



curemeso.org[®]

annual report 2021



Mesothelioma Applied[®]
Research Foundation
research - education - support - advocacy

The Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation is the only 501(c)(3) nonprofit charity organization dedicated to ending mesothelioma, and the suffering this cancer causes, through:

- **funding research to improve treatment options;**
- **providing treatment support and education for patients and their families;**
- **advocating for federal funding of research.**

Executive Director (until 8/29/2021)
Mary Hesdorffer, Nurse Practitioner

Executive Director (after 8/30/2021)
Julie Powers
mary@curemeso.org
(703) 879-3820

Board of Directors

Volunteer members of the board of directors of the Meso Foundation are responsible for the organization's long-term financial stability and integrity and for governing the Foundation and setting its strategic direction and broad policy directives.

Marjorie G. Zauderer, MD, *Chair*
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Aaron S. Mansfield, MD
Mayo Clinic

James Stevenson, MD
Cleveland Clinic

Jessica Blackford-Cleeton
Springfield, IL

Shani Nembhard, Esq.
Kingston, Jamaica

Antoinette Wozniak, MD
UPMC

Cheryl Bruner, Esq.
Louisville, KY

Sanjay Popat, MD, PhD
The Royal Marsden

William N. Ziegler ("Bill")
Rochester Hills, MI

Keith Cengel, MD, PhD
University of Pennsylvania

R. Taylor Ripley, MD
Baylor College of Medicine

In Memoriam
Congressman Bruce F. Vento

Patrick Forde, MD
Johns Hopkins University School of
Medicine

Buerkley Rose, MSN, RN
The University of Chicago

Sandy Robb
Blue Springs, MO

Jason Foster, MD
University of Nebraska

Boris Sepesi, MD
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Randy Krocka
Sheet Metal Occupational Health Institute

Daniel Serman, MD
NYU Lagone Health



Science Advisory Board

Our science advisory board is comprised of clinicians and researchers who work within the mesothelioma field around the world. Members of the SAB are volunteers. They are expected to review and score the applications submitted for our research grants. They are also called upon for expert opinions and advice on scientific matters on behalf of the Meso Foundation.

Tobias Peikert, MD, *Chair*
Mayo Clinic

Assunta De Rienzo, MD
Brigham and Women's Hospital

Joseph Friedberg, MD
University of Maryland

Travis Grotz, MD
Mayo Clinic

Chuong Hoang, MD
National Institutes of Health

Fabian Johnston, MD
Johns Hopkins

Richard Lake, PhD
University of Western Australia

Edward K. Moon, MD
University of Pennsylvania

Steve Mutsears, PhD
University of Western Australia

Arnaud Scherpereel, MD, PhD
Thoracique Hospital Calmette

Peter Szlosarek, MD
St. Bartholomew's Hospital

Emanuela Taioli, MD PhD
Mount Sinai

Walter Weder, MD
University Hospital Zurich

The following financial information is compiled from the Meso Foundation's 2021 audited financial statements.

| Public Support and Other Income | 2021 | 2020 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| General Contributions | \$ 2,812,416 | \$ 5,528,574 |
| Investment Income | \$ 348,256 | \$ 99,527 |
| Total | \$ 3,160,672 | Total \$ 5,628,101 |

| Expenses | 2021 | 2020 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Research | 36% \$ 430,528 | 26% \$ 272,434 |
| Education, Support, Awareness | 42% \$ 504,074 | 46% \$ 487,718 |
| Advocacy | 3% \$ 40,527 | 5% \$ 50,929 |
| Fundraising | 9% \$ 114,565 | 13% \$ 137,153 |
| Management | 10% \$ 117,225 | 11% \$ 115,147 |
| Total | \$ 1,206,919 | Total \$ 1,063,381 |

Total Assets at end of year 2021 \$ 9,384,474.00

Patient Support Services

In 2021, our patient support services included personalized one-on-one consultations to:

- Identify a mesothelioma specialist if needed
- Review treatment options to choose the best one tailored to each patient's unique case
- Advise patients regarding symptom-management and side-effects
- Understand the basics of the disease and the complex medical terms
- Connect with other mesothelioma patients
- Obtain financial assistance

Support Groups

Over 2020 and 2021, participation in our support groups skyrocketed to 972 patients served.

Education

Although we still were not able to hold an educational conference for our patients, we continued developing and distributing information regarding treatment options, side-effect management, clinical trials, and survivorship issues. We published over 30 articles on above-mentioned topics; and we produced nearly 20 educational videos featuring experts in the field of mesothelioma addressing frequently asked questions and discussing clinical trial protocols, results, new indications, side-effects of treatment, quality of life issues, etc.

Meet the Mesothelioma Experts

Over 490 viewers watched the Foundation for three Meet the Mesothelioma Experts live broadcast that covered immunotherapy for mesothelioma in light of the brand new indication of the combination of two immunotherapeutic agents: ipilimumab plus nivolumab.

Travel Grants

Mesothelioma treatment requires the expertise of a specialist who has extensive mesothelioma experience. Such experts are available at a limited number of centers, access to which often requires the patient to travel. The Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation believes that every patient should have the chance to be seen by an appropriate mesothelioma expert, regardless of their ability to pay for travel. That is the reason why our Travel Grant Program was created.

Immediately preceding the pandemic, our travel grant program was growing significantly, year over year. Treatment centers and clinical trials are now back to operating normally, but travel has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels among mesothelioma patients. However, we did see a significant influx in travel grant applications in the spring, right after vaccinations became approved. For reference, the first three months of the year saw roughly \$5,800 in travel grants awarded. In the following three months that amount grew precipitously to over \$13,000. In 2021, we awarded a total of \$49,918 in travel grants as traveling opened back up along with clinical trials.



In 2021, the Meso Foundation funded three grants, each at \$100,000, bringing the total research funded by the organization to \$10.8 million. These awards conclude the 2020 grant cycle which began in the summer of 2020 with a call for letters of interest that attracted 49 applicants of which 10 were invited to submit a full application.

“The uncertainty of the covid era continues, but through it we remain focused on the needs of our community and our mission,” explained Mary Hesdorffer, executive director of the Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation during the first part of the year.

The science advisory board of the Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation, chaired by Tobias Peikert, MD of the Mayo Clinic, is responsible for reviewing and ranking all applications, then recommending the best ones to the board of directors for funding. This year's process also included a review by community members.

The three grants awarded through this most recent grant cycle include a study into the creation of a mechanism to keep the immune system active against peritoneal mesothelioma cells; a study into engineered natural killer cell therapy; and a study into understanding and separating immunotherapy's useful features from the side-effect inducing ones.

“My deepest gratitude goes out to our donors whose support is essential to our mission. Without them none of this work would be possible,” added Ms. Hesdorffer.

The Grants

The Anderson Family Grant

Peritoneal Mesothelioma Organoids for Generation of Adaptive Immunity

Konstantinos Votanopoulos, MD, PhD, FACS, Wake Forest University Health Sciences

Grant in memory of Sandy Robb

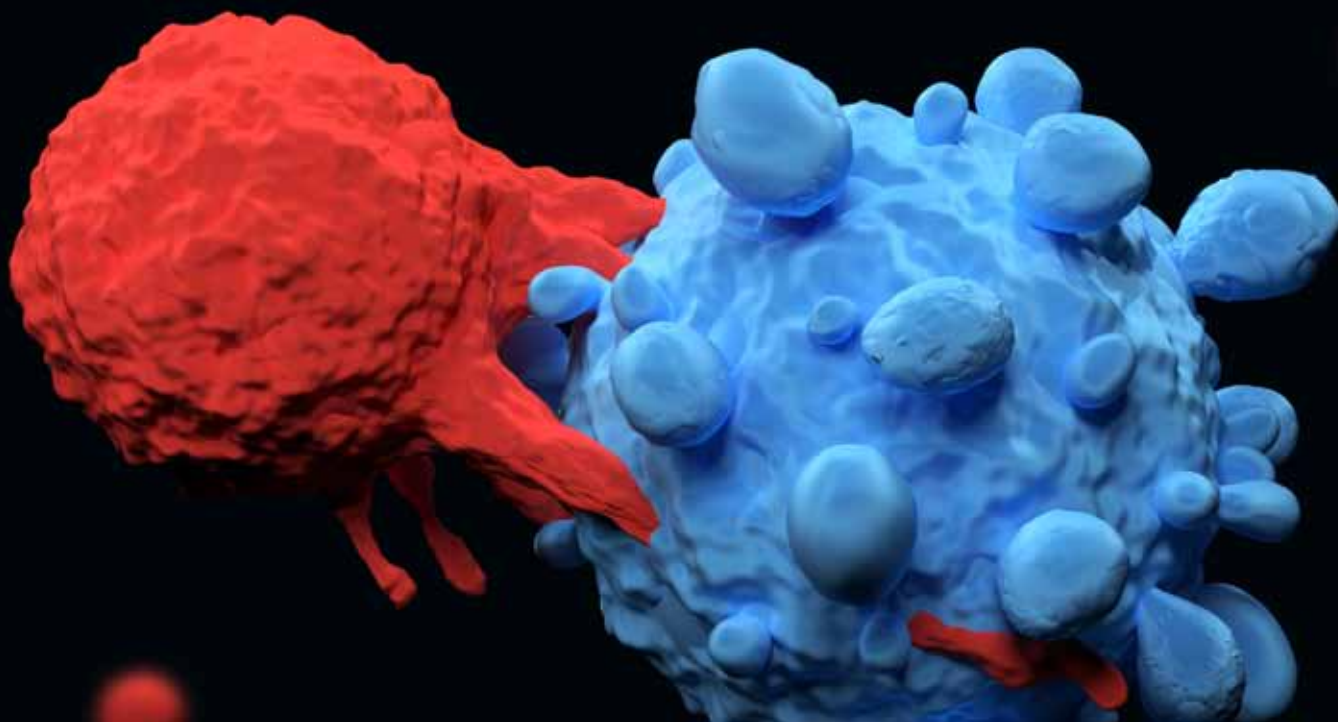
Mesothelin-targeted CAR-NK cell therapy for malignant mesothelioma

Qun Jiang, PhD, National Cancer Institute

Grant in honor of Rich and Lora Mosca

Immune checkpoint induced tumor and autoimmunity: Can we separate them?

Jonathan Chee, PhD, University of Western Australia





Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP), through the Department of Defense (DoD)

The CDMRP's Peer-Reviewed Cancer Research Program, is a Department of Defense medical research funding program that houses merit-based funding for several cancers, including mesothelioma. Inclusion of mesothelioma in this funding was made possible by the Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation's advocacy in 2008.

In 2021, we learned that mesothelioma was about to be inexplicably removed from this funding. In response, the Foundation activated efforts to relist the disease with the program and was successful in doing so.

The appropriation for this program was \$115,000,000 in 2021 to be allocated toward 20 topic areas, including mesothelioma. To date, mesothelioma investigators have received over \$20 million in awards to advance their research.