

SPOTLIGHT:

A Legacy of Teaching and Advocacy

Peggy Spiegler was a teacher and a life-long learner. When she was diagnosed with melanoma in 2008, she directed her love of education toward learning more about this type of cancer and increasing awareness. After she passed away, her husband Neil created the Peggy Spiegler Melanoma Research Foundation (PSMRF) as a tribute to her kindness, strength, and passion. The foundation's support of melanoma research and education is a true testament to Peggy's legacy.

When detected early, melanoma is usually treatable. In the last decade, there have been more interventions developed to treat melanoma and skin cancer than ever before. Many resulting from research led by teams like Penn's Tara Miller Melanoma Center, who remain determined to advance a cure for the disease. These efforts are shared and supported by the PSMRF's mission to inform patients about the importance of screening as well as educate medical students about early detection and care for those affected by melanoma patient care.

In the spirit of an experiential and well-rounded education, Penn's Perelman School of Medicine is proud to offer opportunities for students to learn beyond the traditional classroom environment. One such offering, the Melanoma Journal Club, sponsored by PSMRF, and provides a forum for students to discuss and explore a particular medical topic. In addition to providing a critical analysis of medical literature, students have a valuable opportunity to hone their presentation skills and to engage in lively discussion with patients.

The Melanoma Journal Club is a unique experience offered to first-year medical students who would not otherwise receive training on the topic in the classroom. Classmates work together to analyze a scientific publication that focuses on breakthroughs in the melanoma field and have the opportunity to connect the concepts being taught in their first-year courses, like cancer biology, to specific real-world examples and information.

The students then come together to share their findings with the rest of their class. Philanthropy creates a forum for patients, medical professionals and students to share their perspectives as **Lynn Schuchter, MD**, moderates the sessions and offers professional insight around new treatment options for melanoma—as well as the potential of a career in oncology.



Lynn Schuchter, MD, with one of her patients, Elwood (Woody) Vangelder, and first year medical students, Rohan Palanki, Jackson Bowers, Sabrina Bulas, and Neil Spiegler after the 2018 Melanoma Journal Club.

“The Melanoma Journal Club is an amazing opportunity for first-year students to receive hands-on and interactive instruction. It is an invaluable opportunity to speak with survivors, ask questions, and learn from their different, direct experiences. The journal club inspired me to consider a career in oncology.”

Focus on Melanoma Patient Conference

Because Peggy wouldn't want melanoma education to stop in the classroom, the PSMRF also supports Penn's annual "Focus on Melanoma" patient education conference. The conference serves as an interactive forum for patients and families to connect with a supportive community and to learn about the latest advances in melanoma treatment and the research led by their own physicians that makes the advances possible.

THANK YOU to our community of supporters and advocates who together are helping to make a real difference in the lives of our patients.

