

## Short Note

# Wound Healing Foundation: Public Outreach and Grant Opportunities

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## INTRODUCTION

The Wound Healing Foundation (WHF), a non-profit organization, is committed to improving wound healing worldwide through funding research and education. The WHF is governed by a dedicated Board of Directors comprised of academic, private practice and industry leaders devoted to people affected by wound-specific health issues and scarring. Although over 6.5 million people in the United States have trouble healing properly [1], relatively few clinicians and researchers focus specifically on wound healing. More troubling still is the five-year mortality rate of diabetic ulcers is similar to that of leukemia and ovarian cancer, yet it receives relatively little research funding [2]. In 2003, the five-year mortality rate of melanoma was 7% compared to 45% of a neuropathic diabetic foot ulcer and there is little evidence this has changed [3]. The WHF aims to change that with key research funding and educational resources for both the patient and clinician.

In a recent retrospective study of the medical research funding opportunities in the United States, funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has continued to decrease in dermatology and there seem to be more competition in academia than ever before. While NIH funding is the benchmark, the funding for dermatologic research to principal investigators with MD degrees trended down significantly by \$1.35 million annually and PhD investigators affected by a similar pattern of reduced funding on an annual basis [1]. An opportunity to fund academic research in the area of wound healing is through a grant award from the Wound Healing Foundation.

## THE THOMAS K. HUNT ENDOWED LECTURE

The WHF established the Thomas K. Hunt Endowed Lecture to honor the legacy of Dr. Hunt whose major contributions to the field are numerous, including investigating the role of oxygen in wound healing [3]. This pivotal program of the WHF brings many new scientific minds and intellectual advances to the field of wound healing to encourage continued research, discussion, and educational resources. The award is not limited to those who are directly involved in wound healing research, but also to researchers who demonstrate the ability to bridge scientific gaps and cross boundaries through the use of basic physiology to understand healing processes in multiple organ systems. Lectures may be given by a clinical scientist and/or basic scientist focused on improving wound care or wound healing. The awardee for 2017 is Napoleone Ferrara, MD whose scientific

and intellectual contributions on the biology and regulation of angiogenesis will be presented at the annual meeting of the Wound Healing Society to be held on Wednesday, April 5, 2017 in San Diego, California. The goal of the WHF is to continue to raise funds for additional endowed lectures to be given at the annual meeting where there are additional opportunities to infuse new thinking from luminaries across multiple disciplines through ongoing collaborations, mentoring, methods and more.

## RESEARCH AND CLINICAL GRANT AWARDS AVAILABLE

The WHF intends to fund research that answers key questions about wound healing in order to advance the understanding of mechanisms and improve clinical treatment outcomes. There is also a continued need to fund new and established investigators engaged in cutting edge research to generate pilot data leading to new innovations to advance the basic and clinical science of wound healing. The goal for these programs is to award grants beginning at or above \$10,000. The WHF funding for these grants are dependent upon available the annual received donations. Visit the WHF website for more information at <http://www.woundhealingfoundation.org/programs/Grants.aspx>

## TRAVEL GRANT AWARDS AVAILABLE

The WHF is proud to recognize and reward deserving wound healing researchers by sponsoring their attendance at essential wound healing meetings. Participation in these research meetings contributes to furthering scientific discussions and publications and provides mentorship opportunities to increase the quality of the wound healing and skin care future research. Awards range in size from \$100- \$15,000 and the funding for these programs are dependent upon available yearly donations. Visit the WHF website for more information at <http://www.woundhealingfoundation.org/programs/Scholarships.aspx>

## PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAMS AND ONLINE PATIENT SUPPORT

The Wound Warrior Athlete Initiative was created by the WHF in 2013 to support wounded warrior athletes to promote optimal wound and skin care. Thousands of wounded, ill or injured service members and veterans compete in regional qualifiers to earn a coveted spot in the athletic Olympic-style games each year. Corporate partners, including Swiss-American

Products and Elta MD has helped support the WHF at the Warrior Games which are held yearly at the different military bases by supplying approximately 300 Warrior Care Kits to active and veteran service members from Special Ops, Navy, Marines, Army, Air Force and the British Armed Forces.

Additionally, the WHF sent 700 Warrior Care Kits to military athletes from 15 nations competing in the Invictus Games which were held from May 8-12, 2016 at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. Sponsorship and volunteer opportunities with WHF are available in 2017, as well.

The WHF develops free web based information, educational sessions and other resources for non-wound care clinicians. While the WHF had already established a legacy with the creation of published wound healing guidelines for acute wounds, chronic wounds and prevention of wounds by WHS based on best practices and evidence, there continued to be a need to provide online support for patients. The WHF and Inspire joined forces in 2016 to launch an online community of those affected by wounds and with an interest in wound care and healing. The peer-to-peer community is a free, moderated, safe place for patients and caregivers to connect and support one another on issues related to wound care, traumatic wounds, chronic wounds, amputation, scars, symptoms, and more.

Virtual educational sessions for clinicians in developing

countries are also being created. Corporate partners have helped support the WHF through the creation of web-based and hard copies of educational materials. Join today and encourage your patients, their family and friends to do so at [www.woundhealing.inspire.com](http://www.woundhealing.inspire.com).

## BECOME ACTIVE IN THE WHF

The WHF operates a team of volunteers and keeps overhead costs to a minimum. The WHF is committed to improving the quality of life for wound healing patients and their families through support of awareness, research and education. For more program details or to donate, go to [www.woundhealingfoundation.org](http://www.woundhealingfoundation.org) or e-mail [info@woundhealingfoundation.org](mailto:info@woundhealingfoundation.org) to start gaining more visibility among patients and caregivers and impact research in a new way through a partnership with the WHF!

## REFERENCES

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