

## SHOP TALK

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And, LUNgevity has also granted three Career Development Awards for Translational Research for 2014 to support the work of future research leaders. Each three-year grant awards \$100,000, renewable in the second and third year based on career and research progress. And the awardees join the 2012 and 2013 recipients as ex-officio members of the Foundation's Scientific Advisory Board for the terms of their awards. The recipients are:

- **Patrick Forde, MD (MB, BCh)**, of Johns Hopkins University, for his research "Neoadjuvant anti-PD-1 antibody, Nivolumab, in resectable non-small cell lung cancer";

- **Christine Lovly, MD, PhD**, of Vanderbilt University Medical Center, for her research "Dissecting the role of negative feedback inhibition in ALK+ lung cancer"; and


- **John Poirier, PhD**, of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, for "Molecular mechanisms of acquired drug resistance in small cell lung cancer."

Also, the LUNgevity Foundation has partnered with the Lung Cancer Research Foundation and Melanoma Research Alliance to co-fund new innovative research on PD-1 inhibitor treatment options for patients with non-small cell lung cancer with brain metastases or metastatic melanoma with brain metastases. The award recipient is **Lucia Jilaveanu, MD, PhD**, of Yale University, for her project "Response to PD-1 Inhibitors in

Melanoma and Lung Cancer Patients with Brain Metastases."

The Don Shula Foundation has donated \$1.5 million to Moffitt Cancer Center to establish The Don Shula Breast Cancer Research Fund, which will support research projects that will generate new treatment and prevention strategies for breast cancer patients.

"Cancer has touched our family personally, and I know that the more we give to cancer research, the closer we are to finding a cure," said **Don Shula**, former head coach of the Miami Dolphins (1970-1995) and a member of Moffitt's national Board of Advisors.

The Don Shula Foundation was established in Miami more than 20 years ago as a tribute to Shula's late wife, Dorothy. The organization has supported breast cancer research at Moffitt for over a decade, donating nearly half a million dollars. A committee comprised of Shula designees, Moffitt leadership, and a Moffitt breast cancer physician-scientist will select the most promising breast cancer research projects to be funded by The Shula Fund. 



DON SHULA

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## Breakthrough Status to Pancreatic Cancer Immunotherapy


The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has granted breakthrough therapy status to CRS-207 and GVAX Pancreas immunotherapies to be used as a combination treatment for pancreatic cancer.

CRS-207 expresses the tumor-associated antigen mesothelin, which is over-expressed in mesothelioma and pancreatic, non-small cell lung, ovarian, and gastric cancers. And GVAX Pancreas, derived from human cancer cell lines, is genetically modified to secrete the immune-stimulatory cytokine granulocyte-macrophage colony-stimulating factor (GM-CSF), and also expresses mesothelin.

The breakthrough therapy designation, enacted as part of the FDA's 2012 Safety and Innovation Act, was created to expedite the development and review time of a potential new drug for serious or life-threatening disease where early clinical evidence suggests the drug may demonstrate substantial improvement compared with existing therapies. A news release from the drug's manufacturer, Aduro

Biotech, notes that there are currently no approved therapies for metastatic pancreatic cancer after first-line treatment.

The designation for CRS-207 and GVAX Pancreas is based on findings from a randomized, controlled, multi-center Phase II trial of 93 patients with metastatic pancreatic cancer who had not responded to or had decided not to have prior therapy. Median overall survival for patients receiving the immunotherapy combination was 6.1 months compared with 3.9 months for patients receiving GVAX monotherapy.

The information from Aduro notes that a Phase IIb clinical trial for the combination is ongoing, with enrollment expected to be completed by the end of next year. 



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fax: 646-607-4253, benjamin.harkinson@wolterskluwer.com

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING: **Mike Rusch**, 215-521-8404,  
fax 215-689-2453; mike.rusch@wolterskluwer.com

REPRINTS: **Bridget Quinn**, 215-521-8807; fax: 215-405-3812  
Bridget.Quinn@WoltersKluwer.com

EDITORIAL/PUBLISHING OFFICES:  
333 Seventh Ave., 19th Fl., New York, NY 10001;  
[OT@LWWNY.com](mailto:OT@LWWNY.com), [oncology-times.com](http://oncology-times.com)



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