



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Lessons Learned in 40-Year Cancer Fight Offer Motivation for Accelerated Efforts
*Advances in Melanoma Research Cited in AACR Report as Case Study of Recent Progress***

Statement of Wendy K.D. Selig, President & CEO of the Melanoma Research Alliance

WASHINGTON, September 20, 2011 – “Today’s release of the AACR Cancer Progress Report 2011 to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the National Cancer Act puts the national spotlight on how much progress has occurred in the fight against cancer, while reminding us that much work remains to be done. The recent breakthroughs in treatment of advanced metastatic melanoma, the deadliest skin cancer, offer a case study of what can be accomplished when resources and the smartest minds are focused on improving outcomes for patients. These advances are highlighted in the AACR Cancer Progress Report 2011 through the compelling voices of Andrew Messinger and Roslyn Meyer, whose courage and perseverance are inspiring. Their stories bring to light the paramount importance of a sustained commitment to cutting-edge research.

This has been a tremendous year for the melanoma community. Novel scientific developments have led to the approval of two new drugs for treating this deadly cancer, which has one of the fastest growing incident rates. One of the newly approved drugs, Zelboraf (vemurafenib), is particularly exciting because it targets a genetic mutation. The other, Yervoy (ipilimumab), offers proof of concept that drugs can be developed to work with the body’s immune system to defeat melanoma. These advances in melanoma, which have emanated from decades of scientific groundwork, have revealed treatment paradigms applicable not only to melanoma but to many other forms of cancer as well.

With this report, AACR has told the twin stories of progress and continued need that define our fight against cancer. At MRA, we remain committed to accelerating the pace of discovery, working with all stakeholders toward our mutual objective of conquering cancer. While the road ahead is long, recent success offers hope and strengthens our resolve.”

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About the Melanoma Research Alliance

The Melanoma Research Alliance (MRA) is a public charity formed in 2007 under the auspices of the Milken Institute, with the generous support of Debra and Leon Black. It supports an international, cross-disciplinary group of biomedical researchers possessing clinical and scientific expertise to explore, identify and pursue innovative solutions to critical research questions, leading to better treatments and a cure for melanoma patients. Because of the support of its founders, all public donations to MRA go directly

to research. MRA is the largest private funder of melanoma research. For more information, visit www.curemelanoma.org or contact:

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