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Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance Supports New Stand Up to Cancer Dream Team Dedicated to Ovarian Cancer

New Research Opportunity Marks First Time MOCA has Expanded Research Funding on a National Scale

(MINNEAPOLIS, MINN. April 21, 2015) — The Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance (MOCA) has joined several other leading ovarian cancer organizations in this week’s announcement of an Ovarian Cancer Dream Team, which will begin research in July.

Funded by contributions from a groundbreaking collaboration of the nation’s ovarian cancer organizations, the Ovarian Cancer Dream Team will research therapies that target DNA repair, as well as a new method to identify, counsel and prevent the development of ovarian cancer in women with a high genetic risk of developing it.

The Stand Up to Cancer Dream Team is being funded for 3 years with \$6 million from the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund, the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance and the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, with contributions from organizations throughout the United States, including a \$100,000 commitment from MOCA.

MOCA has provided more than \$5 million to ovarian cancer research in Minnesota, making the organization one of the largest private, non-profit funders of ovarian cancer research in the nation. This is the first time MOCA has funded research outside of Minnesota.

“MOCA has always had an emphasis on research funding, as we know it is the only way we’ll make real progress against ovarian cancer,” said Kathleen Gavin, MOCA executive director. “By providing funding to the Ovarian Cancer Dream Team, we are further strengthening our commitment to the research community and funding a strong collaborative team who are focused on new ways to reach those at high risk and to prevent and treat this disease. This research will benefit women here in Minnesota and nationwide.”

MOCA’s executive director was also selected to serve as one of three advocates on the newly formed Team. Along with Gavin, Jamie Crase, an ovarian cancer survivor and Sue Friedman of Facing our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE) will be working to represent the needs and

interests of ovarian cancer patients and families and serving to connect the scientific and advocacy community.

Alan D'Andrea, MD, co-director of the Gene Therapy Center at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, and the Fuller-American Cancer Society professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, will lead the Dream Team. Elizabeth M. Swisher, MD, professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Washington in Seattle, will be co-leader.

In addition to the team leaders, the project will involve researchers at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota; University of Chicago; The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston; and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York.

Because researchers and clinicians from Mayo Clinic are on the team, Minnesota women will have access to clinical trials and screening and prevention strategies undertaken by the team.

Ovarian cancer is the deadliest of all the gynecologic cancers. More than 21,000 American women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2014, and more than 14,000 women will lose their lives to the disease. In Minnesota, nearly 400 women will be diagnosed with the disease this year. There is NO test for ovarian cancer – more information can be found at www.mnovarian.org.

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About the Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance: The Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance (MOCA) is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness, providing education and support to women and families impacted by the disease and funding the research needed to detect ovarian cancer early and treat it properly. MOCA was founded in 1999 by a group of ovarian cancer survivors. Since then, MOCA has grown to an organization of more than 1,000 survivors and 40,000 donors and active members with a full range of programs encompassing education, support and research. MOCA has awarded more than \$5 million to research projects for ovarian cancer research in Minnesota. For additional information, go to www.mnovarian.org or call (612) 822-0500.