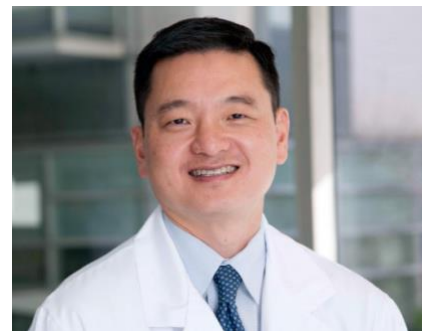


DeGregorio Family Foundation Awards Grant to Sam Yoon of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and Sandra Ryeom of University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine

(NEW YORK, February 25, 2019) – [Sam S. Yoon, MD](#), a surgical oncologist specializing in gastric and gastroesophageal junction cancers at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and [Sandra Ryeom, Ph.D.](#), Associate Professor of Cancer Biology at University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine have been awarded \$100,000 by [The DeGregorio Family Foundation for Gastric and Esophageal Cancer Research](#).

This award will support Dr. Yoon’s research on establishing a deeper understanding of how gastric cancer stem-like cells (CSCs) lead to distant metastasis and resistance to chemotherapy regimens.

Gastric cancer was the [third-leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide](#) in 2018 with 783,000 deaths—and 1.03 million newly-diagnosed cases.



Gastric adenocarcinomas (GAs) represent the vast majority of gastric cancers. Most patients with GA present with locally advanced or metastatic disease. The response rate of GA to multi-agent chemotherapy can be 50% or greater, but nearly all patients develop chemotherapy resistance, and median survival is extended to only 10-12 months. Thus, two ways to combat GAs are to inhibit metastases and to reverse chemotherapy resistance—and Dr. Yoon’s research is focused on addressing these two aspects.



We are optimistic that findings from this research will greatly improve our understanding of gastric cancer...

-Dr. Sam Yoon, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

The KRAS gene and other genes in the KRAS signaling pathway are often mutated in GAs. Dr. Yoon’s research will: (1) examine the role of mutated KRAS in promoting the ability of CSCs to

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Contact:
Lynn DeGregorio
President & Founder
lynn@degregorio.org



form metastases and to induce new blood vessel formation and (2) determine the role of the KRAS signaling pathway in promoting chemotherapy resistance in GA CSCs.



According to the World Health Organization, gastric cancer is the third-leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide with 783,000 in 2018.

The DeGregorio Family Foundation, founded in 2006 after a 10th member of the DeGregorio family died of stomach cancer, has raised close to \$4 million to fund innovative research focused on curing gastric and esophageal cancer. Lynn DeGregorio, President and Founder, stated, "We are thankful for dedicated researchers in this field like Dr. Yoon. I am optimistic the research we are funding will one day lead to a better prognosis for stomach cancer patients."



Fully 100% of all proceeds raised by The DeGregorio Family Foundation goes towards funding innovative research. [Click here to donate](#) and your full contribution will go towards finding a cure for gastric and esophageal cancer.

Commenting on his award, Dr. Yoon, Principal Investigator of the Sam Yoon Lab said, "I am extremely grateful to the DeGregorio Family Foundation for providing us with this award. We are optimistic that findings from this research will greatly improve our understanding of gastric cancer, and hopefully the research will lead to more effective treatments."