



Hope Funds for Cancer Research

Press Release

Hope Funds for Cancer Research Holds Panel Discussion on Translational Research

Media Contact

Kelly Willette

401-847-3286

media@hope-funds.org

NEWPORT, RI -- March 5, 2010 -- The Hope Funds for Cancer Research, an organization dedicated to advancing innovative research for difficult-to-treat cancers, held the second in a series of panel discussions on translational cancer research on March 4th in Boston, MA.

Five accomplished panelists addressed "Translational Cancer Research: Opportunities and Challenges; Revisiting Private Funding's Role in Advancing Compounds through Clinical Studies," to a distinguished and engaged audience at the Boston Athenaeum.

Participating on the panel were: Barry Greene, Chief Operating Officer of the RNAi biotechnology company, Alnylam; Antonio J. Grillo-Lopez, M.D., retired Chief Medical Officer of IDEC Pharmaceuticals and lead developer of Rituxan and Zevalin; William C. Hahn, M.D., Ph.D., Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School; Amy Dockser Marcus, a Boston-based reporter for the Wall Street Journal reporting on rarer cancers; and John K. Naughton, The Ford Foundation's project coordinator for GrantCraft. The moderator was Hope Funds Trustee Charles V. Baltic III.

"This is exciting time in the field of cancer drug development," said Hope Funds Trustee Leah Rush Cann as the evening began. "It is both a new frontier in differentiated cancer treatment and a brave new world of clinical funding options."

The panelists addressed the need for bringing better cancer therapies from the laboratory to the patient more speedily. Citing hurdles that include a shortage of funding, regulatory issues and the need for more cooperation between institutions and industry, the experts identified several ways of expediting the process.

The panelists agreed that the foundation of drug development is basic research, and this is the greatest time in history for innovative research. The panel expressed strong sentiment that patients need to be an integral part of the process, both as advocates and as partners in drug development. The panelists discussed the need for funding along the continuum of translational research, from basic science grants to strategic investment by industry and institutional investors.

An exciting option discussed was the use of program-related investing. This financing vehicle is available from the non-profit sector and allows charities to make investments ranging from basic science grants in the non-profit's mission area, to funding later-stage clinical trials in the mission area, even in public companies. It was stated that while this financing option is about 30 years and relatively small, it is starting to become more recognized, and doubled in size last year.

The Panel Discussion was followed by a Reception and Poster Session with three of the Hope Funds Postdoctoral Fellows: Pedro Medina, Ph.D., from Yale University; Nathan Robison, M.D., from Harvard University; and Xiaoxing Wang, Ph.D., from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. The evening raised funds for postdoctoral fellowships in cancer research.

Additional details on this event will be posted on the Hope Funds website by Monday, March 8th.

About the Hope Funds for Cancer Research

The Hope Funds for Cancer Research was formed in 2006 by a group of concerned individuals who have experience in oncology, intellectual property law, investment banking, philanthropy, sociology, and the arts to establish a funding vehicle that would take a rational scientific, medical, and investment approach to granting money to the most interesting and promising research efforts to address the most difficult-to-treat cancers, including pancreatic, lung, liver, sarcomas, esophageal, brain, gastric, and ovarian cancers. These cancers are insidiously aggressive illnesses that kill most of their victims within months, even with aggressive chemotherapy. The Trustees of the Hope Funds for Cancer Research believe that funding research that could lead to breakthroughs in these areas and increase life expectancy in these types of cancers is at the core of the organization's mission. The Hope Funds for Cancer Research is a 509 (a)(1) charity under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service's code. For additional information about the organization, please visit <http://www.hope-funds.org> or call at 401-847-3286.

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