

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Mayo Clinic and Debbie's Dream Foundation Hosts a Successful Gastroesophageal Cancer Educational Symposium

The hybrid event featured both in-person and virtual attendees.

Plantation, Fla. – (August 4, 2021) – Mayo Clinic and Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer (DDF) co-hosted the Gastroesophageal Cancer Educational Symposium Clinic on Saturday, July 31, 2021, in Rochester, Minnesota. The symposium was designed to educate patients, families, caregivers, and healthcare professionals on the latest information related to gastric and esophageal cancer. More than 250 registrants could participate both in-person or virtually via Zoom or Facebook. Topics covered during the program included genetics, immunotherapy, endoscopic treatments, pathology reports, proton and radiation therapy, circulating tumors, and nutrition.

The program was led by medical experts Dr. Travis E. Grotz and Dr. Shanda Blackmon of Mayo Clinic. Dr. Grotz, a Surgical Oncologist, focused his presentation on "Demystifying the Peritoneum and HIPEC," while Dr. Blackmon, a Thoracic Surgeon and Professor, presented on "Patient Reported Outcomes and What We Can Do About It." Both doctors also participated in two panel discussions with stomach cancer survivors, which occurred between presentations by other Mayo Clinic staff. Patient advocates and mentors from DDF's stomach cancer community also participated in the panel discussions to share their perspectives and experience as survivors.

"DDF is proud to have collaborated with Mayo Clinic to help inform and educate the stomach cancer and gastroesophageal community on topics that are relevant to the needs and curiosity of those affected by this disease," said Andrea Eidelman, Chief Executive Officer of DDF. "A huge thank you to everyone who helped make this event possible, including Drs. Grotz and Blackmon and the entire Mayo Clinic staff, our generous sponsors, the DDF team, our dedicated patient advocates and volunteers."

Amid the recent spike in COVID-19 cases nationwide, Mayo Clinic continued to monitor and honor up-to-date local and national CDC guidelines. Sponsorship for this symposium was provided by Platinum Sponsors Bristol Myers Squibb and Merck; Silver Sponsors Astellas Pharma and Taiho Oncology, Inc.; and Bronze Sponsor Zymeworks. Replays of the presentation will be available for viewing on the DDF website at a later date. For more information, visit www.DebbiesDream.org/lecture-library.

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
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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, as well as to 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, at the age of 50, almost a decade later. 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 in Canada and Germany. DDF strives to continue Debbie's mission and to make her dream a reality. To learn more about DDF, please visit us at www.DebbiesDream.org.

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