Northwestern Mutual catalyzes research for childhood cancer with awards

Four scientists receive grants to investigate causes, cures

MILWAUKEE, Aug. 1, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- One in 330 children will be diagnosed with cancer by the time they turn 20 years old. In order to fight this alarming statistic, Northwestern Mutual is funding childhood cancer research to find a cure.

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Today, Northwestern Mutual, through its Foundation, announced four grants to support Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation's Young Investigator projects. The $400,000, two-year commitment will fund four specific childhood cancer research projects focused on causes and cures.

"Seeing a child in pain is heartbreaking," said John Kordsmeier, president, Northwestern Mutual Foundation. "Through the work of these gifted researchers, Northwestern Mutual can give hope to parents that one day they will be able to tell their child that there is a cure for their illness."

Northwestern Mutual is committed to funding young researchers in the field to identify new ways to fight and cure pediatric cancer. The Young Investigator Awards are designed as start-up funds for new scientists who have either completed their fellowship training, or are in the early stages of their research career. A total of 20 awards are given by Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, one of Northwestern Mutual's partners in its Childhood Cancer Program.

The Childhood Cancer Program launched last year in response to a lack of support for pediatric cancer research and services. Northwestern Mutual's program raises awareness and money to fight the diseases.

Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation funds grants using a competitive review process and bases its decisions on scientific merit, potential to advance cures and treatments, as well as the dedication of the investigator to childhood cancer research. The nonprofit funded 20 Young Investigator grants in 2013 and Northwestern Mutual selected four of these recipients based on type of cancer, project and geographic diversity. Researchers will be asked to share the progress of their findings after the first year, and will produce a final report to inform funders of the researcher's results.

Researchers receiving funds include the following.

Name	Hospital	City	Focus
Charalambos Kaittanis	Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center	New York	Effects of radiation therapy
Laura Schuettpelz	Washington University	St. Louis	Harvesting bone marrow
Shizhen Zhu	Mayo Clinic	Rochester, Minn.	Neuroblastoma development
Cigall Kadoch	Stanford University School of Medicine; Lucile Packard Children's Hospital	Palo Alto, Ca.	Sarcoma tumor research

Northwestern Mutual, along with Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, is also planning a first-ever Young Investigator's Summit for more than 30 promising pediatric hematology-oncology researchers who have received grants through the organization. The event will be held October 24-25 at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, with Northwestern Mutual – Houston, hosting several Summit events.

About the Northwestern Mutual Foundation
The mission of the Northwestern Mutual Foundation – the largest corporate foundation in the state of Wisconsin – is to build strong, vibrant communities that serve as a legacy to future generations. The Foundation's giving is designed to create an impact on the communities where the company's employees and financial representatives live and work. In fiscal year 2013, the Foundation will contribute $16.9 million to nonprofit organizations across the country.

About Northwestern Mutual
Northwestern Mutual is among the "World's Most Admired" life insurance companies in 2013 according to FORTUNE® magazine and has helped clients achieve financial security for more than 156 years. As a mutual company with $1.4 trillion of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual has no shareholders. The company focuses solely and directly on its clients and seeks to deliver consistent and dependable value to them over time.

Northwestern Mutual is the marketing name for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, Milwaukee, WI, and its subsidiaries. Northwestern Mutual and its subsidiaries offer a holistic approach to financial security solutions including: life insurance, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance, annuities, investment products, and advisory products and services. Subsidiaries include Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC, broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company, limited purpose federal savings bank; Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company; and Russell Investments.

About Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation
Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) emerged from the front yard lemonade stand of cancer patient Alexandra "Alex" Scott (1996-2004). In 2000, 4-year-old Alex announced that she wanted to hold a lemonade stand to raise money to help find a cure for all children with cancer. Since Alex held that first stand, the Foundation bearing her name has evolved into a national fundraising movement, complete with thousands of supporters across the country carrying on her legacy of hope. To date, Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, a registered 501(c)3 charity, has raised more than $60 million toward fulfilling Alex's dream of finding a cure, funding over 300 pediatric cancer research projects nationally. For more information on Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, visit AlexsLemonade.org.

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