for senior researchers to share ideas and compare results. Without this visionary program, these trials and collaboration would not be possible.

Our organization, together with other members of the melanoma community, was able to help achieve an increase of $10 million research funding from the Department of Defense’s Peer-Review Cancer Program. Twelve different cancer groups will now share in $25 million for cancer research. Additionally, we’ll be on Capitol Hill in March for our third annual Legislative Hill Day.

The MRF continues to expand its educational programs and recently launched a new partnership with Clinical Care Options. The partnership enables us to co-host symposia for melanoma patients and caregivers, while also offering continued medical education for melanoma clinicians and providers. To learn more about our education programs, visit melanoma.org.

Fundraising is the key to our efforts and impact. I would like to thank all of the volunteers around the country for their dedication and hard work. Your efforts in creating walks, runs, dinners, galas and many other activities are greatly appreciated. We treat each dollar raised as a “precious resource” carefully allocated to the most critical needs. Your programs also serve the very important missions of education and advocacy. Every time someone attends one of our events and learns about melanoma, we have made an impact, and perhaps saved a life.

Our new website, launched in September 2013, has received rave reviews from both the professional media world and people new to our organization. To date the site has been recognized and received awards by four separate media organizations for the overall design, functionality and ease of use. A special thanks to our committee of staff members, led by Lauren Smith Dyer, and Board members, lead by Jeff Harris, who came together and developed such a fine site.

The MPIP community continues to serve a vital role of offering support and information exchange with others impacted by the disease.

We look forward to a very busy year in 2014. New volunteer, education and advocacy programs are under way, which you will hear about throughout the year. With the talents and efforts of our Executive Director, Tim Turnham and his team, as well as with the guidance of our dedicated Board of Directors, I know we will have an impactful year.

Your participation, support and efforts are needed and warmly welcomed. Thank you for your continued enthusiastic support and we look forward to working together in 2014.

Be well,

Steven Silverstein
Chair, Board of Directors
Melanoma Research Foundation

The MRF is thrilled to expand this program and is looking for volunteers to participate in a training in Los Angeles on May 17th-18th. This two-day training will provide you with the tools needed to be a good Buddy, while looking after yourself and maintaining healthy boundaries. Are you a good listener? Are you empathetic? Do you have good coping skills and effective strategies for managing stress? If you answered “yes” please join us for this training.

Contact Mary Antonucci, National Director of Volunteer Services, for more information and to register: volunteer@melanoma.org.

Want to Talk About It?

The MRF’s Peer-to-Peer Phone Buddy program trains volunteers to provide melanoma patients with non-professional emotional support and linkage to important resources. This program was designed to meet the unique needs and challenges faced by newly diagnosed individuals. Phone Buddies are a source of hope and encouragement to patients. They are a shoulder to lean on and a co-navigator as patients and families maneuver their way through the treatment landscape. The benefit of being matched with someone who has been there – and survived – is immeasurable.

The MRF is looking for volunteers to participate in a training in Los Angeles on May 17th-18th. This two-day training will provide you with the tools needed to be a good Buddy, while looking after yourself and maintaining healthy boundaries. Are you a good listener? Are you empathetic? Do you have good coping skills and effective strategies for managing stress? If you answered “yes” please join us for this training.

Contact Mary Antonucci, National Director of Volunteer Services, for more information and to register: volunteer@melanoma.org.
THE IMPACT OF MELANOMA

A Letter About Amy

We talk often about the impact melanoma has on patients and their families and friends. What is less recognized, however, is the impact this cancer has on the doctors and other members of the treatment team who care for these patients. One of those doctors asked if he could write about a patient who had been involved with the MRF. Here is that story:

A True Inspiration to Her Physician

I asked the MRF to allow me to write a note about Amy Willet’s recent death. I am an oncologist specializing in melanoma at Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center in Nashville, Tennessee. I know the MRF well and have always believed it has been a wonderful organization in many ways. However, we are writing this for a very different reason.

Amy Willet passed away surrounded by her wonderful family on February 22, 2014. She was only 44 years old and had battled with her cancer to the point of exhaustion. She had fought with all her energy against a tumor in her heart that prevented blood flow through the lungs.

We have been honored and privileged to be her physician and nurse. In the four short years since her diagnosis of melanoma in 2010, she had a profound impact on the people around her. We were lucky enough to take care of her for the past 2 years, though in truth I am not certain who took care of whom. Anyone who read Amy’s blog, NashVegasMom.wordpress.com, could not help but be inspired.

I was amazed by her perspective on her battle. She made the disease come to life – not in sorrow and pain but with a sense of humor that gave her an exceptional ability to simplify the journey melanoma put her through. Her religious faith and her faith in her family and for all around her were obvious in every installment of her blog.

She could be very tough on me, but even in her toughness I felt her love and her connection. She made me a better physician and even a better person. We will miss her presence in clinic, her calls, emails, and texts. We know her blog will live on with a remarkable ability to make those who read it both laugh and cry.

I also know she loved the MRF, its research efforts and support of so many patients. She especially enjoyed the annual Miles for Melanoma 5K supporting the MRF. We can all be better people if we think about how Amy lived her life and the message she lived in the past 4 years. We will miss her, but her spirit lives with us and the countless other people and patients she inspired.

Amy, thank you for letting us spend this precious time with you. Jeffrey A Sosman MD Professor of Medicine Director, Melanoma Program Vanderbilt Debbie Wallace NP Melanoma Program Vanderbilt

MRF BOARD OF DIRECTORS PROFILE

Jeffrey D. Harris

Jeff Harris has served on the MRF’s Board of Directors since January 2012 and was elected Vice Chair of the Board in 2014. Since becoming involved with the MRF, Jeff has found great inspiration by speaking with and meeting people who have been impacted by this disease but still maintain a healthy and positive approach to life. Jeff’s work with the MRF is motivated by the strength of those in the melanoma community and is dedicated to being part of the mitigation and ultimately eradication of this disease. Before founding his own consulting practice, Harris Consulting Services, LLC in 2010, Jeff served as a Principal with KPMG LLP in KPMG’s Silicon Valley Office, where he was responsible for building multiple key client relationships and directing associated projects for a wide range of client needs. Jeff also developed new product offerings as part of KPMG’s global strategic growth. Prior to moving to the US, Jeff worked with KPMG in Canada where he worked on a variety of strategic initiatives for both public and private sector clients. Jeff has spent his career working with many of the world’s leading organizations helping them navigate through large-scale transformation efforts. This includes a combination of change management, program/project management, organizational strategy and performance measurement.

Jeff currently serves as a Board Member for the University of Victoria Faculty of Business and as President of the University of Victoria Alumni Association (California Chapter). He is also a past instructor in the Business Faculty at the University of Victoria where he taught Organizational Transformation and Change Management. In his free time, he enjoys playing competitive sports including ice hockey and golf. In recent years, Jeff has become increasingly aware of protecting his skin while out in the sun, which, according to Jeff, means he spends most of his time on the golf course in the woods.

MRF FUNDRAISING UPDATE

A Million Miles in May

Join the MRF for a FUN and impactful challenge. The MRF team challenges you and your friends to make a difference in the fight against melanoma by walking, running or biking your way to ONE MILLION MILES. You can also swim, jump, ski, kayak or do any other activity to raise awareness about this deadly disease.

Collectively, the MRF staff, Board of Directors, supporters, advocates, donors and partners will go one million miles in the month of May. Visit events.melanoma.org/2014MillionMiles to sign up and join the MRF!

What you need to know:
• You can take on any activity of your choosing.

• We recommend you use a pedometer or smart phone app like Map My Run to keep track.

• You can log your miles, or steps, or other progress – it’s the honor system – on your home page.

• You can also make this a fundraiser to make a bigger difference.

At the end of the program we’ll add up everyone’s miles to see if we can reach our goal.

An ambitious challenge like this can be hard, but fighting melanoma is even harder. You can make a difference by creating awareness and raising funds for research.
MRF EDUCATION UPDATE

MRF partners with Clinical Care Options and the Annenberg Center for Health Sciences

In January and February, the MRF partnered with Clinical Care Options and the Annenberg Center for Health Sciences on a three-city pilot project aimed at the education of melanoma patients, caregivers and clinicians. Topics included managing a melanoma diagnosis, side effects of treatments and the latest information on melanoma immunotherapies, targeted therapies and clinical trials. This innovative program provided clinicians with continued medical education credits and patients/caregivers with diagnosis, treatment and support information and resources. The afternoon session combined the groups and allowed for two hours of interactive panel discussions on the latest developments in melanoma clinical trials and communication challenges and barriers to optimal care. Approximately 100 clinicians and 45 patients/caregivers attended the three sessions that were held in Miami, San Francisco and New York City.

The MRF thanks the program faculty for being a part of our educational symposia series: Keith Flaherty, M.D., Jeffrey Weber, M.D., Ph.D., Rene Gonzalez, MD and Antoni Ribas, M.D. A special thanks also goes to the MRF’s nurse educator for the series, Katherine Rosenthal, RN, BSN, OCN, CCRP.

Audio recordings and the slide show presentations are now available on the MRF’s website if you would like to learn more about the topics discussed. For more information, please contact Shelby Moneer, the MRF’s Education Program Manager, at education@melanoma.org.

MRF FUNDRAISING UPDATE

The Eyes Have It: Ocular Melanoma

Last year, Connie Robillard, MA, LCMHC and ocular melanoma survivor, decided that she was going to write a book that detailed individual journeys with ocular melanoma in hopes of raising funds, awareness and educating others about this rare disease. After receiving the stories, she decided to leave the stories as they were, told by those who traveled those paths on their own feet.

“As a therapist I had written prior books about child abuse/domestic violence. I came to understand that being diagnosed, treated and then living with uncertainty also causes emotional trauma. Many of the authors who shared their stories wrote to me and told me how helpful it was for them to tell their stories, share the book with their families and doctors. Others wrote to tell me how helpful it was to read what patients had to say about their cancer journey.’

Connie’s book is titled, The Eyes Have It: Ocular Melanoma, and is available on Amazon.com. She is sharing the book proceeds with the MRF’s CURE OM to help advance the fight against this rare cancer. For more information, please contact cureom@melanoma.org.

Please visit www.melanoma.org to learn more about the MRF’s education, research and advocacy efforts. The MRF is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The MRF also welcomes gifts through workplace giving campaigns, including the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) and employee matching gifts. Contact your HR department for details on designating your contribution. CFC #35748

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Make a difference in the fight against melanoma. Please donate to the MRF.
MRF RESEARCH UPDATE

The MRF Works with Congress to Secure $10 Million Increase in Department of Defense Research Program

In 2009, the Department of Defense began funding melanoma and nine other cancer areas through the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP). The program, patterned after the larger and better known Breast Cancer Research Program, challenges the scientific community to accelerate high impact research into treatments for rare cancers.

Since the program’s inception, the Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) has had representation on the panel of advocates, researchers and experts from the DOD, Veterans Affairs and the National Institutes of Health who design Program Announcements to solicit grant applications. This committee also selects an external panel of scientific experts to review the scientific merits of these grant applications.

In Fiscal 2009, the first year of the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program, $4 million of a total of $15 million was targeted for melanoma research. In subsequent years, while the total for the PRCRP has been reasonably stable at $15 million, melanoma’s share has varied between $1.5 and $3 million. Through 2013, melanoma received a total of $10 million.

For Fiscal 2014, the melanoma community made a concerted push for increased DOD funding, arguing that having hundreds of thousands of troops deployed in the Middle East, where sun exposure is high, raises serious concerns that the soldiers of today may suffer from melanoma in the near future. The MRF worked with some of its longtime champions in this House of Representatives on this issue, Carolyn Maloney (D-NY); Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Charlie Dent (R-PA) led the push for $10 million in targeted funding for melanoma research in the Fiscal 2014 Defense Appropriations Bill. Additionally, Representatives Chaka Fattah (D-PA); Charles Rangel (D-NY); Frederica Wilson (D-FL); Denny Heck (D-WA) and Adam Schiff (D-CA) joined in writing the House Appropriations Committee in support of this increased funding.

The MRF also joined with the Melanoma Research Alliance to mount a broader lobbying campaign on Capitol Hill, focused on motivating the Senate to advance the cause of increased DOD funding for melanoma research. Meetings with Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV); Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Chair and Senate Majority Whip Richard Durbin (D-IL); Defense Appropriations Ranking Member Thad Cochran (R-MS); full Appropriations Ranking member Richard Shelby (R-AL) and Defense Subcommittee members Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Jack Reed (D-RI) yielded results. While the full $10 million specifically for melanoma research wasn't received, last year's level of $15 million for the overall PRCRP program in the House was preserved and melanoma along with seven other cancers could compete for funding.

And, for the first time ever, the Senate’s version of the 2014 Defense Appropriations Bill upped the House’s recommended level of $15 million for the PRCRP by an additional $10 million.

Once negotiations between the House and Senate on the final version of the Fiscal 2014 Defense Appropriations were completed, the final 2014 figure for the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program was $25 million, and melanoma along with 11 other cancer research topics are eligible to compete for program funding.

This tremendous win is a direct result of the efforts of the entire melanoma community. None of this could be possible without the help of dedicated advocates. The Defense Department will likely issue a request for research proposals under the 2014 PRCRP this spring, and it’s now up to the scientific community to submit the most innovative research proposals to ensure that melanoma gets its share of the $25 million available under the PRCRP.

MRF FUNDRAISING UPDATE

MRF’s Visionaries Circle

It costs millions of dollars to fund melanoma research, from preclinical work to determine the best possible approaches, to clinical trials utilizing innovative treatments. Melanoma competes with many other potentially fatal diseases for federal research dollars, making private support absolutely necessary to accelerate the pace of research and to achieve durable results in treating this aggressive cancer.

With melanoma diagnoses increasing at such a rapid rate, support from our generous donors is more important than ever. Recently the MRF launched a new and exciting giving opportunity for our community of supporters called the MRF’s Visionaries Circle. The Visionaries Circle is a giving society of donors who share the vision of finding a cure or treatment for melanoma. Members of the Visionaries Circle provide major financial support of the MRF’s cutting edge research to prevent, treat and cure melanoma as well as activities which elevate the impact of our organization in the fight against melanoma.

The MRF’s Executive Director, Tim Turnham, says “Visionaries Circle members envision a world where the diagnosis of melanoma no longer means a possible loss of life but instead a manageable and treatable condition. As these donors are providing major support to the research that we are funding through our research grants program and the Melanoma Research Breakthrough Consortium (MRFBC), they are also demonstrating their support of the sacrifices and challenges that face this extraordinary community of scientists and physicians.”

Visionaries Circle members provide an investment level donation of $25,000 or more annually. Members receive special invitations to scientific meetings and receptions to informally interact with the top doctors and researchers in the field, exclusive invitations to attend some of the MRF’s signature events such as Miles for Melanoma at Universal 5k Walk/Run, Kevin Nealon Celebrity Golf Classic, and Wings of Hope Gala as well as receive recognition at these events.

The MRF is extremely grateful to this special group of donors as listed below. If you are interested in joining as a Charter Member, please contact Donna Englander, National Director of Stewardship at 1 (800) 673-1290 or denglander@melanoma.org.

Anonymous
William and Dana Boden
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William H. Canon Family Foundation

‡deceased
Dr. Jeffrey Weber of Moffitt Cancer Center shares information on clinical trials with clinicians and patients during the MRF’s educational symposium in Miami. Panelists on the left include: T.J. Sharpe (melanoma patient and blogger), Katherine Rosenthal, RN, BSN, OCN, CCRP and Dr. Rene Gonzalez from UC-Denver Comprehensive Cancer Center.

CURE OM’s Patient Steering Committee met in Washington, D.C. to discuss the MRF’s ocular melanoma education and support programs. Pictured left to right: MRF Executive Director Tim Turnham, CURE OM Project Coordinator Molly Stoffa, Esther Damaser, CURE OM Director Sara Selig, Rob Cheek and Mark Weinzierl. Not pictured: Anne Marie Montijo.

Kim and Joe Silva, owners of pottery painting studio Pea Poddery, hosted a fundraiser in honor of Kim’s first husband Kevin Brue, who lost his battle with melanoma at 39 years old. The event raised over $1,000 for the Melanoma Research Foundation Breakthrough Consortium (MRFBC)!

The William H. Canon Foundation hosted a gala in Detroit, MI to raise money to help the MRF advance melanoma research. Proceeds from the event will help fund a research grant in honor of William Canon. Pictured: Patti Canon, Casey Canon, Shelby Canon, Chloe Canon, Andrea Canon Dawson and the MRF’s Communication Manager Lauren Smith Dyer.

Wade Barrett and his sister Meredith Emerson, who raised over $12,000 as part of the MRF’s Miles for Melanoma Individuals program to help advance melanoma research. Wade and Meredith’s father is currently fighting melanoma.

The MRF’s Education Program Manager Shelby Moneer, melanoma patient and Patient #1 blogger T.J. Sharpe and melanoma patient Melissa Moore posed for a photo during the MRF-CCO education symposium in Miami, FL.

Melanoma patient and blogger T.J. Sharpe shares his personal experience with melanoma with others impacted by the disease at the MRF-CCO education symposium in Miami, FL.
The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) is working to transform melanoma from one of the deadliest cancers to one of the most treatable. Learn how.

IN THIS ISSUE

• 2013 Annual Report
• Featured Board Member
• The MRF’s Visionary Circle
• Patient Support Programs
• Upcoming Educational & Fundraising Events

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Our Mission Statement

The MRF is the largest independent organization devoted to melanoma.

The MRF is the largest independent organization devoted to melanoma. The MRF is the largest independent organization devoted to melanoma. To educate patients and physicians about the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of melanoma. To act as an advocate for the melanoma community to raise awareness of this disease and the need for a cure. To support medical research for finding effective treatments and eventually a cure for melanoma.