

MRA's Latest Research Report: We Are Melanoma Research

Take a look at the featured topics—and skin cancer patient advocates—in the report on Melanoma Research Alliance's scientific retreat.

July 30, 2024 By [Melanoma Research Alliance](#)

Each year, the Melanoma Research Alliance brings together melanoma thought leaders from across the global research community to exchange ideas, share recent scientific successes and hurdles, forge new collaborations, and connect with the patient advocate community.

To start the Scientific Retreat, patient advocate Leah Adams shared her melanoma journey. Her early-stage melanoma diagnosis, surgery, and frequent follow-up dermatology visits have completely changed how she views the world around her. While learning to balance her new reality, Leah's father was unexpectedly diagnosed with Stage IV melanoma just two years after her diagnosis. "My dad's late-stage melanoma is now stable due to treatment advances made in the last decade. This progress gives hope to and improves the quality of life of patients — regardless of the stage of their melanoma," she told attendees. Leah emphasized that without the scientific progress of the last ten years, her dad would not have survived long after his diagnosis. Emphasizing the importance of melanoma research, she shared, "Research is the beacon that illuminates our path to better treatments, increased understanding, and, ultimately, cures."

Melanoma patient advocate Kellie Cereceres took the stage next to share her difficult journey of receiving a Stage 4 melanoma diagnosis after months of extreme pain and visits to the doctor. She started targeted therapy to treat her advanced disease, but soon had trouble tolerating treatment. Through her own self-advocacy, Kellie was able to make a plan with her oncologist to receive the lowest possible treatment dose to mitigate further side effects. "I continued to be my own advocate as I researched everything that could keep me alive and healthy," she said. Today, Kellie is No Evidence of Disease (NED), and she expressed gratitude for the research and advances in the field of melanoma. She remains hopeful and excited for future developments that will help improve the lives of all patients. She closed her remarks by sharing a poem she wrote about the cancer experience, "... tomorrow is another day, another chance to grab onto hope, another day to find joy ..."

The cover of the MRA 2024 report

Courtesy of Melanoma Research Alliance

Featured topics in the 2024 Research Report:

- Harnessing the Power of Cell-Based Therapies
- Advancements in Metastatic Melanoma and In-Transit Disease
- Exploring New Avenues in the Tumor Microenvironment
- Supercharging T-Cell Responses Against Melanoma
- Neoadjuvant Studies as Drug Development Launchpads
- Navigating Melanoma's Continuum with Dermatology, Surgery, Oncology, and Survivorship Strategies
- Melanoma Unraveled: Decoding Individual Risk, Amplifying Awareness, and Pursuing Precision
- Scanxiety: Understanding, Managing, & Thriving Beyond the Fear
- Breaking Barriers: Demystifying Clinical Trials

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