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**SUSAN G. KOMEN®’S 2015 BREAST CANCER RESEARCH FUNDING TARGETS EARLY-CAREER INVESTIGATORS, NEW THERAPIES, HEALTH INEQUITIES AND METASTATIC DISEASE**

***South Carolina Researchers Receive $630,000 in Research Funding***

**DALLAS – Sept. 22, 2015 –** Susan G. Komen, the world’s largest nonprofit funder of breast cancer research, announced new grants to 124 researchers in 25 states and eight countries internationally, with about half of the grants targeted to early-career researchers squeezed by stagnation in federal research dollars.

The grants include $630,000 in new funding for research at the University of South Carolina and Medical University of South Carolina, bringing Komen’s total research investment in South Carolina to $1,540,000 since 1982.

The 2015 research grants expand Komen’s ongoing commitment to funding early-career scientists, that is, recent graduates and those trying to establish independent research careers. This group has been especially hard hit by real-dollar declines of as much 25 percent in federal research funding over the past decade.

“We committed two years ago to do all that we can to ensure that talented early-career investigators remain in the breast cancer research field, while continuing our support for established researchers,” said Komen President and CEO Judith A. Salerno, M.D., M.S. “We cannot afford to lose talented scientists to other fields for lack of funding.”

This year’s research slate brings Komen’s total research investment to more than $889 million since 1982, the largest of any nonprofit, and second only to the U.S. government.

Grants from Komen’s nearly $36 million research portfolio – including more than $17.6 million in grants awarded to early-career investigators – span the entire cancer continuum from prevention to treatments for aggressive and metastatic disease. These include:

* 36 grants to improve understanding of **metastatic breast cancer**
* 18 grants investigating how tumors develop **drug resistance**
* 19 grants related to the study of **triple negative breast cancer** – one of the most aggressive forms of the disease
* 15 grants working to identify and understand **biological and socio-economic health inequities**
* 13 grants seeking to develop **new and novel therapies**

**Komen’s Investments in South Carolina**

Komen’s research program is funded in part by contributions from Komen’s nationwide network of Affiliates, which direct 25 percent of locally raised funds to Komen’s national research program. The remaining 75 percent of net funds are invested into community outreach programs that serve local women and men facing breast cancer.

Since 2001, Komen Lowcountry has funded more than $6.5 to community programs serving local women and men, while contributing more than $2.5 million to Komen research.

“We are so proud and thankful for the support of this community as we help our friends, coworkers and neighbors who are facing breast cancer. This investment in research will assure continued progress against breast cancer,” said Lucy Spears, Mission Programs Manager for Komen Lowcountry.

In South Carolina, researchers will receive $630,000 to investigate novel breast cancer therapies.

* **Adam Soloff, Ph.D., of Medical University of South Carolina** will receive $450,000 for pre-clinical testing of a novel vaccine that induces highly specialized cells within the immune system to seek out cancer cells in combination with a new investigational drug, anti-PD-L1, which blocks the ability of cancer cells to hide from the immune system. If successful, this treatment strategy could not only kill existing breast cancer cells, but also produce long-term immune memory that will prevent breast cancer recurrence.
* **Martina McDermott, Ph.D., of University of South Carolina** will receive $180,000 to determine whether the addition of a newly developed drug that targets a protein called CDK8 to ER and HER2-targeted therapies will increase the response to treatment and prevent the development of drug resistance.

A full list of Komen’s 2015 research grants can be found [here](http://ww3.komen.org/Flashviewer/Grants_Table/FY15/2015grants.html).\*

In addition to funding breast cancer research, Komen has invested more than $1.95 billion into community health outreach and global programs that serve hundreds of thousands of women and men annually through breast cancer health and support programs that screen, educate and provide financial, medical and psychosocial assistance.

For more information about Komen’s mission investment, please visit [komen.org](http://komen.org).

**About Susan G. Komen®**

Susan G. Komen is the world’s largest breast cancer organization, funding more breast cancer research than any other nonprofit while providing real-time help to those facing the disease. Since its founding in 1982, Komen has funded more than $889 million in research and provided $1.95 billion in funding to screening, education, treatment and psychosocial support programs serving millions of people in more than 30 countries worldwide. Komen was founded by Nancy G. Brinker, who promised her sister, Susan G. Komen, that she would end the disease that claimed Suzy’s life. Visit [komen.org](http://komen.org/) or call 1-877 GO KOMEN. Connect with us on social at [ww5.komen.org/social](http://ww5.komen.org/social).

*\*Contingent upon signed and executed contracts with Komen*