Melanoma Research Alliance

For Immediate Release

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Melanoma Research Alliance Announces 13 Dermatology Fellowship Awards

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 8, 2020 – The Melanoma Research Alliance, the largest non-profit funder of melanoma research, has named 13 promising clinicians/researchers-in-training as 2020 MRA Dermatology Fellows.

The Fellows, all trainees – either as dermatologists or researchers focused on dermatology – will each receive a $35,000 grant to support an independent research or demonstration project focused on advancing melanoma prevention or early detection. Fellows' research interests are broad, including research aimed at telemedicine, machine learning, and development of a prevention intervention for young adults.

"This program is unique because it helps attract the best and brightest young scientists and clinicians to focus their efforts on advancing melanoma prevention and early detection," said MRA Board member and melanoma survivor Denise Kellen. "By investing in these rising stars, we are investing in the next generation of dermatologists and dermatology-focused researchers who will serve on the front lines against this disease."

The MRA Dermatology Fellowship program, now in its second year, is part of a broader effort by MRA to further engage dermatologists in research to advance melanoma prevention and early detection. This is important because as recent treatment advances have helped people with melanoma live longer, they have not blunted the ever-increasing number of new melanomas diagnosed each year. This year it's estimated that more than 100,000 people will be diagnosed with melanoma.

Founding support for this program was generously provided by Denise and Michael Kellen. In addition to the Kellen's continued support, Caterina Heil, Jessica and Natan Bibliowicz and the Polka Dot Mama Melanoma Foundation also contributed to the 2020 cohort.

"We are incredibly grateful for our many donors who are integral in our work," says MRA President & CEO Michael Kaplan. "Denise and Michael Kellen's support truly made this program possible and we are thrilled to see Caterina Heil, Jessica and Natan Bibliowicz and the Polka Dot Mama Melanoma Foundation join them in supporting year two of this important initiative."

2020 MRA Dermatology Fellowship Awardees

Shirin Bajaj, MD
Polka Dot Mama Melanoma Foundation – MRA
Dermatology Fellows Award
New York University School of Medicine
*Development of an Enhanced Telemedicine-Based
Melanoma Diagnostic Platform*

Juliana Berk-Krauss, MD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
SUNY Downstate Medical Center

*Early Detection and Novel Therapies Impact
Melanoma Incidence and Mortality*

Carter Haag, M.D.
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
Oregon Health & Science University
*Multimedia Learning for Melanoma Prevention and
Early Detection Education*

Jonathan Kentley, MBBS

MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
Diagnosis of Melanoma Using Machine Learning and Confocal Microscopy

Sixue Liu, PhD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
The University of California, Los Angeles
Mechanisms and Treatments of Metastatic Dissemination by Stage III Melanoma

Enrica Quattrocchi, MD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
Mayo Clinic
Melanoma Staging by Artificial Intelligence

Aditi Sahu, PhD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
Towards a Multimodal Imaging Approach for In Vivo Melanoma Diagnosis

Mariana Silva, PhD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
Brigham and Women's Hospital
A Novel Integrin-Dependent Metastasis Pathway in Melanoma

Qi Sun, PhD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
New York University School of Medicine

Transcriptional Profiling and Marker Identification of Early Stage Melanoma

Zhipeng Tao, PhD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
Massachusetts General Hospital
Preventing Melanomagenesis Through Modulating HMGB1 Palmitoylation

Matthew Vesely, MD, PhD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
Yale University, School of Medicine
Determining the Immune Inhibitory Landscape in Melanoma

Meng Wang, PhD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
The University of California, San Francisco
Characterizing the Genomic Evolution of Acral Lentiginous Melanoma

Yujue Wang, MD, PhD
MRA Dermatology Fellows Award
The University of California, Los Angeles
Genomic Features of Primary Melanoma Predictive of Brain Metastasis

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