



Greetings!

Time flies when you're having fundraisers! And, oh my, have we been having them! Included in this issue of *Eye On A Cure* are some amazing stories from the Warrior fundraising field. These are real stories from real patients and caregivers, in the trenches fighting this terrible disease and working to raise awareness and much-needed funds for OM research by putting on their own awareness and fundraising events.

Thanks to these Warriors and OMF's new fundraising Program Director, Holly, we've ramped up our fundraising considerably, and we're already on pace for 2015 to blow past the **\$176,000** raised in 2014. From events like the 2nd annual Swing for Sight golf tourney put on by A Cure In Sight (and which grossed **\$63,000**) to local events like the elementary school talent show put on in memory of Diane Perrott and the 5k in Kilmarnock, Virginia in memory of Lisa Spiers, it's been a busy 2014.

OMF would not be able to do what it does - including awarding a recent \$50,000 grant to a talented young researcher studying BAP1 mutations in Bill Harbour's lab in Miami - without the diligent grassroots efforts of everyone in our wonderful OM community. So thank you for your support of our shared mission to support patients and caregivers, fund groundbreaking OM research and to see a cure for eye cancer.

Our very best for a great summer,
The OMF Team

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UPCOMING EVENTS



Lookin' for a Cure 5k

Sept 26

Huntersville, NC

[Learn more >](#)



Eye Am Not Alone

Patient Retreat

Oct 16-18

Cleveland Clinic

Cleveland, OH



Nov 7

Red Head Run

Newton, NC

EANA Patient Retreat to be held at the Cleveland Clinic



Location Set for 2015 Patient Retreat

The 2015 Eye Am Not Alone (EANA) Patient Retreat will be back at the

wonderful [Cleveland Clinic](#) for a second year in a row. The Clinic, under the watchful leadership of Arun Singh, MD, was a fantastic partner in 2014, and OMF is excited to continue this going forward and to build on the success of the 2014 retreat. You can see [videos from the 2014 retreat here](#).

[Learn more and sign up \(live July 15th\) >>](#)

For 2016, OMF is contemplating a larger meeting on the west coast.

2015 Research Grant Recipient Announced

Research Grant Awarded to Stefan Kurtenbach, PhD

On April 18, 2015, Dr. Stefan Kurtenbach was awarded the AACR-Ocular Melanoma Foundation Fellowship, in honour of [Robert C. Allen](#).



Dr. Stefan Kurtenbach's research takes gene expression profiling to the next level. In addition to identifying those at risk for metastasis, Kurtenbach's work at Bill Harbour's lab at Bascom Palmer at Miami University involves the classification of uveal melanomas into two significant subgroups: Class 1 tumors are associated with low metastatic risk and Class 2 tumors with high metastatic risk. [This test, commercialized by Castle Biosciences](#), is now widely used as a routine clinical test and is the gold standard for precision medicine in this cancer.

The Harbour Laboratory also showed that Class 2 tumors are strongly associated with inactivating mutations in the tumor suppressor gene BAP1. Thus, determining the link between loss of BAP1 and liver metastasis may be the key to identifying novel targeted therapies.

The project to be undertaken by Dr. Kurtenbach, a postdoctoral research fellow in the lab, is to investigate the relationship between BAP1 function and proper migration and differentiation of uveal melanocytes. Dr. Kurtenbach's hypothesis is that BAP1 regulates normal migration and differentiation of uveal melanocytes, and that loss of BAP1 in uveal melanoma cells leads to a loss of responsiveness to differentiation and guidance signals, resulting in primitive stem-like de-differentiation of melanoma cells and deregulated guidance signaling that re-directs these cells to the liver.

The goal of this project is to identify the key BAP1-regulated guidance cue genes that are deregulated by BAP1 mutation, which may allow targeted therapeutic intervention to delay or prevent liver metastasis.

[Read more about the AACR grant program >>](#)

Our Amazing Warriors

Lisa Spiers 5K Memorial Race

"Love and hope." That's how attendees describe their emotions during the Lisa Spiers 5K Memorial Race. The event was sponsored by the Baptist Church of Kilmarnock, VA. Matthew Tennant, parish priest, headed the fundraising efforts.

Lisa's husband, Robby, and their sons ran in the race surrounded by friends and supporters.

Community members of Kilmarnock lined the streets to cheer on the runners. Participants were entertained with live music on the course and at the finish line. Bounce houses invited children post-race. Overall, the feeling was one of love and



BY THE NUMBERS

12 years since founding
#1 on Google for OM
\$175,513 raised in 2014
2,873 Facebook 'likes'
2,306 Forum members
13,900 Twitter followers
58,309 web visitors in 2014

Like us on Facebook

Follow us on [twitter](#)

SEE A CURE

celebration.

The 2nd annual Lisa Spiers 5K Memorial Race has already been scheduled for April 16, 2016. If you're within driving distance, come support this amazing warrior event!



Swing for Sight Raises \$63,000

In partnership with [A Cure in Sight](#) and [Speedgolf International](#), the [Swing for Sight golf and wine tasting event](#) returned to world famous Napa Valley for a second spectacular year. Held in mid April at Eagle Vines, the fundraiser incorporated four main events: Speedgolf, a traditional golf tournament, a winery tour around Napa Valley, and dinner with a silent auction.

The **Speedgolf** tournament started at 6am with mist still blanketing the golf course. These incredible athletes ran (yes, *ran!*) the course for twelve hours straight. Their event resembled running an ultramarathon while playing ten rounds of golf. The Napa sunshine and green rolling hills were the perfect backdrop for the fast-paced event. Pictured right is Tim Scott and his wife. Together with seven other speed golfers, they raised over **\$30,000**.



Altogether, the Swing for Sight event grossed over \$63,000 for ACIS and OMF!



The event culminated with dinner and **Guest Speaker Dr. Bertil Damato, MD, PhD of UCSF**



OMF Communications Director, Holly Abbe, and the incredible ACIS board celebrate a wonderful event with Dr. Damato

Elementary School Ocular Melanoma Awareness Day Raises Over \$10,000

The Neshannock Memorial Elementary School in New Castle, PA held an awareness day to honor their beloved librarian, [Mrs. Diane Perrott](#), who lost her battle with ocular melanoma on August 24, 2014. The event included a talent show, t-shirt sale and bake sale.

"Diana was loved by everyone who met her," said Staci Norris, friend and colleague. "Her absence is huge--not only felt here in our school, but felt by our entire community."



While battling OM, Diana worked to spread awareness. She purchased sunglasses for all the elementary school children to wear during their outdoor recess. And she asked that her legacy of spreading OM awareness continue.

The event was a huge success. It was a time of celebration, of memory, and of coming together.

[View the Tribute Page on OMF's site in memory of Diane >>](#)



Ian Brown plays the maracas at the Ocular Melanoma Awareness talent show.

Interested in Putting On A Warrior Event?

The Warrior Fundraising Program is OMF's platform to empower members of the OM community to contribute their own time, talent and treasure. We work with YOU to put on an event or do something amazing - whether it's hosting a BBQ at your home, running a 10k or hosting an awareness event at your kid's school. We can supply you with helpful instructions and best practices, plenty of giveaways (brochures, SEE A CURE sunglasses, t-shirts, anything you need), and even additional volunteers and funds to make it a success and can work alongside you to ensure it raises awareness of OM and funds for OMF research initiatives.

To learn more or to get your event planning started today, drop Holly, OMF's new Program Director, a note at holly@ocularmelanoma.org.
