



Press Release

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A Decade of Partnership: Northwestern Mutual Boosts Childhood Cancer Survivorship

Chicago, September 2026: The [American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology \(ASPHO\)](#) is thrilled to recognize a milestone partnership with the Northwestern Mutual Foundation that has led to lasting progress in childhood cancer survivorship. The Northwestern Mutual [Award for Excellence in Childhood Cancer Survivorship](#), established in 2017, will celebrate its ten-year mark at the 2027 ASPHO Conference next May in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

“Northwestern Mutual is proud to honor stellar pediatric investigators and spur their research with the ASPHO Award, which has led to immediate advancements in cancer survivorship,” notes Audra Brennan, Vice President, Philanthropy, Northwestern Mutual Foundation. “The research conducted by recipients has improved life for countless children and has become part of the global care approach for childhood cancer. The future is bright knowing that such brilliant pediatric hematology/oncology researchers are dedicated to enhancing the lives of childhood cancer survivors.”

The Northwestern Mutual Award \$10,000 honorarium supports innovative projects by a mid-career (8-15 years post-fellowship) childhood cancer survivorship investigator who has demonstrated his or her commitment to this segment of the field through a growing portfolio of research and project funding, while accelerating in his or her output and gaining prominence.

The inaugural award presented at the 2018 ASPHO Conference recognized pioneer in childhood cancer survivorship, Leslie L. Robison, MPH PhD. Known for his prolific and crucial contributions to survivorship, Dr. Robison has dedicated his career to improving outcomes after childhood cancer and translating knowledge to advance the quality of survival among this population. Last year's recipient, Karen E. Effinger, MD MS, of Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, was recognized for her transformative application of technology-based solutions to address a major challenge in survivorship clinical care, extracting treatment data to generate the survivorship care plan and enabling survivors to share these plans with providers.

Other recipients, and their supported research, include:

- 2025 recipient Lucie M. Turcotte, MD MPH MS, of University of Minnesota Masonic Children's Hospital, who supported the career development and research opportunities of mentees with the award;
- 2024 Katie A. Greenzang, MD EdM, Dana-Farber / Boston Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, development of a family-centered communication intervention helping families understand anticipated long-term outcomes;
- 2023 Tara Brinkman, PhD, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, linguistic translation of CBT program to Spanish for Hispanic survivors of childhood cancer;
- 2022 Sogol Mostoufi-Moab, MD MSCE, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, efforts to improve early musculoskeletal complications of adolescents and young adult survivors of hematopoietic cell transplantation (HCT) clinical trial;
- 2021 M. Monica Gramatges, MD PhD, Baylor College of Medicine, efforts to improve survivor education and access to care in regions characterized by significant outcome disparities utilizing Passport for Care (PFC) decision support tool and resource for survivors of childhood cancer;
- 2020 Melissa Hudson, MD, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, development of External Advisory Group and issues/preferences relating to access, design features and content presentation of the mHealth patient activation and PCP activation interventions; and
- 2019 Smita Bhatia, MD MPH, University of Alabama Birmingham, whose research focuses on the long-term health and well-being of cancer survivors, including the conduct of targeted intervention trials to reduce the burden of morbidity among cancer survivors.

"I feel incredibly honored to receive this award and to be recognized by my peers for my work in the field of survivorship. It is so gratifying to see this field grow and gain attention from organizations like Northwestern Mutual and ASPHO," said 2025 recipient Lucie M. Turcotte, MD MPH MS.

Nominations and applications for [ASPHO Awards](#) are accepted year-round. The call for awards to be presented at the 2027 ASPHO Conference has closed; applications submitted between September 25, 2026, and September 23, 2027, will be considered for the 2028 awards cycle and presented at the 2028 ASPHO Conference.

About Northwestern Mutual Foundation

The mission of the Northwestern Mutual Foundation is to improve the lives of children and families in need. The Foundation has given more than \$575 million since its inception in 1992 and is designed to create lasting impact in the communities where the company's employees and financial representatives live and work. We accomplish this by combining financial support, volunteerism, thought leadership and convening community partners to deliver the best outcomes. Our efforts are focused nationally on curing childhood cancer, and locally on education, neighborhoods, and making our hometown of Milwaukee a great destination. Visit [Northwestern Mutual Foundation](#) to learn more.

The [American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology \(ASPHO\)](#) is the professional medical society of pediatric hematology/oncology subspecialists and other healthcare professionals dedicated to promoting the optimal care of children, adolescents, and young adults with blood disorders and cancer. Founded in 1981, ASPHO serves 1,900 members including physicians, researchers, advanced practice providers, and trainees by sponsoring educational and professional development programs, promoting discovery, advocating on behalf of its patient base and members, advancing professional practice and supporting partnerships to further its goals. Learn more about the Society: [ASPHO Conference](#), [About Us](#), [Educational Offerings](#), [Community](#).

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