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July 24, 2014

Mrs. Lora Castello
Director, Kerri Castello Cancer Research Foundation
9390 Timbercreek Blvd.
Spanish Fort, AL 36527

Dear Lora and members of the KCCRF:

Thank you for your recent donation to the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute to support our Early Detection Cancer Research Program. Specifically, the funds from the 2013 Kerri Castello Tennis Tournament will be used to enhance our early detection pancreatic cancer study.

Pancreatic cancer is a terrible disease that robs the life from some 39,000 of the 45,000 people diagnosed each year. Currently, only one in twenty survive 5 years and these are mainly the people who are detected early and are able to have surgery. For those that get to surgery, five year survival raises to about 22%. Researchers in the Proteomics and Mass Spectrometry Core Research Laboratory at the Mitchell Cancer Institute have made a break through that could change these statistics. Jana Rocker, then a Ph.D. student and a 32 year osteosarcoma cancer survivor, started to look for a non-invasive way to diagnose for colon cancer. The approach taken did not give the clear profile of the colon but instead showed the pancreas. The simply-stated result is the ability to clearly tell a diseased pancreas from a healthy one. The basic understanding of this diagnostic approach is now extending to collaboration with UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center and we have extended our study to include individuals with a family line to pancreatic cancer and those with a history of non-benign conditions such as pancreatitis. The foundation's contribution enables our researchers to process patient samples in such a way that they can differentiate between these two conditions and develop a scientific test that produces accurate data and can be performed as a routine screening procedure. With a test available, this disease could be easily ruled in or out and those with the disease will more likely be suitable for surgery and not later stage diagnoses.

Through your generosity, we can together change the course of this disease. In appreciation for everyone who contributed and will continue to help us push this research forward, we extend our gratitude.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kelly D. McCarron'.

Kelly D. McCarron
Director of Development
USA Mitchell Cancer Institute