SAA – ST. LOUIS
2020 GRANT AMOUNT: $140,000

GRANT RECIPIENT: Charles Kaufman, MD, PhD
PROJECT: Malignant Melanoma Research

GRANT RECIPIENT: Mark Schroeder, MD
PROJECT: First Use Baricitinib in Humans for Treating GVHD (Graft Versus Host Disease) Clinical Trial

Project Details: The Siteman Cancer Center and SAA – St Louis had a very productive year. Physician Scientist Charles Kaufman was funded in 2019 for a 2-year project, described as bold and innovative, to investigate the earliest genetic events in a single cell that will eventually lead to development of malignant melanoma. The work using a zebrafish model of melanoma developed by Dr. Kaufman received significant funding from the NIH towards the end of 2019. This success opened the opportunity to transfer funds to a second investigator at Siteman.

Mark Schroeder, another physician scientist at Siteman Cancer Center was selected for funding on a proposal that links his laboratory and clinical research expertise. The proposal seeks to improve outcome for patients who received an allogeneic stem cell transplant (bone marrow from a related or unrelated donor) as part of therapy for disease such as leukemia and multiple myeloma. Allotransplants are often complicated by GVHD – graft versus host disease – where the donor immune system attacks the recipient and results in numerous effects on skin, liver, kidney, intestines etc. that can be debilitating and, in many cases, fatal. Dr Shroeder’s research proposal involves a new drug, baricitinib, proven to lessen GVHD in a mouse model. He has designed and will conduct a clinical trial that will be the first use baricitinib in humans for treating GVHD.

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