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# BREAKTHROUGHS IN IMMUNOTHERAPY



JHU 2184
Merck Sharp v. Johns Hopkins
IPR2024-00648

For more than three decades, Swim Across America has been funding immunotherapy research and clinical trials, and Swim Across America's grants have played a major role in bringing new treatments for those fighting cancer. In 2018, the Nobel Prize for Medicine was awarded for work in advancing immunotherapy. The Swim Across America Research Lab at Memorial Sloan Kettering has been part of the collaboration that lead to the development of immunotherapy. In their own words below, doctors share the impact of funding from Swim Across America.

## Dr. Jedd Wolchok (Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center)

In the 1980s, Memorial Sloan Kettering was seeking to expand our efforts and innovate in the area of cancer immunotherapy. This now widely accepted standard approach to cancer treatment was then considered to be unconventional and speculative. Swim Across America recognized the high risk/high reward nature of our efforts and quickly became the largest non-government organization to financially support our immunotherapy research.

**"SAA funding has played a major role in clinically developing the four FDA-approved immunotherapy medicines ipilimumab (YERVOY), nivolumab (OPDIVO), pembrolizumab (KEYTRUDA) and atezolizumab (TECENTRIQ)"**

We have been able to leverage SAAs financial support into millions of dollars of NIH grant support as well as other private donations we might not otherwise have received. Our lab at MSK is designated as the Swim Across America lab, signifying the importance of our partnership with Swim Across America."

## Dr. Luis Diaz (Johns Hopkins Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center / Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center)

In 2009, I was a young faculty member at the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center when Swim Across America-Baltimore believed enough in my research idea to provide necessary clinical funding for an immunotherapy treatment that is now FDA approved and saving lives.

To provide some context, I had applied for funding to an endless number of organizations. I was denied by all of them. Merck finally agreed to give us a sample of Keytruda immunotherapy vaccine but I had to come up with funding for the clinical trials. Enter Swim Across America, which provided funding for the trials at Johns Hopkins.

Since the inception of Swim Across America-Baltimore, you have provided dollars to fund immunotherapy clinical trials and important cancer research at Johns Hopkins. FDA approval of Keytruda is our most visible success story and that success is now spawning more research that will likely lead to more treatments.

**"My greatest joy is seeing lives saved and the appreciation I have that SAA is part of the story."**

Swim Across America is celebrating 35 years of impact in 2022. SAA has raised $100 million since its inception in 1987 to support cancer research and clinical trials across the U.S. Please contact Jeni Howard at **jhoward@jhowardpr.com** for media inquiries.

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