



Hope Funds for Cancer Research

Press Release

Announces Fellow's Appointment at the Spanish National Cancer Research Center in Madrid

For Immediate Release
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Newport, RI - March 16, 2015 - After working for five years at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York with one of the world leaders in metastasis research, Joan Massagué, Manuel Valiente has received an appointment in Madrid. Dr. Valiente will be starting a new research group at the prestigious Spanish National Cancer Research Centre (CNIO).

"This is an extraordinary achievement in today's research environment; Dr. Valiente will lead the first laboratory in Spain devoted exclusively to brain metastasis research," stated Hope Funds Trustee, Leah Rush Cann.

Brain metastasis are known to develop in approximately 30% of cancer patients and are the cause of death in these patients. Dr. Valiente's laboratory will continue to investigate the molecular mechanisms of brain metastasis and how cancer cells interact with the colonised cerebral tissue will open avenues to novel therapeutic opportunities.

About Manuel Valiente, Ph.D.

Manuel Valiente Cortes, Ph.D. joined the laboratory of Joan Massague, Ph.D. at Sloan-Kettering Institute in 2010, as a postdoctoral Fellow, after having received his Ph.D. in neuroscience from Instituto de Neurociencias in Spain. Manuel was a Hope Funds for Cancer Research Fellow from 2010 - 2013. His Fellowship focused on brain metastasis, which affect between 10 to 30% of patients diagnosed with solid tumors. Development of therapeutic approaches have improved the control of extracranial systemic disease; however, the specific nature of the central nervous system, with a very restricted permeability of brain capillaries, is leading to a concurrent increase in the rate of patients affected by brain metastasis. The occurrence of a brain metastasis is accompanied with a dismal prognosis and poor survival rates.

Using experimental mouse models, Drs. Valiente and Massague discovered that a number of genes are specifically expressed on human cancer cell lines from breast and lung adenocarcinomas that preferentially metastasize in the brain. They have evaluated which of these genes are playing fundamental roles in the establishment of brain metastasis. Identification of these genes and the processes in which they are involved will help these researchers directly target the ability of cancer cells to invade the brain from the initial events of the metastatic disease. This will create new opportunities to improve the design of therapeutic drugs that can treat metastatic brain disease. The results of Dr. Valiente's work was published in the journal *Cell* in February 2014, [Click here to view paper.](#)

Dr. Valiente currently serves on the Hope Funds for Cancer Research's Council of Advisors.

About CNIO

The Spanish National Cancer Research Centre (CNIO) was founded in 1998 by the Carlos III Institute of Health, and belongs since the spring of 2008 to the Ministry of Science and Innovation. The CNIO is one of the few European Cancer Centers to allocate resources to both basic and applied research in an integrated fashion, thus supporting the interaction of basic research programs with those of molecular diagnostics, drug discovery and a newly created Clinical Program, that now connects the Centre with the more prestigious cancer clinical centers in Madrid and along Spain. The Center currently hosts 27 Research Groups, 15 Technology Units and nine Experimental Therapies Sections, with a total of 500 researchers and technicians; providing infrastructure capable of supporting a wide range of research.

About 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 our 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 401-847-3286.

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