

# HIGHLIGHTS



NEWS IN THE FIGHT FOR CURES

FALL 2018

At The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS), generous donors and volunteers make lifesaving advances possible.

## Supporter's Corner

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Driving home a message of support for patients and families facing cancer, Subaru partnered with LLS for the third consecutive year to reach out to patients in hospitals and treatment centers nationwide.

In June, through the Subaru Loves to Care health-focused initiative, Subaru retailers and LLS chapters together delivered more than 40,000 blankets and 7,700 arts and

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## Gains Outpace Expectations In Master Clinical Trial

Now in its second year, LLS's Beat AML Master Clinical Trial continues to outpace expectations. The first master trial ever sponsored by a voluntary health organization, Beat AML takes a new, paradigm-shifting approach to clinical research. By simultaneously testing multiple therapies from multiple pharmaceutical companies at multiple institutions, the Master Clinical Trial aims to drive the first significant gains in decades

for patients with acute myeloid leukemia (AML).

### Dramatic Growth

Since the Master Trial was launched, in June 2016, patient response has been extraordinary. Already, more than 380 patients have enrolled in the trial at participating sites across the country, quickly closing in on the original target of 500 patients.

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▲ Specializing in treating AML patients over 60 years of age, Uma Borate, MD, MS, of Oregon Health & Science University Knight Cancer Institute is proud to participate in the Beat AML Master Clinical Trial. “These are the golden years of their lives, when their time is finally their own,” says Dr. Borate. “I am hopeful clinical trials such as these will give back my patients their precious hard-earned time to spend as they please.”

## Supporter's Corner

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crafts kits, along with cards handwritten by Subaru customers offering hope and support.

“Subaru Loves to Care is all about improving the health of our local communities, and we are proud to once again work alongside our valued partner, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, to continue supporting patients and their families battling cancer,” said Alan Bethke, senior vice president of marketing at Subaru of America. “We hope that through this program our gestures of hope will comfort and warm those who need it most.”

This year’s campaign involved 500 retailers and set a new one-year record.



# Cultivating Tomorrow's Leaders in AML Research

Cures for AML require bold, creative science. LLS is committed to driving that science through our Career Development Program (CDP), which awards grants to encourage the best and brightest young investigators to pursue blood cancer research. This support provides critical funding for emerging researchers, as well as lasting prestige that enhances their entire careers.

LLS investment in this area is significant: of the 120 CDP grants currently awarded, 44 are devoted to AML and six more are devoted to myelodysplastic syndromes, a precursor disease that can progress to AML. Included among these innovators are the following:



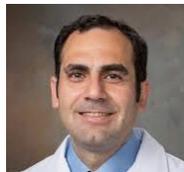
**Jason Butler, PhD**, of Hackensack Meridian Health, is studying whether aging blood vessels can be manipulated to safeguard healthy stem cells.



**Todd Druley, MD, PhD**, of Washington University in St. Louis, is focused on improving molecular detection of mutations in AML cells to inform treatment decisions.



**Samuel Taylor, PhD**, of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, has discovered a molecule that can inhibit a genetic mutation and trigger cancer cell death.



**Amer Zeidan, MBBS**, of Yale University, seeks to improve outcomes for bone-marrow malignancies through the use of immune checkpoint inhibitors.

Since 1953, the CDP has helped jump-start the careers of nearly 3,000 scientists, including three Nobel laureates. By cultivating today’s most promising young researchers, we will deliver tomorrow’s cures to patients with AML.

To support research in the area of greatest interest to you, contact us at 1-888-773-9958.

## Gains Outpace Expectations in Master Clinical Trial

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LLS continues to expand the Master Trial to sites across the country and has opened at seven new clinical locations since the spring of 2018. This brings the power of precision medicine to patients in regions across the U.S., and more locations will be added in the months ahead.

Under the trial, LLS is also forging productive collaborations between pharmaceutical companies, with seven companies and 11 studies in the trial. Although they are competitors, these companies are joining together under LLS's leadership. More pharmaceutical partners are expected to join as the trial continues to expand.

### Expanded Focus

As participation grows, so does the scope of the trial. AML progresses and evolves quickly, acquiring additional genetic mutations. To cure AML, treatments must target all of the mutations driving it. The solution is combination therapies that deliver a one-two punch: one

“For too long we've treated AML as a one-size-fits-all disease when it is really a much more complex grouping of multiple subtypes of blood cancer, and this trial sets out to change that paradigm. Our goal is to deliver the right drug to the right patient at the right time.”

*Louis J. DeGennaro, PhD, LLS President and CEO*

therapy to attack the predominant genetic mutation, and another to attack secondary mutations. Combination studies have been added to the trial, with a goal of adding a total of five combination studies by early next year.

In another advancement, at the request of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, LLS is developing a tool to assess the ability of AML patients to withstand treatment by comparing their “biological age” to their chronological age. Depending

on the mutations driving the disease, AML can make patients appear more fragile or less fragile than they actually are. Knowing the biological age of patients will enable doctors to devise the most personalized and effective treatment plans possible.

Beat AML was made possible with the generosity and vision of leadership donors, including the Harry T. Mangurian Jr. Foundation, and their continued partnership continues to sustain the initiative.

Beat AML  
Master Clinical Trial  
is now open at

13

sites

- The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center (OSUCCC)
- Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK)
- Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) Knight Cancer Institute
- University of Chicago Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center at University of Texas Southwestern
- University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah
- Mayo Clinic Cancer Center, Jacksonville, FL
- Mayo Clinic Cancer Center, Phoenix, AZ
- Mayo Clinic Cancer Center, Rochester, MN
- UCLA Health
- UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Winship Cancer Institute, Emory University

# LLS Calls For More Action On Soaring Costs of Cancer Care

LLS released its *“Progress Report on the Cost of Cancer Care”* in August, stating that costs are still skyrocketing and more must be done to ease the burden on patients. “Far more action is needed to address the financial toxicity that adds to the stress of a cancer diagnosis for patients and their families,” said Louis J. DeGennaro, PhD, LLS president and CEO.

Experts estimate that between the years 2010 and 2020, out-of-pocket costs for cancer care will jump 39 percent, when the cost of care is expected to exceed \$173 billion.

LLS issued the progress report one year after launching its Cost of Care Initiative, which calls on

stakeholders—from doctors and hospitals to insurers and policymakers—to collaborate to reduce financial distress for cancer patients.

In 2017, LLS proposed more than two dozen policy recommendations aimed at reducing the price tag for cancer care. Since then, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has sped up the review of applications for generic drugs, and other changes are on the way.

LLS is continuing this work. “We are pushing hard to advocate for change across the health care system so patients can focus on their survival, not their finances,” said Gwen Nichols, MD, LLS chief medical officer.