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**SUSAN G. KOMEN ANNOUNCES \$26 MILLION INVESTMENT IN NEW RESEARCH TO FIND SOLUTIONS FOR AGGRESSIVE AND METASTATIC BREAST CANCERS, AND TO HELP COMMUNITIES MOST AT RISK**

***Massachusetts Researchers Receive \$3,260,095 in Research Funding***

**DALLAS – Sept. 25, 2018** – Susan G. Komen®, the world’s leading breast cancer organization, today announced an additional investment of nearly \$26 million to fund 62 new research projects that seek to answer some of the toughest questions facing breast cancer. This new funding is part of the organization’s efforts to reduce the number of breast cancer deaths in the U.S. by 50 percent by 2026 and brings its total research investment to \$988 million to date – the largest nonprofit investment outside the U.S. government.

The grants include \$3,260,095 in new funding for research at five institutions in Massachusetts, bringing Komen’s total research investment in Massachusetts to \$79,633,610 since 1982.

“This year, Komen is investing in a number of areas that will help us achieve our bold goal and save lives. We are seeking answers to why our current drugs work for some patients, but not all, or why they work at first, but later become ineffective.” said Komen Chief Scientific Advisor, George Sledge, M.D., Chief of Oncology at Stanford University Department of Medicine. “We are also looking into aggressive forms of the disease like triple negative and inflammatory breast cancer, which tend to have poorer outcomes. By investigating novel techniques and therapies, we hope to bring new treatment options to patients.”

The newly announced grants will investigate critical areas in breast cancer research, including (but not limited to) projects focused on one or more of the following:

- Drug Resistance and Metastasis (40 grants, representing 70 percent of the grants awarded)
- Triple Negative Breast Cancer (23 grants)
- New Treatments (38 grants) such as Immunotherapies (9 grants)
- Health Disparities (8 grants)

This year, Komen’s competitive grant program for young investigators was entirely focused on drug resistance and metastatic disease. “Komen continues its long-standing investment in the next generation of scientists, to ensure that brilliant researchers whose careers are just beginning have funding to pursue their novel ideas,” said Komen Chief Scientific Advisor, Jennifer Pietenpol, Ph.D., Executive Vice President for Research and Director of the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. “We are proud that this investment includes opportunities for 23 innovative and inspired researchers to lead the way in making breast cancer discoveries that will improve care for all and help save lives.”

“More than 41,000 women and men will lose their lives to breast cancer this year alone. I lost my mother to the disease a few years back, and I myself have been treated for aggressive triple negative breast

cancer. The idea that it could impact my daughters is unacceptable,” said Komen President and CEO Paula Schneider. “We all have a personal reason or passion that we support the fight against breast cancer, and we’re proud to invite people to support the work that means the most to them. It will take all of us working together to save lives and ultimately end this disease.”

### **Komen’s Investments in New England**

Komen’s research program is funded in part by contributions from Komen’s nationwide Network of Affiliates, which directs a portion of funds raised locally to Komen’s national research program, while also investing in vital community programs that serve local women and men facing breast cancer.

Since 1993, Susan G. Komen New England has invested over \$13 million in Connecticut organizations, over \$3 million in Maine organizations, over \$9 million in Massachusetts organizations, and over \$6.5 million in Vermont and New Hampshire organizations providing breast health services to uninsured and underinsured residents. Komen New England has also contributed more than \$9.5 million to support breast cancer research.

“We are so thankful for the friends, family and neighbors that fight alongside us, helping to reduce the number of breast cancer deaths in Massachusetts, both on the ground and through research,” said Lori van Dam, CEO, Susan G. Komen New England.

In New England, Komen is granting to the following researchers:

Regina Barzilay, Ph.D., from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology will receive \$211,346 to develop software that will predict disease progression from imaging data. Dr. Barzilay will apply automated “deep learning” models on mammograms and associated clinical data to discover signs of early disease progression not visible to the human eye and identify those patients at higher risk for recurrence.

Komen Scholar Joan Brugge, Ph.D., from Harvard Medical School, will receive \$600,000 to study how loss of BRCA1 function leads to breast cancer in order to develop ways to prevent cancer in patients with BRCA1-mutations.

Rachel Freedman, M.D., M.P.H., from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, will receive \$300,000 to investigate ways to improve survival for breast cancer patients that are 70 years of age or older. Older patients often face worse outcomes when compared to their younger counterparts. The goal of this study is to identify tailored treatment methods that will improve survival for this population of patients.

Shom Goel, Ph.D., from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, will receive \$450,000 to investigate how to improve the effectiveness of a class of drugs called CDK4/6 inhibitors in the treatment of ER+ breast cancer. While these drugs can prevent tumor growth, patients often become resistant to them. The goal is to determine if treatment resistance can be overcome by combining these CDK4/6 inhibitors with immunotherapies (drugs that target and boost the immune response).

Jennifer Guerriero, Ph.D., from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, will receive \$450,000 to investigate ways to improve treatment response to a type of drug called PARP inhibitors for patients with triple negative breast cancer (TNBC) that also have a BRCA gene mutation. These tumors often hijack the patient’s immune system to become resistant or unresponsive to PARP inhibitors, which leads to tumor spread. The goal of this study is to determine if targeting macrophages, a type of immune cell, can improve response to PARP inhibitors and patient survival.

Taru Muranen, Ph.D. from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, will receive \$448,749 to study the how the tumor environment (area surrounding the breast tumor) can cause ER+ breast cancer to become resistant to hormone therapy. Dr. Muranen will use this information to discover new ways to overcome treatment resistance in ER+ breast cancer.

Komen Scholar Julie Palmer, Sc.D., from Boston University, will receive \$600,000 to develop a risk prediction tool that will consider the different risk factors for ER+ and ER- breast cancer, along with age-related incidence patterns in African-American women. This tool will help identify African-American women who would benefit from earlier and more frequent screening or alternative modes of screening.

Komen Scholar Ann Partridge, M.D., MPH, from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, will receive \$200,000 to expand her research evaluating the prevalence and predictors of outcomes in young women with breast cancer, including their diagnoses, effects of their treatment, and their social and behavioral outcomes. Her new studies will also consider the effectiveness of the Oncotype DX genetic test, cosmetic results and the outcomes of treatment and surgery decisions on outcomes.

Research has been a cornerstone of Komen's work since opening its doors in 1982. Komen also works to inspire action through advocacy and public policy, to mobilize communities through support services and opportunities to make a local impact, and provide the care that patients need (including screening, diagnostics, treatment and navigation).

#### **About Susan G. Komen®**

Susan G. Komen is the world's largest breast cancer organization, funding more breast cancer research than any other nonprofit outside of the federal government while providing real-time help to those facing the disease. Komen has set a Bold Goal to reduce the current number of breast cancer deaths by 50 percent in the U.S. by 2026. Since its founding in 1982, Komen has funded more than \$988 million in research and provided more than \$2.2 billion in funding to screening, education, treatment and psychosocial support programs serving millions of people in more than 60 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. That promise has become Komen's promise to all people facing breast cancer. 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).

#### **About Susan G. Komen® New England**

Susan G. Komen New England is working to better the lives of those facing breast cancer in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. Susan G. Komen® New England began with Races for the Cure® in Boston and Manchester, VT in 1993 and Hartford in 1994. The Affiliate has invested over \$13 million in Connecticut organizations, over \$3 million in Maine organizations, over \$9 million in Massachusetts organizations, and over \$6.5 million in Vermont and New Hampshire organizations providing breast health services to uninsured and underinsured residents. The Affiliate has also contributed more than \$9.5 million to support breast cancer research.

*Grants are contingent upon signed and executed contracts with Komen.*

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