



Since 2011, SAA – Chicago has provided Rush University Medical Center with more than \$1.1 million and has funded 15 distinct research projects. Rush uses a peer-reviewed process for determining which projects will receive SAA grants, and to date, more than 100 research proposals have been submitted for consideration.

The ultimate goal of funding early stage cancer research is to give doctors the resources – from staff to lab equipment – to bolster their areas of study and to be eligible to receive grants from organizations such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In the past 5 years, 3 doctors who have received grants from SAA – Chicago, have received \$2.5 million from the NIH to continue their research.



With critical seed money from Swim Across America and other private funding sources, **Dr. Barua** was notified July 1, 2016 that he has been awarded RO1 funding (the highest level) amounting to \$1.7 million from the NIH. SAA funding from the 2013 Chicago swim enabled Dr. Barua to refine and bolster his study, which is the basis to developing a non-invasive early detection test for ovarian cancer. Currently, there are no early detection tests available for ovarian cancer – a very aggressive and hard-to-treat disease. If successful, Dr. Barua’s test could help the nearly 25,000 women in the United States who are diagnosed each year. Early detection is key. Roughly 14,000 women die annually of ovarian cancer. An effective, accurate test could drastically reduce that number.



SAA funding of **Dr. Carl Maki’s** breakthrough research on Osteosarcoma in aggressive childhood bone cancer was key to him receiving NIH funding. A previous submission was very close to garnering the needed marks to gain eligibility but fell short. Dr. Maki leveraged SAA funding to fortify the areas NIH said were deficient. The next year (2014), NIH awarded Dr. Maki \$375,000. He is trying to pinpoint why 30% of patients with this type of cancer respond poorly to chemotherapy. He’s very close to finding an effective way to target and eradicate these resistant cancer cells. Dr. Maki swims each year in the SAA – Chicago events.



**Dr. Amanda L. Marzo**, received \$425,000 on July 1, 2016 for her work on examining the impact tumor antigen load has on CD8 T cell memory induction and maintenance. The results from this project will enable researchers to refine the design and use of current immunotherapies and will help in the creation of an improved strategy for tumor vaccines.