Northwestern Mutual Increases Research for Childhood Cancer through Grants

Eight researchers receive grants to accelerate the search for causes, cures

MILWAUKEE, Oct. 21, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, Northwestern Mutual, through its Foundation, announces the funding of four new Young Investigator grant awards for childhood cancer research. The awards support Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation's (ALSF) Young Investigator program. These Young Investigator Grants are designed as start-up funds for scientists at the early stages of their careers to pursue promising research ideas. The addition of these four research projects results in eight funded research projects this year, an $800,000 commitment. Each researcher receives a total grant of$100,000 given over two-years. Four of the recipients received their initial funding last year.

Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation grants follow a competitive review process and base decisions on scientific merit, potential to advance cures and treatments and the dedication of the investigator to childhood cancer research.

The second ALSF Young Investigator Summit, presented by Northwestern Mutual, also kicks off today at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. The two-day Summit brings together 50 researchers from across the country to collaborate, build new relationships and interact with leading researchers in the pediatric oncology field. A number of topics will be covered, including cellular immunotherapy, personalized genomics, and professional development.

"Our Childhood Cancer Program has a relentless focus on research. That's why we're honored to provide an opportunity for researchers to come together and advance their knowledge in an effort to discover the next generation of childhood cancer treatments," said John Kordsmeier, president, Northwestern Mutual Foundation. "We want to give families hope and a chance for a better future to find a cure for childhood cancer."

Cancer is the leading cause of death by disease in children under the age of 15 in the U.S., yet research for childhood cancer is vastly underfunded as compared to other cancers, causing a decrease in time spent helping seriously ill children.

A 2013 survey of childhood cancer researchers, commissioned by Northwestern Mutual, cited that 71 percent know of specific researchers whose projects are in danger of not getting additional funding. Northwestern Mutual is committed to accelerating researchers' work and to providing support to families battling the disease.

Northwestern Mutual and ALSF will honor the following researchers for their work at this year's Summit:

Name	Hospital	City	Focus
Charalambos Kaittanis	Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center	New York	Effects of radiation therapy
Laura Schuettpelz	Washington University	St. Louis, MO	Harvesting bone marrow
Shizhen Zhu	Mayo Clinic	Rochester, Minn.	Neuroblastoma development
Cigall Kadoch	Dana Farber Institute	Boston, Mass.	Sarcoma tumor research
Jeffrey Huo	The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine	Baltimore, MD	Epigenetic Origins of the Retinoblastoma Tumor Initiating Cell
Carl Koschmann	University of Michigan	Ann Arbor, Mich.	Therapy for pediatric glioblastoma
Katherine Tarlock	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center	Seattle, Wash.	Therapeutic strategies for Leukemia

Mireya Velasquez	Baylor College of Medicine	Houston, TX	Research for Leukemia/Lymphoma

Through a variety of other initiatives, the Northwestern Mutual Foundation and fundraising efforts led by financial representatives across the country have contributed more than $6 million for childhood cancer, helping fund more than 41,000 hours of research and provide support for more than 3,000 families. For more information about the Foundation and its Childhood Cancer Program, please visit www.northwesternmutualfoundation.com.

About Northwestern Mutual Foundation
The mission of the Northwestern Mutual Foundation is to improve the lives of children and families in need. The Foundation has given nearly $270 million since its inception in 1992 and is designed to create lasting impact in the communities where the company's employees and financial representatives live and work. We accomplish this by combining financial support, volunteerism, thought leadership and convening community partners to deliver the best outcomes. Our efforts are focused nationally on curing childhood cancer, and locally on education, neighborhoods and making our hometown of Milwaukee a great destination.

About Northwestern Mutual
Northwestern Mutual has been helping families and businesses achieve financial security for nearly 160 years. Our financial representatives build relationships with clients through a distinctive planning approach that integrates risk management with wealth accumulation, preservation and distribution. With more than $217 billion in assets, $26 billion in revenues and more than $1.5 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to more than 4.2 million people who rely on us for insurance and investment solutions, including life, disability and long-term care insurance; annuities; trust services; mutual funds; and investment advisory products and services.

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 comprehensive 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 $80 million toward fulfilling Alex's dream of finding a cure, funding over 450 pediatric cancer research projects nationally. For more information on Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, visit AlexsLemonade.org.

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