Local Teen Raises Big Money for Melanoma Walk 2016

Kate Bryson and her family have been great supporters of our annual Melanoma Walk since 2014. This year, Kate took on a new fundraising approach to help raise money for the Walk. She is active at her Karate school, and even teaches one of the karate classes! This year, Kate raised $700 through the karate school, including a surprise Halloween party at the Nihon Karate dojo, and ended up raising a total of $1,347 for her “Karate Kids Care” Walk team!

Kate is an exceptional 15 year-old girl, and we’re so happy to have her on the SCI team. Before the Walk, we presented Kate with an award we created especially for her.

Thanks Kate! See you next year.

The University of Arizona Cancer Center, and the Skin Cancer Institute are proud to announce the arrival of Montaser Shaheen, MD, our new oncologist specializing in melanoma. Dr. Shaheen comes to us from the University of New Mexico, where he was an Associate Professor in Hematology/Oncology. Dr. Shaheen graduated from medical school in Damascus, Syria in 1996. He did his oncology training at the Indiana University Medical Center. Dr Shaheen has extensive experience in immunotherapy for melanoma. He has contributed to the FDA approval of what is considered the most effective immunotherapy combination for the treatment of metastatic melanoma, with a large portion of treated patients on that study being alive a few years later and potentially cured. (1,2) He also has a lab at the Cancer Center where he and his team are investigating basic mechanisms of cancer formation.


Students are Thinking About Sun Safety!

Anya Gerken, an 8th grader at Doolen Middle School, is learning about the power of the sun and how to protect against its damage with clothing. She did a science project on how UVA and UVB rays pass through certain types of fabrics. Her research focused on using a special machine called a dosimeter to measure the amount of UV radiation that passes through different fabrics based on their weaves. The SCI was happy to help, and gave her access to our dosimeter to conduct her research. Anya found that thicker fabrics, tighter weaves, and darker colors let through the least amount of UV light. Anya will be presenting her findings in May at the Doolen Middle School Science Fair.
Great news for the Skin Cancer Institute’s Students Are Sun Safe (SASS) program. Thanks to a community grant awarded to the SCI’s own Dr. Lois Loescher from the National Area Health Education Center (AHEC), we’re taking SASS to the Future Health Leaders (FHL) students from Bisbee, Douglas and Nogales high schools so they can learn about sun safety, while also learning how to coordinate community health education campaigns!

The students will be involved in evaluating the impact of the peer-led sun safety program on rural adolescents in Arizona. Six students from each high school will be trained as peer leaders, and will reach an estimated 250 classmates with sun safe messages.

The SASS curriculum is a 50-minute presentation followed by sun safety learning activities. AHEC will evaluate the effectiveness of both the student training and the peer-led community education activities to document sun safety knowledge, attitudes, and intended sun safety behaviors, before and after the presentation, and 3 months later.

Our hope is that this project will inspire students to move forward in a career focused on cancer prevention, research, and/or community outreach.

Save the Date!
Skin Cancer Summit: June
Skin cancer Prevention Friend (SPF) luncheon: Monday, May 1st Hacienda del Sol