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Media Contact:
Lauren Smith Dyer
(202) 742-5918
M: (202) 870-8827
LSmithDyer@melanoma.org

World Champion Athlete Joins Fight Against Melanoma
Leanda Cave Partners with the Melanoma Research Foundation to Raise Awareness of the Deadliest Form of Skin Cancer

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Four-time Triathlon World Champion and internationally-renowned endurance athlete Leanda Cave is joining forces with the Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF), to raise awareness of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. After her own skin cancer diagnosis in 2012, Leanda dedicated herself to educating others about melanoma prevention, early detection and treatment.

To kick off the partnership, Leanda and the MRF will co-host the first annual Miles for Melanoma 5k run/walk in Miami, Florida on November 1 at Virginia Key Beach Park. The event will bring together athletes, members of the South Florida community, melanoma survivors, caregivers and their loved ones, local media and more. Local media personality and melanoma survivor Dave Aizer from WSFL-TV will emcee the event.

“I know first-hand that long hours spent training in the sun increases the risk of being diagnosed with skin cancer, the most deadly form being melanoma,” said Leanda Cave. "I want people to know that this cancer exists, that there are steps they can take to prevent it and that catching it in its early stages is so important. The Miles for Melanoma Miami race on November 1st will be a fun way to raise awareness and funding for melanoma research, education and advocacy efforts!"

Research shows that nearly 90% of melanomas are thought to be caused by exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light, both the sun and indoor tanning beds. While other cancer diagnoses are decreasing, the rates of melanoma are going up. It is the leading cause of cancer death in women in their late 20s, but it can strike men and women of all ages, all races and skin types. Many people are not aware that melanoma isn’t “just skin cancer” – it can develop anywhere – eyes (ocular melanoma), mouth (mucosal melanoma), scalp, nails, feet, etc.

“The MRF is thrilled to partner with Leanda to combat the rising number of melanoma diagnoses,” said Tim Turnham, Executive Director of the MRF. “We admire and are grateful for Leanda’s steadfast commitment to educating her fellow athletes and fans about the connection between melanoma and UV overexposure, and the importance of reducing their risk to the best of their ability.”
“The Miami run/walk on November 1st will be a great way to kick off my partnership with the MRF,” continued Leanda. “Miami is near and dear to me personally, so I’m eager to gather as many members of the Miami community as possible so we can make a big dent in this cancer.”

Registration for the Miles for Melanoma Miami 5k run/walk is now open. A local dermatology group will be on site during the event to offer attendees free skin screenings. All proceeds from the event go to accelerating the MRF’s mission of advancing research, education and advocacy for melanoma.

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About Melanoma
Melanoma is one of the fastest growing cancers in the United States and can strike men and women of all ages, races and skin types. With a one in 50 lifetime risk of developing melanoma, nearly 74,000 Americans are expected to be diagnosed with Stage I-IV melanoma and another 63,000 will be diagnosed with melanoma in situ – totaling nearly 137,000 total diagnoses. Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults 25- to 29-years-old and the second most common cancer in adolescents and young adults 15- to 29-years-old.

The majority of melanomas occur on the skin; in fact, melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer. Melanoma can also occur in the eye (ocular, or uveal melanoma), in mucous membranes (mucosal melanoma), or even beneath fingernails or toenails.

About the Melanoma Research Foundation
The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) is the largest independent organization devoted to melanoma. Committed to the support of medical research in finding effective treatments and eventually a cure for melanoma, the MRF also educates patients and physicians about prevention, diagnosis and the treatment of melanoma. The MRF is an active advocate for the melanoma community, helping to raise awareness of this disease and the need for a cure. The MRF’s website is the premier source for melanoma information seekers. More information is available at www.melanoma.org. Find the MRF on Facebook and Twitter.