



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Debbie's Dream Foundation Hosted A Successful 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Stomach Cancer Capitol Hill Advocacy Day**

*More than 150 advocates met virtually with lawmakers to help increase federal funding for research.*

**Washington, D.C. – (March 8, 2021)** – Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer (DDF) hosted its 9th Annual Stomach Cancer Capitol Hill Advocacy Day virtually on February 11 and 12, 2021. The annual meetings, typically held on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., presented an opportunity for nearly 200 stomach cancer patients, family members, and caregivers to meet virtually with Congress members and share their personal stories and the latest facts and statistics about stomach cancer. These consistent efforts help ensure that stomach cancer remains eligible for funding through the Department of Defense's Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP).

This year's Advocacy Day was held just two months following the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) December 2020 announcement to approve the concept of a new gastric cancer research program dedicated to advancing knowledge of the origins of stomach cancer. Congress also designated stomach cancer as eligible for research funding through the PRCRP in 2020. As a result, more funding was given to the National Institutes of Health, which allowed the NCI to receive \$6.44 billion under the "Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020, signed into law by President Donald Trump December 20, 2019. In addition, NCI was directed to update on NCI-supported research to advance these goals in the Fiscal Year 2021 Congressional Justification and add esophageal and stomach cancers to future Research, Condition, and Disease Categorization reports. These were some of the many changes to take place as a direct result of DDF's annual advocacy efforts, and the organization looks forward to continuing advancements following the 2021 meetings.

"Debbie's Dream Foundation has led the movement towards critical research and funding for stomach cancer for the past nine years," said Andrea Eidelman, DDF's Chief Executive Officer. "We understand that these efforts are essential to helping us achieve our mission of one day finding a cure for this disease. We also appreciate every patient, family and caregiver advocate who has joined us over the years in sharing their personal experience with stomach cancer, and we look forward to continuing to make a difference through this initiative."

For more information about DDF's Annual Advocacy Day, visit [www.DebbiesDream.org/advocacy](http://www.DebbiesDream.org/advocacy). To learn more about DDF and other resources offered, visit [www.DebbiesDream.org](http://www.DebbiesDream.org).

### **About Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer**

DDF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness about gastric cancer, advancing funding for research, and providing education and support internationally to patients, families, and caregivers. DDF seeks as its ultimate goal to make the cure for stomach cancer a reality.

DDF was founded in 2009 by Debbie Zelman after she was diagnosed with stage IV incurable gastric cancer in 2008 and given only weeks to live. Debbie is considered a pioneer by many for bringing awareness to the plight of stomach cancer patients worldwide and the lack of federal funding for stomach cancer research. She did all of this while receiving hundreds of rounds of chemo, in addition to daily oral treatments. Debbie passed away on December 23, 2017, almost a decade later, at 50. As a result of her leadership, DDF now has a Scientific and Medical Advisory Board of world-renowned doctors and chapters throughout the United States and Canada and Germany. DDF strives to continue Debbie's mission and to make her dream a reality. To learn more about DDF,

**(More)**

please visit us at [www.DebbiesDream.org](http://www.DebbiesDream.org).



**Photo One:** Participants of Debbie's Dream Foundation 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Virtual Stomach Cancer Advocacy Day during the During DDF's virtual happy hour.

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