

TUXEDO JUNCTION AND GRANTS FOR CANCER RESEARCH

FUNDS RAISED TO DATE \$242,000



The Tuxedo Junction Advisory Board allocates funds raised to research projects supported by Cancer Council Victoria. Mr David Skpeaman, (Fracs) works closely with Professor David Hill AO Chair of CCV in the allocation of funds.

CCV support more than 90 biomedical researchers by providing grants, fellowships and scholarships. The Research Management Unit coordinates the selection process and the CCV website includes an archive of research projects funded. Cancer Council Victoria conducts research into many aspects of cancer and has a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), made up of volunteer experts, to oversee the ethical aspects of research. Research proposals (and amendments) are reviewed to ensure ethical standards are met and that the confidentiality of participants' information is protected. The progress of approved research is monitored with annual reports from researchers.

THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED BY FUNDS RAISED AT TUXEDO JUNCTION 2007, 2008 AND 2009.

2007

Saturday July 14

Event Founding Sponsor

Event Corporate Partner

Artbre Consulting

salesforce.com

The funds from Tuxedo Junction 2007 were used to form The 2007 Tuxedo Junction Grant and The 2007 Seeley Gratitude Grant. Anne Seeley purchased the naming rights to this grant at Tuxedo Junction 2007.

THE 2007 SEELEY GRATITUDE GRANT

Researchers:

Prof Christopher Christophi, Prof Peter Angus, Mr Vijayaragavan Muralidharan
The University of Melbourne

Project

Liver Tumours and the Renin Angiotensin System. The treatment and prevention of liver metastases from colorectal cancer in adults and older people. Over 12,000 cases of bowel cancer are diagnosed annually in Australia. Approximately 50% of these patients will develop spread of the cancer to the liver (metastases) and this is the major cause of death. The treatment is limited and most patients are only suitable for chemotherapy which is at best palliative in nature. An alternative approach is inhibition of the formation of blood vessels that allow the liver metastases to grow. There is now accumulating evidence, both in population studies that the renin angiotensin system (RAS) of the liver may inhibit cancer growth and that drugs that inhibit the RAS, commonly used in the treatment of hypertension, may be an alternative treatment strategy. Our preliminary experiments have shown that the use of drugs that block the RAS dramatically decrease the number and volume of colorectal cancer liver metastases and that various components of the RAS are increased in liver metastases. Further investigations to elucidate the underlying mechanisms are required.

Pharmacological blockade or immunotherapy modulation of the RAS may prove an alternative or adjunctive treatment strategy in the treatment of colon cancer that has spread to the liver.

[THE 2007 TUXEDO JUNCTION GRANT](#)

Patient Support Services For People With Advanced Cancer

Funds from Tuxedo Junction will be used to help establish a specialised advanced cancer telephone and internet group support service. It is in this way that people with advanced cancer can be connected to each other. These services will be coordinated and overseen by an oncology nurse who is able to provide practical advice and access to further resources.

2008

Saturday August 9

Event Principal Sponsor Artbre Consulting

Event Corporate Partner salesforce.com

Naming Rights for 2 grants were purchased by our generous supporters, Harold Seeley AM, Anne Bown-Seeley, Andrew and Sarah Cox of the Imperium Capitol Group. The research projects below will be partially funded by the following grants.

[THE 2008 SEELEY GRATITUDE TO GOD GRANT](#)

Researchers

Dr Weisan Chan, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research

Project

Research on to the prevention, early detection and treatment of Melanoma in adults.

Most tumour cells express tumour-specific proteins. Killer T cells suppress and eliminate tumour cells by recognising fragments (epitopes) derived from these tumour proteins. For some poorly understood reasons, these cells can either fail to activate or be rendered irresponsive during tumour genesis. A major goal of cancer vaccine is to either activate these T cells or reverse their unresponsiveness.

Researchers

Prof Geoffrey Pietersz
Macfarlane Burnet Institute for Medical Research and Public Health

Project

Research into the prevention of breast cancer. We have designed a vaccine based on a unique delivery system. We will now design a vaccine that has multiple peptides so that people can make killer cells. Cancer cells are constantly changing to avoid detection by the immune system, we would now like to produce a vaccine which is more effective and will benefit everyone.

[THE 2008 IMPERIUM CAPTIOL GROUP GRANT](#)**Researchers**

Dr David Thomas, A/Prof Paul Simmons
Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Project

Research into the causes of bone cancer in adolescents. Osteosarcoma is the most common primary bone cancer and the third most common cancer in adolescents.

Treatment often entails aggressive surgery with intensive chemotherapy, and causes life-long morbidity. The 5-year survival of patients with metastatic or recurrent disease is less than 25%. Using cell lines and primary normal human bone cells, we will knockdown expression of WIF1 and examine whether these cells can undergo normal development. We will also examine how re-expressing WIF1 in bone cancer cells or treatment with WIF1 protein affects cancer cell growth and survival.

Researchers

Prof Erik Thompson, A/Prof Alexander Dobrovic, Prof Peter Choong, Dr Prue Hill, A/Prof Michael Henderson, Prof Klaus Pantel
University of Melbourne

Project

Breast Cancer: Epithelial carcinoma cells undergo epithelial mesenchymal transition (EMT) to induce migration, invasion and survival, enhancing cancer spread. Disseminated cancer cells need a reverse transition (MET) to form a new mass. We will examine EMT / MET status of cells at different stages of metastasis in patients, whether silencing by promoter methylation drives these transitions, and the effect of forcing epithelial / mesenchymal states on breast cancer dissemination.

THE 2008 TUXEDO JUNCTION GRANT

At the 2008 event Melanie Nightingale representing our Corporate Partners salesforce.com, invited all guests to list the names of their family and friends who have been touched by cancer on a whiteboard. Everyone who saw the board on the night was touched deeply by the number of names listed. From the 320 guests and staff in the room there were over 150 names. The Board and Producers of Tuxedo Junction great take pride in honouring those listed by attaching these names to The Tuxedo Junction 2008 Grant. The complete list is available on our website.

4 Rural Workshops: When Cancer Won't Go Away

People living in rural areas (have a worse outcome when they are diagnosed with cancer) can access the Cancer Helpline and online support groups.

These free forums provide people with advanced cancer, and their friends and families, the chance to speak with others in similar situations. Topics covered include financial and legal issues; and current treatments and different medical supports available for advanced cancer. Questions such as what happens when a person presents with an advanced cancer diagnosis. The Family Issues and Living with Uncertainty session is conducted by a psychologist, who talks about coping with cancer and living with uncertainty.

2009

Saturday August 1

Naming Rights for 2 grants were again purchased by our generous supporters, Harold Seeley AM, Anne Bown-Seeley, Andrew and Sarah Cox of the Imperium Capitol Group. The research projects below will be partially funded by the following grants.

THE 2009 SEELEY GRATITUDE TO GOD GRANT

Researchers

Prof David Bowtell, Dr Andreas Möller

Project

The effect of low oxygen levels in solid breast tumours and surrounding tissues as potential drug intervention target.

Breast cancer is a major cause of death among women. We will be investigating the signals that tumours and nearby cells use to communicate with each other, enabling further tumour progression and metastasis to distant organs. Blocking these signals with drugs may improve cancer treatment by preventing new blood vessel growth and subsequent metastasis.

This project explores how low oxygen levels impact on breast cancer cells and their surrounding tissue, identifying opportunities for drug interventions.

THE 2009 IMPERIUM CAPITOL GROUP GRANT

Researchers

Drs Sarah Russell and Helena Richardson

Project

Leukaemia and lymphoma (in children and adults): Research into prevention and causes of leukaemia: Regulating polarity proteins.

The design of therapeutic agents for the treatment of cancer is an extremely promising avenue of research, with many new drugs entering clinical trials and improving the outcome of cancer treatments. Understanding the signaling pathways that promote cancer is therefore essential not just for choosing the molecules to target by new drugs, but also to determine which cancers each drug is most appropriate for. We have recently shown that the tumour suppressor proteins, Discs large and Scribble, which were previously implicated in solid tumours, also play a role in regulating the biology of blood cells. This discovery suggests that Scribble and Discs large might also act as tumour suppressors in lymphocytes.

THE 2009 TUXEDO JUNCTION GRANT

Tuxedo Junction also contributed funds towards the CCV Tuxedo Junction also contributed funds towards Telephone and Internet Support Groups Program. Cancer support groups are a proven strategy that can provide effective social support and enhance a sense of inclusion and engagement with others. However, not all adults are able to participate in face-to-face groups. Telephone and Internet Support Groups (TISGs) offer people affected by cancer the opportunity to explore many issues related to the cancer experience, from the privacy and comfort of their own home.

These professionally facilitated groups of 6-8 participants meet weekly for six weeks, either via a private chat room or by teleconference. Groups are available for younger adults, people with advanced cancer, cancer survivors, and people who are caring for someone with cancer.