2018 is off to a great start! We have good things to report and good things to look forward to. Our fall was jam-packed with warrior events and a successful "Eye Am Not Alone" patient conference at Stanford University.

Our biggest announcement for 2018 is that we are increasing our annual $50K research grant to a two-year, $150K research grant in partnership with AACR. This was made possible by the generous contributions and amazing fundraising efforts of the OM community. Read more to learn about the research grant and the other incredible accomplishments here at OMF.

2018 $150K OM Research Grant Announced

$150K Research Grant
Due to generous donations and successful fundraising in 2016 and 2017, OMF has increased our $50K research grant to a 2-year, $150K research grant. This grant is offered in partnership with the American Association of Cancer Research (AACR). This will mark our fifth year of providing funding for ground-breaking research in uveal melanoma. You can read about our past grant recipients [here](#).

What does the increase mean? It means the grant recipient will receive $75K a year, for a two year project. By extending the longevity of their research, the researcher will produce more in-depth results. It means we are supporting more robust research that will hopefully propel treatment options and attract innovative new doctors to dedicate their time to uveal melanoma. It means we are serious about finding a cure!

While many generous individuals contributed to this amazing accomplishment, the Kammerman family’s "Be the Light" fundraising efforts made this increase in grant size possible (shown in picture above with the 2017 grant recipient, Vivian Chua, PhD).

Grant recipients will be announced on March 3, 2018, and the grant will be awarded on April 17th at the annual AACR conference. You can learn more about the grant and our partnership with AACR [here](#).

EANA 2017 Highlights

2017 EANA Patient Conference
With over one hundred attendees including patients, caregivers, and speakers, the event brought medical experts and patients together from all over the country. Dr. Prithvi Myruthunjaya was our gracious host at this year’s "Eye Am Not Alone" patient conference at Stanford University.

Friday night’s kick-off dinner recognized Warrior efforts from 2017. Recipients of the 2017 Warrior Awards were: Elizabeth McBride and Phil & Caitlyn Stewart.

Saturday had a robust schedule that took attendees through Dr. Myruthunjaya’s overview of “Uveal Melanoma Treatment, Surveillance, and Adjuvant Therapies” and an insightful panel discussion with
experts Dr. Myruthunjaya, Dr. Damato, and Dr. Hovland. Other highlights included MDA's Dr. Sapna Patel who gave an overview of clinical trials and Anne Osborn's presentation on self-care strategies. Sabrina Frey shared her inspiring story about living with metastatic OM, and Maura Kammerman gave a heart-felt tribute to her husband, OM patient David, and her family as she described their incredibly successful fundraising event.

Saturday evening ended with a celebration of life - Miriachi style! Attendees were serenaded by a live Miriachi band and mingled while enjoying Mexican food. Sunday's session included an informative session about prosthetics by Steve Young, a leading ocularist in San Fransisco.

Thank you to ALL of the doctors, patients, caregivers and OM community members -- all the Warriors -- for making this year's conference such a success!

Check out our highlights video here.

Stay tuned for location and dates of EANA 2018!
Warrior Update

Copperhead Grille Golf Tournament

The Copperhead Grille sponsored a golf tournament in honor of Georgia Kondoleon. This “Fore a Cure” event brought in a mix of experienced golfers and supportive friends and family to play 18 holes in raise awareness for OM.

Mike Dontas, co-owner of the Copperhead Grille, started the event with a beautiful tribute to his aunt, Georgia. He urged golfers to enjoy their day and to give generously. Golfers did both! They attempted to win the grand “Hole in One” prize (and some players got extremely close!) Craft beer samples from the award winning Devil’s Backbone Brewing Company flowed freely at key spots along the course. The tournament ended with a dinner catered by the Copperhead Grille where winners of raffle prizes were announced.

Mike and his team from Copperhead Grille raised over $20,000 to help support OM research. We applaud their efforts and look forward to another tournament this coming fall.
A Sister’s Love

When Elaina found out her sister, Katie, had been diagnosed with OM, she wanted to help. She wanted to spread the story of Katie's strength and do something, anything, to help her sister feel supported.

And she did just that.

Elaina started a Crowdrise fundraiser that shared her sister's story. She said, “Katie is the strongest women I know. We have always referred to her as a honey badger because she is the toughest chick around. She will fight like nobody’s business. If anyone can deal with whatever awful things cancer brings, its my sister.”

With just a few quick clicks and an uploaded picture of Katie, the fundraiser went live. In just a few days her efforts raised $3000...and as of this week, she is over the $4000 mark!!

Elaina explains the reason for her efforts, “I am trying to raise money for research and hopefully a cure for this awful type of cancer. More research and clinical trials need to be done to help people like my sister who deal with such a scary type of cancer.”

Thank you Elaina and Katie for sharing your story! Thank you for working hard to raise awareness and research funds.

If you want to support Elaina’s efforts, click HERE.

Are you Interested in Raising Awareness and Funds for OM Research?
One quick and easy way to raise awareness or fundraise is to use a sleek online fundraising tool such as Crowdrise. If you have questions or need help setting this up, contact holly@ocularmelanoma.org.

Do you want to Host 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 child's school. We can supply you with helpful instructions and best practices, plenty of giveaways (brochures, SEE A CURE sunglasses, t-shirts, etc.), and even additional volunteers.
and funds to make it a success! We can also work alongside you to ensure your event 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 Warrior Program Director, a note at holly@ocularmelanoma.org OR fill out online our Warrior Worksheet.

What is CancerCon?

Our very own OM Warrior, Phil Stewart, and his wife, Caitlyn Stewart, attended CancerCon last year. CancerCon is a young adult gathering of cancer patients, caregivers, advocates, and health care professionals.

Here’s what Phil had to say about the experience:

**How did you get involved with CancerCon?**
Shortly after my diagnosis with OM, I saw on Facebook that CancerCon was offering scholarships. I had just attended EANA where I connected with other people who were going through the same experience as me. I thought CancerCon could offer similar benefits.

**What was the best part of CancerCon?**
Being able to be in a room with 500+ other cancer survivors and feeling like I finally belong somewhere. Every time I walk into an oncologist office, I’m the youngest one there by 20+ years and aside from the cancer, we have nothing in common. Being able to talk to my peers about what they are dealing with and knowing that they understand is an awesome feeling.

**Who would you recommend try to attend CancerCon?**
Anyone 18-39 who is going through a diagnosis of cancer can truly benefit from the conference. During the conference there are numerous breakout sessions to choose from to fill your weekend. These sessions deal with relevant emotional and physical support for dealing with a cancer diagnosis. In addition to helpful healthcare workshops, the weekend is also full of activities for fun. Things like sightseeing tours, sports games, scavenger hunts, movies, board games, and adult coloring books and other activities geared towards adolescents and young adults. CancerCon strives to be a place where people feel support, much like EANA, while offering different opportunities to the younger population of cancer patients.

As the population of young OM patients grows, OMF will continue expanding information relevant to you.

Thank you, Phil, for sharing your experience.

Fall/Winter 2017 Pictures
Golfers purchase raffle tickets for silent auction at Copperhead Grille Tournament

OM Patients and Caregivers ask questions during EANA
Teamwork at EANA 2017

EANA Saturday’s Mexican Themed Dinner
Miriachi Band serenaded EANA Conference attendees.