

Foundation for the NIH Awards First Rancic-O'Neill Renal Cell Cancer Research Fellowship

Fellow to work with renowned researcher Dr. Richard Childs at NHLBI

Bethesda, MD (May 25, 2011) — The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) is pleased to announce today that Quinn Weisman has been awarded the first Rancic-O'Neill Fellowship, made possible by a partnership between the Dr. Edward T. Rancic Memorial Fund and the Dean R. O'Neill Renal Cell Cancer Fund, in support of research for renal cell carcinoma - or kidney cancer - at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The Rancic-O'Neill Fellowship provides for a post-baccalaureate researcher in the lab of Dr. Richard Childs at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI). Research conducted in this lab focuses on the development of new treatments for renal cell cancer, a deadly form of cancer whose incidence is increasing in the general population.

“Kidney cancer affects more than 50,000 Americans a year – and the incidence is steadily increasing,” said Dr. Scott Campbell, Executive Director and CEO of the Foundation for NIH. “Through the Foundation and its donor-advised funds – such as the Dean R. O'Neill Renal Cell Cancer Research Fund and the Dr. Edward T. Rancic Memorial Fund, breakthroughs are being made in understanding and treating this disease.”

Both Dean R. O'Neill and Dr. Edward Rancic participated in an experimental cancer trial at the NIH. Their families established these memorial funds to provide support for Dr. Childs' research which focuses on utilizing the immune system to eradicate cancer. Coordinated by the Foundation, the families have now joined together to form the Rancic-O'Neill Fellowship.

“Establishing this fund at the Foundation was a great way for us to honor our father. We are excited about partnering with the Foundation and the O'Neill family to support kidney cancer research and help a young scientist develop their career,” said Bill Rancic. “We also hope to raise awareness with the FNIH about the extensive renal cell cancer research being conducted at the NIH.”

“After he was diagnosed with renal cancer our dad was relentless in learning more about the disease and the various cutting-edge treatment options at the NIH,” noted Matthew O'Neill. “He was treated with an experimental stem cell transplant through Dr. Childs' lab and survived the disease for several years. This fellowship is a fitting tribute to his relentless efforts to learn more about the disease.”

Weisman and future Rancic-O'Neill research fellows will work with Dr. Childs and his laboratory and clinical research staff to develop novel new forms of immunotherapy for kidney cancer, such as allogeneic stem cell transplants, vaccine therapy and drug treatments. The efforts of Dr. Childs and his colleagues have already led to the discovery that allogeneic stem cell transplants can induce powerful immune effects against kidney cancer that in some cases can lead to sustained regression

of metastatic disease. More recently, Dr. Childs' group has translated laboratory findings from the bench to the bedside, initiating a novel immunotherapy trial that explores the potential of natural killer cell infusions to treat the most advanced form of kidney cancer.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with the Rancic Fund to launch the Rancic-O'Neill Fellowship. This fellowship once again demonstrates our shared commitment to supporting a dedicated kidney research fellowship program at the NIH," said Brian O'Neill.

In addition to their partnership with the Rancic Family, the O'Neill Family created the annual Boo! Run for Life 10K run and 2-mile walk in 2006 to raise awareness and funding for renal cell cancer research. To learn more about the Boo! Run for Life event, which will be held this year on October 16, 2011 in Washington, DC, please visit: www.boorunforlife.com

The Rancic-O'Neill fellowship, working in partnership with the FNIH and the NHLBI, will provide critical support for kidney cancer research by sponsoring top-notch candidates to the NIH to pursue novel and promising immune-based treatments for kidney cancer. To learn more about the fellowship, funds and the Foundation for the NIH, please visit: www.fnih.org

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RenalCellCancer.org

RenalCellCancer.org provides information about the Dean R. O'Neill Renal Cell Cancer Research Fund, and will soon provide information about the Dr. Edward T. Rancic Memorial Fund and the Rancic-O'Neill Fellowship. The FNIH and its donor-advised funds provide critical support for kidney cancer research at the NIH NHLBI. For more information, please visit: www.renalcellcancer.org

Foundation for the National Institutes of Health

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