

CR&T FUNDS NEW RESEARCH GRANTS

While CR&T has historically focused on research into myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs), we also fund outstanding studies that could lead to advances in treating other types of cancer. Our board of directors recently approved funding for two studies that will enhance our understanding of breast and lung cancers. We are deeply grateful to our donors and friends. This outstanding research is made possible by your support.

Evaluating Oncoplasty



Alexander J. Swistel, M.D.
Associate Professor of
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New York-Presbyterian/Weill
Cornell Medical Center

Women who inherit the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation have an increased risk of developing breast or ovarian cancer. Working with a genetic counselor, these women can evaluate their personal risk, based not only on test results but on factors such as family history and ethnicity. When it comes to treatment, these women have two choices: Have screening tests every six months, or undergo preventive surgery, which may include both a double mastectomy and removal of the ovaries.

For many women, frequent screening means living with uncertainty from one appointment to the next, and causes great anxiety. But a mastectomy can have a profound impact on a woman's quality of life, altering her body image and affecting intimate relationships. Oncoplasty addresses these concerns by combining general and plastic surgery. The tumor is removed, along with enough surrounding tissue to ensure that no cancerous cells remain. Next, reconstructive techniques are used to create a natural-looking breast with minimal scarring.

The nipple-sparing mastectomy is the newest form of oncoplasty. Unlike other procedures, this sophisticated technique retains the nipple and areola, resulting in a completely natural look. However, this procedure commonly leaves a small

amount of breast tissue. Concerned that this could lead to a recurrence of cancer, critics have called for studies that demonstrate long-term safety.

For more than 10 years, the Breast Oncoplasty Program at Weill Cornell Medical College has been offering the nipple-sparing mastectomy as an option to women with the BRCA mutation. Importantly, Weill Cornell surgeons have pioneered a unique technique that removes all of the breast tissue while leaving the disease-free nipple and areolar skin intact.

With funding from CR&T, Dr. Alexander Swistel and his team are studying the

The study will provide long-term safety data about a sophisticated new surgical technique.

outcomes of this procedure in women with diagnosed malignancies, as well as those who chose preventive surgery. The researchers will evaluate survival,

recurrences, and overall quality of life in these women and in a control group that has undergone traditional mastectomy. The goal of the study is to provide reliable long-term safety data, enabling women to make informed decisions about their surgical options and surgeons to feel confident that this procedure will be beneficial to their high-risk patients.

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CR&T FUNDS NEW RESEARCH GRANTS

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Evaluating and Treating Nonsolid Lung Cancer Nodules



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Dr. Mark Pasmantier, the lead investigator of this new, CR&T-funded project, previously served as a clinical investigator in the New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell (NYP/WC) Early Lung Cancer Action Project (ELCAP). Using low-radiation-dose computed tomography (CT) scans, this groundbreaking initiative tested the value of annual repeat screening for lung cancer. Over 20 years, thousands of high-risk patients were screened. The results were revolutionary: The overall five-year survival rate went from 14 percent in an unscreened group to more than 80 percent in patients who were screened.

In addition to advancing early detection and treatment, researchers are making great strides in understanding the biologic mechanisms that lead to the development of cancer. By examining the genetic mutations in cancer cells, investigators can discover the underlying causes of the disease and, ultimately, develop exciting new therapies.

The researchers aim to identify genetic mutations that lead to adenocarcinoma of the lung.

To this end, Dr. Pasmantier and his team are focusing on a subset of lung cancer patients with nonsolid nodules. These patients have adenocarcinoma, a type of cancer that originates in glandular tissue and accounts for 40 percent of all lung cancers. The nodules are often multiple and tend to grow slowly. As opposed to solid nodules, nonsolid nodules are more likely to be malignant and must be monitored carefully.



Dr. Pasmantier and his team will use low-dose CT screening to identify a number of patients with multiple nonsolid nodules. When they see that a nodule is growing, they will conduct a biopsy. If the tumor is diagnosed as adenocarcinoma, they will follow the standard of care and remove it.

A portion of the tissue that was removed will be used for pathologic testing. The remainder will be grown in the research lab. Through continued studies of these tissue samples, the researchers aim to identify the genetic mutations that lead to adenocarcinoma of the lung. The next step will be to design a drug that, in effect, corrects the abnormalities caused by the mutations. If this approach proves to be successful when tested on cultured cells, the team will design a clinical trial to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the treatment in humans with lung cancer.

CR&T MEDICAL ADVISORS ARE RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

The members of CR&T's Medical Advisory Board (MAB) are recognized as international leaders in their field. We are proud to congratulate these prominent physician-researchers on their latest accomplishments.

In June, *New York Magazine* published its 17th annual list of the best doctors in the New York area. This year, three CR&T medical advisors are on the list: Drs. John P. Leonard, Anne Moore, and Alexander J. Swistel.

The magazine's list is a shorter version of an annual guidebook published by Castle Connolly Medical, Ltd.

Last spring, Linda Vahdat, M.D., was recognized as an outstanding educator by the Division of Hematology and Medical Oncology at Weill Cornell Medical College. In addition, on May 20, the Triple Negative Breast Cancer Foundation presented its Hero Award to Dr. Vahdat for her commitment to developing new therapeutic options and her dedication to providing exceptional care for patients.

To learn more about CR&T's medical advisors and their achievements, please visit www.crt.org.

LOWERING THE COST OF CANCER DRUGS



The number of drugs available to fight cancer has never been greater, and many promising new treatments are in development. Unfortunately, the cost of cancer drugs has never been higher, fueling concerns that out-of-pocket expenses are barring patients' access to life-saving treatments.

In July 2015, 118 oncologists from leading medical centers nationwide called for the federal government to take steps to reduce the prices of cancer drugs. Their recommendations were set forth in a commentary published in the *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*. Among the authors are two members of CR&T's Medical Advisory Board, Drs. Andrew Schafer and Richard Silver.

"In the United States, the average price of new cancer drugs increased 5- to 10-fold over 15 years, to more than \$100,000 in 2012," the authors noted. The average U.S. family earns \$52,000 a year. For those with insurance, out-of-pocket expenses for a drug that costs \$120,000 can be as high as \$25,000 to \$30,000. As a result, some patients may forgo treatment, while others are forced into bankruptcy in order to cover costs.

Proposing Solutions

The authors have posted a petition on Change.org, calling for the President, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Congress to implement the following strategies:

- Allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices. (At present, only private insurers and the Department of Veterans Affairs have this ability.)
- Allow cancer drugs to be imported across U.S. borders for personal use. (Identical drugs are sometimes half the price in Canada.)

**The average price
of new cancer drugs
increased to more
than \$100,000 in 2012.**

- Enact new federal legislation that prevents drug companies from delaying access to generic drugs and extending the life of drug patents.
- Establish a review process to ensure that newly approved cancer drugs are priced fairly, based on the value of the treatment to patients.
- Allow organizations such as the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (a nonprofit NGO created by the Affordable Care

Act) to include drug prices in their evaluation of the value of drugs and treatments.

- Request that nonprofit organizations that represent cancer specialists and their patients (e.g., the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the American Society of Hematology) consider the overall value of drugs when they develop treatment guidelines.

Noting that more than 900 new cancer drugs are under development, the authors assert that "drug companies should be rewarded with reasonable profits for these efforts. The unfortunate news, also acknowledged by some of the pharmaceutical leadership, is that the current pricing system is unsustainable and not affordable for many patients." They hope to launch a strong grassroots effort that will "focus the attention of pharmaceutical companies on the problem and... encourage our elected representatives to more effectively advocate for the interests of their most important constituents among the stakeholders in cancer – American cancer patients."

To view the petition, visit change.org and search for "Protest High Cancer Drug Prices."

47 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT

CR&T was established in 1968 with the conviction that finding a cure for blood cancers would play a critical role in the conquest of all cancers, including breast, lung and other common cancers. Our goal is to quickly bridge the gap from bench to bedside by providing grants directly to doctors and scientists. In addition, we are committed to enabling patients to become informed members of their healthcare team and to learn about the latest research developments.

CR&T's accomplishments include:

- Participating in breakthrough clinical research and discovery in the treatment of chronic myeloid leukemia.
- Shedding light on the therapeutic role of a new cancer marker, JAK2, in the myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs).
- Establishing the Richard T. Silver M.D. Myeloproliferative Neoplasm Center at Weill Cornell Medical College, dedicated in early 2014.
- Participating in the development of new chemotherapies for Hodgkin's disease and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.
- Developing the use of interferon alpha as a treatment for polycythemia vera and other MPNs.
- Contributing to the understanding of how and why breast cancers spread, and to the development of new drugs to treat breast cancer.
- Identifying the processes of blood cell formation, which initiated a new treatment for blood diseases and solid tumor cancers through angiogenesis.

Current Research Priorities

Over the coming year, CR&T will invest approximately \$1.1 million – the largest single commitment in our history – to advance critical cancer research initiatives.

Blood Cancers

- Enabling the Richard T. Silver M.D. Myeloproliferative Neoplasm Center to hire its first Scientific Director, Joseph Scandura M.D., PhD. In addition to leading basic research initiatives at this translational research and treatment center, Dr. Scandura will continue to focus on creating disease models of MPNs, using an innovative technique known as gene editing. These models, which can be developed faster and more economically than traditional animal models, will contribute to the development of new therapies that target the genetic and immunologic defects that play a role in MPNs.
- Providing support for research into the natural history and treatment of the MPNs, conducted by CR&T's founder, Richard T. Silver M.D.
- Supporting two major conferences: The 8th International Patient Symposium on MPNs and the 8th International Congress on MPNs, Myelodysplasia and Chronic Myeloid Leukemia, for physician-scientists.



Other Common Cancers

- Funding studies that advance our understanding of common cancers, including breast cancer, lung cancer, and lymphoma. (Please see our cover story to learn more about our two newest research commitments.)

Your Support Makes It Happen!

All of these achievements were made possible through the support of generous and committed friends like you. With your help, CR&T will continue our crucial work – making life-saving new treatments a reality for millions of cancer patients worldwide. Please help us make it happen!

Please donate online at www.crt.org or use the enclosed envelope. We are deeply grateful for your support!

PLEASE JOIN US

for a very special evening honoring a compassionate family and a courageous cancer survivor for their dedication and accomplishments.

We are proud to present the Humanitarian Award to the Johns family for their longtime commitment to CR&T's mission, and the Cancer Survivor Award to Fran Drescher, award-winning actress, author, and health advocate.

RSVP online at www.crt.org/Hall-of-Fame-Event or contact Barbara Rosenstein at 212-288-6604 or brosenstein@crt.org.

All proceeds from the dinner benefit CR&T.

2015 CANCER SURVIVORS HALL OF FAME DINNER



Tuesday, November 17, 2015

The Essex House | 160 Central Park South
New York, NY



Julia
Johns



Jennifer Johns
Friel



Amanda Johns
Perez



Fran
Drescher

CR&T WELCOMES NEW LEADERSHIP

Anne Templeton, Board of Directors

The newest member of CR&T's Board of Directors, Anne also serves as co-chair of the Dinner Committee for our 2015 Hall of Fame event, which will honor her friend Fran Drescher.

Anne has years of experience as a senior executive in the acquisition, development and production of high-quality cinema. Her career is distinguished by a unique selection of successful films, along with manifold long-standing relationships with respected and influential filmmakers, actors and leading industry executives.

After leaving New York University, Anne held executive positions at early leading independent distribution companies in New York. She relocated to Los Angeles after being recruited to run the Acquisitions Department of The Samuel Goldwyn Company. There, she was principally responsible for acquiring either the domestic or international rights for many high-profile successes, including Kenneth Branagh's "Henry V," Luc Besson's "La Femme Nikita," and Steven Soderbergh's "Sex Lies & Videotape."

In 1991, Anne moved to production, serving as Senior Vice President of Production and Acquisitions at Dino DeLaurentiis Productions, where she oversaw Madonna's hit documentary, "Truth or Dare." Moving on to Edward R. Pressman Films, Anne oversaw larger and more commercial ventures, such as "The Crow," "City Hall," and "Judge Dredd," and developed scripts with A-list writers, including David Mamet. Finally, after heading Marlon Brando's production company, Franjipani Productions, she formed her own production company, making production and development deals with New Line Cinema and Dreamworks.

In 2000, Anne applied her numerous celebrity contacts to the non-profit sector, serving as a consultant for the world-renowned human rights organization, Amnesty International. She retired from the film business in 2001 and moved back to New York City in 2006, becoming involved in philanthropy. In addition to her work for CR&T, Anne is a Patron at the New York, Tribeca and Hamptons film festivals. She is a co-host of the annual fundraising dinner for Headstrong, a free mental health clinic for veterans that is based at Weill Cornell Medical Center.

Anne also co-sponsors a biennial benefit for Edwina Von Gal's Perfect Earth Project.

Barbara Rosenstein, Director of Administration and Development

Barbara has more than 20 years' experience in nonprofit communications and management. She joined CR&T in April 2015. Her responsibilities include managing the annual Cancer Survivors Hall of Fame Dinner and the biennial International Patient Symposium on Myleoproliferative Neoplasms; soliciting funds for CR&T's programs; and writing for and overseeing the production of CR&T's print materials and website.

Barbara comes to CR&T from Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) and its legacy organization, the Food Allergy Initiative (FAI), where she was Director of Communications. Prior to FARE, she served in increasingly responsible positions, including Vice President of Marketing, at the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America (CCFA). She graduated *summa cum laude* with a bachelor's degree in English from Fordham University and holds an MBA in marketing from Fordham's Graduate School of Business.

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ABOUT CR&T

Since 1968, CR&T has funded the world's most promising physician-scientists, equipping them with the resources to advance the treatment of various types of blood cancers, including myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs), leukemia, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and multiple myeloma, as well as other common cancers, such as breast and lung cancer.

CR&T NEWS

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LIMITED SEATS STILL AVAILABLE – REGISTER TODAY

8th International Patient Symposium on Myeloproliferative Neoplasms

WEDNESDAY,
NOVEMBER 4, 2015

Belfer Research Building | Weill Cornell Medical College
413 East 69th Street | New York, NY 10021

CR&T is proud to sponsor
this full-day event for patients, their families
and friends. Learn about the latest developments
in MPN research and treatment from distinguished
basic scientists and clinical research physicians.

Register online at
www.crt.org/8th-International-Patient-Symposium
or contact Barbara Rosenstein at
212-288-6604 or at brosenstein@crt.org.

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Find educational resources
at www.crt.org

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weapon in the fight
against cancer. At the
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providing researchers,
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