

February 14, 2024

Dear Trustees of The Brett Tashman Foundation,

I'm very pleased to report that using your funding we were able to publish a landmark article on the possible drivers of desmoplastic small round cell tumor, DSRCT. Doctor Ludwig and I published a series of articles in 2022 that outlined to the medical community the importance of androgen receptors and the growth and spread of this tumor. As you recall we had not previously known what causes these tumors to grow and spread. We still do not know the organ of origin of DSRCT. However, we do now have a better understanding of what controls the growth of the tumor.

After probing the DNA and proteins of dozens of DSRCT tumor samples including Brett's, we were able to establish after sifting through 10s of thousands of genes and proteins and trying to connect them with the growth of the tumor, that some genes were *not* important in DSRCT. In particular, the genetic control of the immune system is not an important driver of DSRCT growth

Doctor Ludwig and I and our team, (funded by your donations) made an antisense to the antigen receptor and inserted that antisense into the DSRCT tumor cells. We then put those tumor cells into mice and allowed them to grow. When the mice tumors from patients and mice tumors from the cell line were treated with the antisense of Androgen, the growth was stunted and the mice that received the antisense had a 100% survival. This is an enormous finding! and hence was published in Nature Communication journal (which is the highest impact, that is, the most widely read and most prestigious journal in the world).

We are super excited about these findings but continue to need to change the treatment pattern for DSRCT. Currently, in my move to Howard, I am working on a novel microfiber that can be impregnated with targeted chemotherapy and provide a slow release of chemotherapy throughout the abdomen, therefore, avoiding the HIPEC procedure. This microfiber also has the potential to stop growth and the spread of other sarcomas in the arms and legs.

Your continued support is critical to our success and much appreciated over the past many years.

Thank you again



Andrea Hayes Dixon MD FACS Phd\*h  
Dean Howard University College of Medicine  
Vice President of Clinical Affairs  
Associate Director of Howard University Cancer Center