



...where cancer research meets compassion.

Focus ON THE Search

Clinical trials advancing the quest for cancer treatment, management, and prevention.

Western States Cancer Research NCORP ■ Spring 2021 ■ Issue 35

Upcoming Events

■ Ribbons and Roses 2021 Fundraiser May 7, 2021

Location: Lamar Street Center in Arvada, CO

See article at right for more information.

DID YOU KNOW?

714 The number of patients that Western States Cancer Research NCORP is currently following on their post-treatment health status in **5** states across the West, including Alaska.



WSCR-NCORP is a member of the Community Health Charities.

Please consider supporting WSCR-NCORP in your workplace giving program.



Save the Date for Ribbons and Roses

Where: Lamar Street Center in Arvada, CO
When: Friday, May 7, 2021, 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

To adhere to COVID-19 public health guidelines and safety precautions, the Lamar Street Center and WSCR-NCORP will conduct the evening's events inside and will follow the standard social distancing guidelines set forth by the CDC and the State of Colorado. Ticket sales will be limited, with reservations required to join us. We welcome any questions.

A gourmet plated dinner and drinks will be served. Sponsorships are available now and start at \$500 each. **To learn more, call Laura at 720-475-5728.**

The **2020-21 Berris Award** winners will be recognized at Ribbons and Roses. We hope you can join us to honor: **Dr. David Trevarthen, Gerald Hayes and Debbie Markham** on May 7th.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Consuelo Kelly

My name is **Consuelo Kelly**. I am an Oncology Certified Nurse, and have recently obtained my Masters of Science in Nursing, with board certification as a Family Nurse Practitioner.

In August of 2020 I re-joined the clinical research coordinator (CRC) team with WSCR-NCORP. Previously I worked as a CRC for the organization which was then known as Colorado Cancer Research Program, after which I served as a volunteer member of the Board of Trustees. All along my journey as an oncology nurse, I have attended the wonderful community outreach events sponsored by WSCR-NCORP. My favorite part of these was getting to see previous clinical trial participants who continue to keep close ties with our group.

The driving force behind my passion for oncology research is my mother. When I was ten years old, she was diagnosed with a form of colon cancer, and before my 11th birthday, she passed away. Her battle was heartbreaking. Seeing her struggle through her chemo treatments is now what motivates me every day to help change the trajectory for cancer patients.

Through my work as a CRC, I get to see patients that are not only managing but thriving with a diagnosis of cancer due to new treatments and therapies that are the direct result of successful clinical trials. I am excited and hopeful for a brighter future for cancer patients and increased access to trials for patients in the community.



Consuelo with her sons.

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Nicholas DiBella, MD, *Principal Investigator, Emeritus Trustee*

Our Mission

To provide the people of Colorado, Montana, Utah, Washington state and Alaska the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the medical research conducted through cancer clinical studies.

Our Purpose

To serve as an NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP), as designated by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), to enable people in their local communities to participate in cancer prevention, cancer control, and cancer treatment research through local physicians, community hospitals and clinics.

Our Vision

The marriage of clinical research and compassion via the progress we help affect through community oncology research.

For More Information

Contact one of the following staff at 303.777.2663.

Lisa Switzer, MA
CEO and Executive Director

Laura Gabbay
Major Gifts and Planned Giving Officer

Nicholas DiBella, MD
Principal Investigator



Find us on Facebook at
[endcancerco](https://www.facebook.com/endcancerco)

Message from Lisa Switzer, MA

CEO and Executive Director

Dear Friends,

My Irish family has a saying that didn't mean much to me when I was young: "There is no luck except where there is discipline." Throughout my career, those words have taken on new layers of meaning.

Over the past year, our organization, like our country, has had to make many changes in order to adapt to our circumstances. Most of our decisions were intentional and some were serendipitous, but the choice to see them through has involved discipline. I am extremely proud of and grateful for the team we have put together, our supportive Board of Trustees and the medical professionals we work with to bring cancer clinical trials to patients in their own communities.

Last year before the pandemic broke and COVID wasn't yet part of our lexicon, our leadership team created a work environment that allowed our

staff to work from home if their life circumstances warranted it. Little did we know all of our lives would dictate working remotely! On March 13th, 2020, we sent everyone home with all their office supplies, thinking we would be back together in the near future. Little did we know...

Discipline has kept us safe and allowed us to retain a sense of camaraderie despite being dispersed. We still do our work with commitment and compassion, and we stay connected because of intentionality and our care for one another. Making it through 2020 with grace was not possible because of luck or happenstance; it was possible because of discipline.

Sláinte (good health to you),

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers



SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

Citywide Banks



Citywide Banks has been a profound leader in corporate philanthropy across Colorado, supporting mental health wellness, education, economic development, and other local causes. All of the professionals at Citywide Banks live and work here in Colorado. They have developed deep roots with their partners, and this is their community too.

For more than 50 years, Citywide Banks' leadership and employee team have been an active supporter of hundreds of nonprofit causes. Giving back to their community is one of their core values, and that is why Citywide Banks is proud to support Western States Cancer Research NCORP. In 2020, the bank's outreach highlights included \$100,000 to COVID-19 relief efforts such as emergency meals, medical supplies, and small business relief. In addition, Citywide Banks proudly believes in their mission of enriching lives one customer, employee and community at a time.

Our sincere thanks to Citywide Banks. To learn more about the community outreach commitment of Citywide Banks, please visit [citywidebanks.com/community-outreach](https://www.citywidebanks.com/community-outreach).



PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Jeffrey Matous, MD, Hematologist Oncologist

Interview by Western States Cancer Research NCORP Staff Member, Laura Gabbay, February 2021



What role as a hematologist-oncologist do you play in any given cancer research clinical trial?

My role in a cancer clinical trial is to always let my patients who might be eligible to enroll in a study know about the various clinical trials that are open.

Clinical trials offer the most innovative, effective and up-to-date treatment options for a cancer patient. The first thing I think about when I care for a patient with a cancer diagnosis is: do I have a clinical trial that is appropriate for this patient? The effort is well worth it because anything we, as physicians can do, to provide access to clinical trials and studies is vital.

What advice would you have for other physicians interested in pursuing cancer research opportunities at the local level?

Given that the types of studies offered by NCORPs like Western States Cancer Research NCORP are National Cancer Institute (NCI) studies, conceived and put out by the finest physicians and researchers in the country, it is imperative for physicians to consider the opportunity.

Every time a patient is at a treatment crossroads, either diagnosis or when changing treatments, physicians would learn that NCI clinical trials offer the most cutting-edge treatment options and latest advances in science for their patients.

If a physician does not take interest or explore cancer research opportunities at the local level, s/he is missing something. S/he may be missing an important opportunity to improve the care of her/his patient.

What lies ahead for cancer research in 2021?

In 2020, there was a marked, intentional decrease in accruals by physicians to cancer studies and clinical trials, as we figured out how best to contend with COVID-19.

I am glad to report that with the lessons we have learned since last March, we are full-steam head once again with our patients to enroll them in the trials that might help them.

To read the entire interview, visit our blog on our website, westernstatesncorp.com.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

WSCR-NCORP Study Database for Physicians

Taking to heart how essential it is that we continue to strive for excellence in our use of technology, during 2020, we launched a searchable Study Database on our website. This new Study Database allows physicians and clinical staff to now navigate and search for WSCR-NCORP studies. This tool offers physicians access to a robust trial menu that investigates agents through more than 70+ trials currently. It is our hope that physicians in the states in which we are the site manager for clinical trials will use this tool to locate studies for which their own patients might be eligible.

The page is located at westernstatesncorp.org/physicians/study-database-for-physicians/

Physicians – often the key trusted messengers in conversations with their patients about clinical trials – can see which of our more than 70 open clinical trials are open to accruals (new enrollments). Of note as well, providers can search by specific cancer diagnoses, such as breast cancer, urinary bladder cancer, kidney cancer, leukemia, and other forms of cancer.

As trusted experts in the field of oncology, hematology, and radiation research, we have opened more than 900 trials since we were founded in 1988 and been a clinical trial leader in hundreds of approved cancer therapies over the past 38 years. Our new Study Database is another innovative layer to this commitment to expanding enrollment of eligible cancer patients on clinical trials.

Every gift makes a difference.

Our nonprofit began as the vision of local oncologists who wanted to ensure that Colorado residents could benefit locally from cancer clinical research.

As we continue to grow, help us with our outreach so cancer patients may learn more about research trials in their communities!

Go to our website, westernstatesncorp.org and click on the **Donate** button, call **720-475-5728**, or mail your donation to:

1325 S. Colorado Blvd.
Suite B-400
Denver, CO 80222

Thank you!

Focus ON THE Search

Founded in 1983, Western States Cancer Research NCORP (WSCR-NCORP), an affiliate of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) of the NIH, provides cancer patients with cutting-edge treatment options through innovative research and clinical trials in their own communities with their own doctors. At WSCR-NCORP, we work every day to create opportunities where clinical research meets compassion.

WSCR-NCORP's Partner Hospitals & Cancer Centers

Boulder Community Hospital	Jefferson Healthcare
Colorado Blood Cancer Institute (CBCI)	Mountain Blue Cancer Care Center
Foundation Health Partners Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	Rocky Mountain Cancer Center – Aurora, Centennial, Littleton, Midtown, Rose, Sky Ridge, Swedish
Health One Swedish Medical Center	The Women's Imaging Center
Intermountain Healthcare	

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Triple Negative Breast Cancer Awareness

March 3rd marked the launch of **Triple Negative Breast Cancer Awareness Day**, the global annual awareness campaign to help eradicate triple negative breast cancer and celebrate amazing triple negative breast cancer (TNBC) warriors! On that day and throughout the entire month of March, we join with breast cancer awareness volunteers across the world to share facts about this aggressive form of breast cancer.

TNBC tends to be more likely to recur and more difficult to treat because there is no targeted treatment. TNBC disproportionately strikes younger women, women of African, Latina or Caribbean descent, and those with BRCA1 mutations. Consult with your doctor today to learn more about TNBC and other forms of breast cancer detection.



If you are interested in supporting our work with a financial contribution, please visit our website or call our office. **Thank you.**

Western States Cancer Research NCORP is a 501-c-3 nonprofit organizations. Donations to support our programs are tax-deductible.

To sign up for our new electronic mailing list, please visit our Contact page under the About tab.

www.westernstatesncorp.org
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