

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

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American Cancer Society Awards SIU Cancer Institute Major Grant

American Cancer Society donations help fund beginning researchers

(Springfield, IL) – The American Cancer Society, National Home Office has awarded an Institutional Research Grant totaling \$127,500 to the SIU Cancer Institute at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine.

Institutional Research Grants are awarded to non-profit, non-federal institutions with a significant number of established investigators conducting cancer research and a replenishing pool of junior faculty interested in cancer research. The three-year grant will provide \$120,000 in seed money to support beginning investigators at SIU School of Medicine for pilot projects in basic, clinical, or physiological and behavioral cancer research. The grant will also provide a total of \$7,500 for a stipend each of the three years to support a medical student or graduate student interested in oncology research.

“We are honored to receive another grant from the American Cancer Society to support SIU’s talented faculty members actively engaged in basic and clinical cancer research so they can test their innovative ideas in fighting cancer,” said Dr. K. Thomas Robbins, interim director of the institute and vice president of the American Cancer Society, Western Region board of directors. “One of our most important goals for the SIU Cancer Institute is to build a center of excellence in oncology research that will lead to better care for cancer patients.”

The American Cancer Society is the largest source of private, not-for-profit funding for cancer research in the country, second only to the U.S. government. Each year, the Society funds more than \$130 million in cancer research. In addition to the national program, the Illinois Division of the

American Cancer Society has provided seed money to beginning scientists to undertake vital cancer research.

The Illinois Division recently awarded a grant to another researcher at the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine in Springfield. Dr. Sophia Ran is studying tumors and how they metastasize.

“Since the American Cancer Society started funding research in 1946, we have spent almost \$2.7 billion on scientific investigation, with a focus on funding the work of promising new investigators. As a result, the Society has been involved in the early research of virtually every major cancer advance in the past 50 years,” said Ermilo Barrera, MD, president of the American Cancer Society, Illinois Division board of directors. “In fact, the Society is proud to be the only private funding source that can claim 38 researchers who have gone on to win the Nobel Prize.”

Cancer research in Illinois is made possible through events such as Relay For Life, the Society’s signature activity that mobilizes communities to celebrate survivors, remember loved ones and raise awareness and funds for the fight against cancer. Teams gather for this overnight event with tents and sleeping bags to participate in the largest fundraising walk in the nation. The 2005 Relay For Life season takes place in more than 180 communities throughout the state.

Some of the examples of what American Cancer Society donor dollars have accomplished in the area of research include the Pap test for detection of cervical cancer, drugs to treat leukemia and advanced breast cancer, the prostate antigen test (PSA) for prostate cancer, and the use of Tamoxifen to reduce the risk of breast cancer.

For the most up-to-date cancer related information or to locate an American Cancer Society Relay for Life event in your area, visit www.cancer.org, or call 1.800.ACS.2345 where you'll always find a warm voice on the other end of the line -- 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy, and service. The Society’s Illinois Division has more than 120,000 volunteers and 280 staff members fighting cancer in the state.

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