

# momentum

SPRING 2007 | A NEWSLETTER FROM THE DAMON RUNYON CANCER RESEARCH FOUNDATION

## New Award Brings a Venture Capital Approach to Cancer Research

*\$5 Million Gift Launches Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Award*

**Y**oung visionaries have always been on the forefront of progress. This principle has guided the technology sector for decades. After all, Bill Gates and Steve Jobs were just 24 and 21 when they started a technology revolution.

The same tenet holds true in the biomedical realm: young and inventive mavericks with bold ideas and unconventional approaches make breakthrough discoveries. But these young scientists with high risk ideas have the hardest time getting grant support. The new Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Award seeks to help change this.

Through a novel partnership between the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation and venture capital philanthropists Andrew and Debra Rachleff, the new award will provide early career investigators with seed funding to independently conduct high risk research designed to significantly impact our understanding of cancer and approaches to its prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

"Silicon Valley has always been about pushing the envelope and we wanted to extend that idea to young scientists" says Andy Rachleff. Mr. Rachleff explains, "Shifting paradigms or transforming a field requires extraordinary ideas and a fearless pursuit of the impossible.

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Like many Americans, Andy and Debbie have been profoundly affected by cancer. "Our original intention was to focus on breast cancer research because we were frightened by its pervasiveness in family members and close friends. However, in talking with the Damon Runyon folks, we were made to understand that if you truly want a breakthrough then you can't limit your research to one particular cancer. What brought us together was a common view that young scientists were the best path to foster innovation," says Debbie Rachleff. Damon Runyon Board Member and Nobel Laureate David Baltimore, PhD, concurs: "Scientific progress depends on enabling young scientists to test new ideas and challenge long-held theories. They are the ones who often do what others would say is impossible."

Damon Runyon and the Rachleffs seek dramatic scientific breakthroughs with these awards. "Unlike traditional research funding which tends to focus on incremental advances, we are investing in ideas that are high risk but have the potential for breakthrough discoveries," says Lorraine Egan, Executive Director of the Foundation. As Mr. Rachleff says, "Similar to the venture capital world, we are not focused on batting averages. We are looking for home runs. One can't



Andrew and Debra Rachleff

forget that great breakthroughs cannot be achieved without taking significant risk. If just one of the young investigators we fund has an idea that leads to a major discovery, we will view this program as a huge success."

The partnership between Damon Runyon and the Rachleffs allows Andy and Debbie to avoid an administrative burden and direct their entire gift—all \$5 million—to funding scientists. "Instead of reinventing the wheel and adding new costs to the system, we are partnering with experts and know that 100% of our

gift will go to these extraordinary researchers" says Debbie Rachleff.

Who better to evaluate the next generation of out-of-the-box thinkers than the visionaries of today who themselves conceived breakthrough ideas at a young age. Each member of the Innovation Award committee appreciates the challenges in securing grant money for inventive research. Dr. Mark Davis of Stanford University, a pioneer in immunology, recalls, "One of my early grant proposals was rejected simply because, 'some of your experiments might fail.' It's hard to make real progress with that mind set." Special attention was also paid to bringing together thought leaders from both academic and commercial environments with diverse backgrounds so that a wide variety of ideas could be considered and analyzed.

Launched with initial funding of \$5 million from the Rachleffs, the program awards between three and five new grants each year, with each recipient receiving \$450,000 over three years. The first awards will be made in the fall of 2007.

Andy and Debbie hope that two things will come from the creation of the Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Award. First, that at least one scientist will make a real and lasting impact on the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of cancer. And second, that others will look to this as a model of funding—partnering with an existing foundation to fuel the innovation pipeline by supporting young investigators and their breakthrough ideas.

### NATION'S LEADING SCIENTISTS ON DAMON RUNYON-RACHLEFF INNOVATION AWARD COMMITTEE

**Ronald Levy, MD** (Committee Chair, Stanford University) developed Rituxan, the first FDA-approved monoclonal antibody to treat cancer.

**Elizabeth H. Blackburn, PhD** (University of California, San Francisco) is a world class biochemist who discovered telomerase, the enzyme that replenishes the protective structures at the ends of chromosomes.

**David Botstein, PhD** (Princeton University) revolutionized modern human genetics by developing methods for the mapping of the human genome — thus laying the foundation for the Human Genome Project.

**Mark M. Davis, PhD** (Stanford University) is an internationally renowned immunologist who discovered how the immune system recognizes foreign invaders and acts to destroy them.

**Napoleone Ferrara, MD** (Genentech, Inc.) is a pioneer in the field of angiogenesis whose work led to the development of Avastin, the first FDA approved anti-angiogenesis therapy.

**Stephen Fesik, PhD** (Abbott Laboratories) developed a novel method that has revolutionized how chemical libraries are screened for new anti-cancer drugs.

**Sanjiv Sam Gambhir, MD, PhD** (Stanford University) transformed the molecular imaging field by enabling

the real-time visualization of biological events in patients and in isolated cells.

**Todd R. Golub, MD** (Broad Institute) pioneered the application of genomic approaches, particularly micro-array analysis, to cancer biology.

**Linda G. Griffith, PhD** (MIT) is a leader in the rapidly-emerging field of "tissue engineering," the manipulation of cells to form multi-dimensional structures that carry out the functions of normal tissue.

**Greg Hannon, PhD** (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory) is at the forefront of small RNA biology, studying the earliest stages of cancer development and investigating small RNAs as cancer therapeutics.

**Kenneth W. Kinzler, PhD** (Johns Hopkins University) identified the sequence of genetic mutations that appear to initiate the great majority of colorectal cancers.

**Jacqueline A. Lees, PhD** (MIT) focuses on identifying cellular networks affected by cancer causing oncogenes and tumor suppressor genes.

**Kevan M. Shokat, PhD** (University of California, San Francisco) develops new chemical-based approaches to decipher cellular signaling networks, enabling the quick analysis of the full spectrum of cellular processes.

> YOU'RE INVITED

# Annual Breakfast Honors Lawrence A. Bossidy



Keynote Remarks  
**Peter S. Kim, PhD**  
President  
Merck Research Laboratories

Tuesday, June 5th, 2007  
Cipriani 42nd Street



**LAWRENCE A. BOSSIDY**  
FORMER CHAIRMAN AND CEO,  
HONEYWELL INTERNATIONAL

For more information, please call 212.455.0501.

## Broadway on the Bay

On December 5th, 2006, the Bay Area Leadership Council of the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation held its first theatre benefit in San Francisco. After a spectacular pre-theatre dinner at the Grand Café, a sell-out crowd enjoyed the first San Francisco performance of the Broadway smash – **Jersey Boys**. Guests included: Connie and Bob Lurie; Debbie and Andrew Rachleff; Judy Swanson; Deborah Strobin; and board members Ron Levy and Gordon Ringold.



Connie Lurie (far L) and Damon Runyon Fellows (L to R) Drs. Susan Ruth Schwab, Alain Laederach, Wendy Gilbert, and Mathew Miller at the inaugural theatre benefit in San Francisco.

> YOU'RE INVITED

## Get Tickled Pink – Thursday, May 17th

Our spring theatre benefit sizzles! Enjoy pre-theatre dinner at the Blue Fin restaurant and Broadway's next smash hit – **Legally Blonde** – on **Thursday, May 17th**.

Call Michael Stiver at 212.455.0501 to reserve your tickets now!



## New Partnerships with Novartis and Genentech to Support Clinical Investigator Awards

We are pleased to announce that Novartis and Genentech have each generously committed to fund Damon Runyon Clinical Investigators. Novartis will be supporting two physician-scientists with a donation of \$900,000 and Genentech has donated \$450,000 to fund one investigator. The support of these two leaders in the development of ground-breaking cancer therapeutics is a strong endorsement of our program, which is designed to train the next generation of physician-scientists capable of translating scientific discoveries into new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer. They join the Clinical Investigator Award's founding sponsor Eli Lilly & Company, as well as Siemens Medical Solutions, in supporting this prestigious award program.

## GO VERTICAL CHICAGO 2006

Our fifth anniversary climb up the Sears Tower in Chicago was a great success with nearly 2,000 fearless and committed climbers conquering 103 floors and raising over \$300,000!



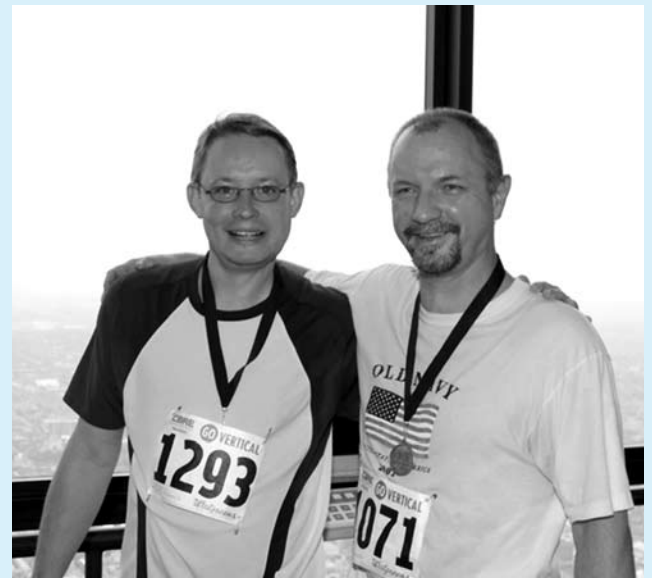
### SAVE THE DATES

**Go Vertical Aspen 2007**  
Sunday, July 29th

**Go Vertical Chicago 2007**  
Sunday, November 11th



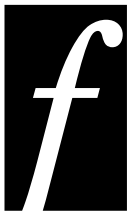
Friends celebrate after reaching the top of the Sears Tower at Go Vertical Chicago 2006.



Two climbers catch their breath and enjoy the stunning views after taming the Sears Tower.



After a memorable day, climbers were congratulated for their role in funding discovery!



## 10 New Damon Runyon Fellows Selected

The Damon Runyon Fellowship Award supports the training of the brightest young postdoctoral scientists in leading laboratories across the country. The three year award is designed to enlist the skills and creativity of the next generation in the fight against cancer.

### Emily E. Arias, PhD

*The Rockefeller University, New York, New York with Tarun M. Kapoor, PhD*

Uses state-of-the-art live cell microscopy to examine how chemotherapeutic drugs destroy cancer cells

### Lu Gan, PhD

*California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California with Grant J. Jensen, PhD*

Employs new imaging technology to produce life-like images of the dividing cell's nucleus or "brain center"

### Mary G. Goll, PhD

*Carnegie Institution of Washington, Baltimore, Maryland with Marnie E. Halpern, PhD*

Explores how alterations in DNA packaging can change cells into tumor cells by either turning on genes that promote cancer or by turning off genes that protect cells from cancer

### Rebecca A. Ihrie, PhD

*University of California, San Francisco, California with Arturo Alvarez-Buylla, PhD*

Investigates the growth and proliferation of stem cells within the adult brain to better understand the development and treatment of brain tumors

### Krista Kaasik, PhD

*University of California, San Francisco, California with Ying-Hui Fu, PhD and Louis J. Ptacek, MD*

Studies the connection between circadian rhythms and tumor formation

### Esteban O. Mazzone, PhD

*Columbia University, New York, New York with Hynek Wichterle, PhD*

Identifies the molecular cues that direct how stem cells become more specialized cells during embryonic development

### Guangshuo Ou, PhD

*University of California, San Francisco, California with Ronald D. Vale, PhD*

Explores how to minimize or reverse organ damage that results from cancer therapy

### Yun Wu, PhD

*Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey with Virginia A. Zakian, PhD*

Studies the process by which chromosomes become unstable and multiply uncontrollably, ultimately leading to tumor formation

### Shenqin Yao, PhD

*Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts with Catherine Dulac, PhD*

Investigates the chemical origin of the behavioral problems that result from brain tumors

### Hayan Yoon, PhD

*University of California, Berkeley, California with Mu-Ming Poo, PhD*

Studies the mechanisms of drug addiction in order to develop non-addictive pain medication for cancer patients

\* Physician-Scientist - \$170,000 Basic Scientist - \$140,000

*Congratulations to all!*

## DISCOVERIES & DISTINCTIONS

**Eileen P. White, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Fellow '83-'85*) and **Elaine V. Fuchs, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Fellow '77 and Damon Runyon Board Member*) were elected to senior leadership positions of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), the largest professional association for cancer researchers. Dr. White will join the Board of Directors and Dr. Fuchs will serve on the Nominating Committee.

**Pardis C. Sabeti, MD, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Fellow '04-'06*) and **Chad A. Cowan, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Fellow '02-'05*) were profiled in *Seed* magazine as young visionaries who are "pushing boundaries, shifting baselines, and moving science forward."

**Jeremy N. Rich, MD** (*Damon Runyon-Lilly Clinical Investigator '04-'09*) and coworkers report on a new combination therapy with promising results for advanced gliomas, brain cancers with notoriously poor prognoses.

**Robert H. Vonderheide, MD, PhD** (*Damon Runyon-Lilly Clinical Investigator '00-'05*) and colleagues report exciting results from an early clinical trial using a new immunotherapy targeting CD40, a molecule expressed on the surface of cancer cells.

**Madhav Dhodapkar, MD** (*Damon Runyon-Lilly Clinical Investigator '02-'07*) and colleagues report that bortezomib, a drug currently in use for the bone marrow cancer multiple myeloma, may act to increase the body's immune response to tumor cells.

**Scott A. Armstrong, MD, PhD** (*Damon Runyon-Lilly Clinical Investigator '03-'08*), **Matthew L. Meyerson, MD, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Fellow '95-'98*), **William R. Sellers, MD** (*Damon Runyon-Lilly Clinical Investigator '01-'05*) and their collaborators describe a novel technique called high throughput genotyping that guides cancer diagnosis and personalized choice of therapies for treatment, decreasing unwanted side effects and improving chances for a cure.

**Gregory J. Hannon, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Fellow '92-'94 and Innovation Award Committee Member*), **Xiaodong Wang, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Fellow '91-'94*) and **Richard M. Losick, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Scientific Advisory Committee Member '99-'03*) received awards from the National Academy of Sciences for their exceptional scientific contributions to human knowledge.

**Andrew G. Dillin, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Fellow '99-'01*) received the prestigious McKnight Neuroscience of Brain Disorders Award.

**For information about recent discoveries made by Damon Runyon scientists, please visit the "News" section on our website ([www.drcrf.org](http://www.drcrf.org)).**

## Damon Runyon Alum Leading Stem Cell Field

The latest discovery from **Elaine V. Fuchs, PhD** (*Damon Runyon Fellow '77 and Damon Runyon Board Member*) is likely to have a long term impact on the treatment of many diseases, including cancer. She and colleagues were the first to successfully use adult stem cells from the hair follicle to clone mice that thrive into adulthood - but the implications of this discovery go beyond cloning. Dr. Fuchs' work provides evidence that these skin stem cells have the potential for generating embryonic stem cells which are capable of producing any other type of cell from muscle cells to neurons. If embryonic stem cells can be generated from a patient's skin, and then used to create cells or tissues according to the patient's specific need, dramatic advances in the treatment of cancer, tissue rejection, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and neurodegeneration are likely to follow.





> \$5 Million Gift Launches Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Award

> Join us for our Annual Breakfast on June 5th

> Go Vertical Chicago raises \$300,000 for Cancer Research

> Ten New Postdoctoral Awards Announced

## broadway bound?

Why pay broker's fees when you can get the best house seats, a tax deduction, and support cutting-edge cancer research at the same time? Use the Damon Runyon Broadway Tickets Service for your personal and business entertaining!

It's easy. Simply call our dedicated Broadway Tickets line at 212.455.0550 between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Payment can be made by major credit card or by check. Your tickets will be waiting for you at the Box Office on the night of the show.



**A Moon for the Misbegotten – tickets only \$205 each!**

"If you only see one production this year, make it this one" says London's *Daily Express*! Following a critically-acclaimed, sold out run in London, Eugene O'Neill's classic, **A Moon for the Misbegotten**, moves to Broadway with the original London cast – including Academy Award winner Kevin Spacey. Call 212.455.0550 at 9 am on the first day of each month for your best chance to snag great seats to one of the season's hottest show.

**Bay Area Bound?**

The Damon Runyon Foundation is proud to partner with the Curran Theatre in San Francisco in the recent expansion of our Broadway Tickets service. Seats are now available for the Broadway sensation **Jersey Boys**. Call 212.455.0550 to make your reservations.

Catch the show that continues to bring down the house – the smash hit **Jersey Boys**—or one of the NEW SHOWS opening in Spring 2007:

**Talk Radio**  
starring Liev Schreiber

**Curtains**  
starring David Hyde Pierce

**The Pirate Queen**

**The Year of Magical Thinking**  
starring Vanessa Redgrave

**Coram Boy**

**Deuce**  
starring Angela Lansbury & Marian Seldes

**Frost/Nixon**  
starring Frank Langella & Michael Sheen

**Inherit the Wind**  
starring Christopher Plummer & Brian Dennehy

**Legally Blonde**  
starring Laura Bell Bundy

**A Moon for the Misbegotten**  
starring Kevin Spacey & Eve Best

**Radio Golf**

**TO ORDER TICKETS CALL  
212.455.0550 or 1.877.7CANCER**

(For more information about our Broadway Tickets Service, go to our website [www.drcrf.org](http://www.drcrf.org))

## GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

➤ **Tribute gifts** Honor someone in your life, give special meaning to condolences or celebrate nuptials with a special gift that supports cancer research. The Foundation will send a beautiful card on your behalf to the person(s) of your choosing.

➤ **Remember the Foundation in your will or trust** Support the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation after providing for your family and loved ones. Bequests and trusts using property, securities or cash provide long-term financial stability to the Foundation.

➤ **Gifts of securities** If you have stock that has grown in value and produces little income, you can make a charitable gift of these securities and enjoy significant tax savings.

➤ **Matching gifts** Double your impact through a corporate matching gift. Check with your employer's human resources department to find out if this is an option for you.

➤ **Named awards** Sponsor a brilliant scientist for a three-year period or in perpetuity, and we will name the award for you or your family, or in honor of a loved one.

➤ **Host an event** Help the Foundation reach out to new friends by hosting an event to raise funds and awareness about our important work.

➤ **Take a trip on us!** Make a donation with a credit card and add to your reward points!

**For more information about these giving opportunities, please call 1.877.7CANCER.**

**100%**  
for cancer  
research\*

\* THAT'S HOW MUCH OF YOUR DONATION WILL BE USED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

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