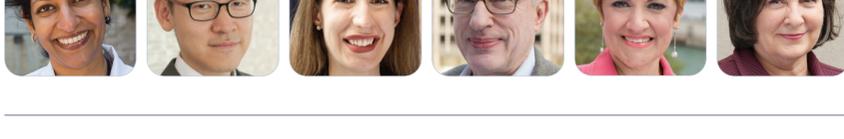


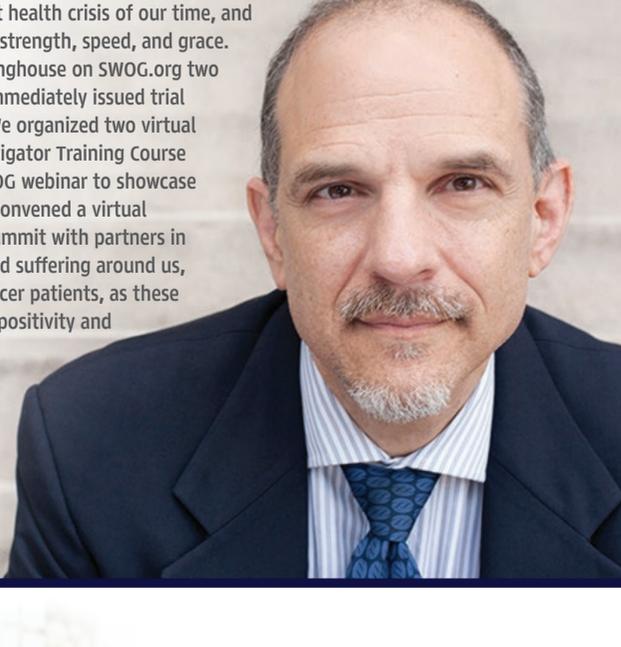
We Got Through This Year TOGETHER



“This year ushered in the largest health crisis of our time, and SWOG members responded with strength, speed, and grace. We staged an information clearinghouse on SWOG.org two weeks into the pandemic, and immediately issued trial guidance memos to members. We organized two virtual meetings, took our Young Investigator Training Course online, and hosted a Best of SWOG webinar to showcase our high-impact work. We even convened a virtual SWOG Latin America Initiative summit with partners in Chile. Despite the uncertainty and suffering around us, we kept making progress for cancer patients, as these pages show. Thank you for your positivity and perseverance.”

Charles D. Blanke, MD

— Charles D. Blanke, MD
SWOG Cancer Research Network Group Chair



“This year I learned to communicate with empathy and honesty. To focus on the positives rather than the negatives. To be thankful for the privileges received. To advocate and innovate. To remember to pay it forward. And to always choose kindness.”

— Virginia Sun, PhD, RN



“This year I learned that a new world is not just possible but the only logical way forward. My community has been decimated by COVID, particularly those individuals deemed ‘essential.’ Let their suffering not be in vain. We must seize the day and finally create lasting radical and institutional change.”

— Eileen Fuentes, MHA, CCRP



“This year I learned how care can be rendered more patient-centered. Necessity is the mother of invention and, in both standard practice and clinical trials, we brought treatment to patients, rather than obligate them to travel to us. Telehealth and home-based therapies are silver linings of the pandemic that will hopefully be positive legacies of COVID-19.”

— Mark Lewis, MD



“This year I learned that the human spirit could overcome significant hardship following one of the greatest health tragedies ever encountered. This experience has made us question our approach to medicine — including cancer care. We must move forward and continue to utilize knowledge learned in a more practical way: #telehealth.”

— Cathy Eng, MD



“This year I learned how care can be rendered more patient-centered. Necessity is the mother of invention and, in both standard practice and clinical trials, we brought treatment to patients, rather than obligate them to travel to us. Telehealth and home-based therapies are silver linings of the pandemic that will hopefully be positive legacies of COVID-19.”

— Mark Lewis, MD



Our Data

- 14 SWOG trials activated
- 10 SWOG trials closed
- 32 SWOG trial concepts reviewed by leadership
- 15 requests for trial data granted
- 3,132 patients enrolled on all SWOG-run trials, not counting screening registrations
- 107 journal articles published
- 51% percent published in high-impact factor journals
- 73 oral or poster presentations made
- 33% of presentations made were oral



Biostatistician **Joseph Unger, PhD**, had a stellar year, publishing and presenting a series of high-impact SWOG results focused on health disparities at ASCO, AACR, ASCO Quality Care Symposium, and more. Some of his findings are surprising, including a meta-analysis showing more than half of all cancer patients offered a clinical trial agree to participate — including Black patients, an historically underrepresented group.

94 New Member Sites



Our Highlights

- We onboarded five community advocates this summer, bringing our total number of patient advocates to 28 and adding additional representatives from the Asian Pacific Islander, Black, and AYA communities as well as first-time advocates representing military veterans and older adults.
- We made innovative strides in operations, launching a new conflict management system and a new learning management system online, and also cut triage trial approval notification times significantly. Triage letters took anywhere from one to six weeks to get to principal investigators, who now get them in a week or less.
- We brought on a new chair, Allison Caban-Holt, PhD, to lead the recruitment and retention committee, which aims to improve patient diversity in our trials and increase diversity in our leadership and membership. The committee joined our leadership with the patient advocate committee to win a grant award this fall from The Hope Foundation for Cancer Research to advance these efforts, which, along with a new SWOG member training program, will improve our equity efforts in 2021 and beyond.
- We launched two new working groups, both out of our early therapeutics and rare cancers committee. The CNS working group, which focuses on brain and spinal cord tumors and brain metastases, is headed by Manmeet Ahluwalia, MD, from Cleveland Clinic and the sarcoma working group is headed by Lara Davis, MD, from Oregon Health & Science University. If they roll out strong studies, and the SWOG executive team and Board of Governors approves, the working groups will result in new committees.



• We shared a bumper crop of newsworthy research at major conferences such as ASCO, AACR, ASH and the Society of Immunotherapy Treatment in Cancer this year, and had a robust year for publications. SWOG grabbed international attention in December, when Kevin Kalinsky, MD, presented results of S1007, known as RxPONDER, at a press conference at the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium.

THE HOPE FOUNDATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH

Changing How We Work, Together

Did you visit SWOG’s website this past year? Engage with one of the group’s training programs, or attend a virtual group meeting session? If so, we were there with you. When SWOG had to pivot to the use of new tools to continue its work, we helped with those changes, too. Engagement across the network looked much different in 2020, but we all found new ways to stay in touch and stay on track with vital clinical trial processes.

The results our grantees’ research produced in 2020 inspired us. The interactions our program teams managed remotely motivated us. The volunteerism of our board members and our funding review teams humbled us. You gave your time, and you shared your expertise. Through these challenging months, you were with us, too.

We don’t know how 2021 will unfold, but we’re excited by the potential to continue to innovate together. Our charitable support for SWOG will help find new ways to make the best cancer care available to patients everywhere. Despite new obstacles and persistent changes, SWOG has Hope — and so do you.

Onward and be well,

Johanna R. Horn
Johanna R. Horn
President & CEO
The Hope Foundation
for Cancer Research



2020 BY THE NUMBERS

GRANTS Coltman Fellowships, Career Development and Impact Awards, SEED Fund, SWOG Trial Support and VA Integration Support grants funded: \$1,655,117	INFRASTRUCTURE Continued support for SWOG’s biostatistical team, Latin America Initiative, group meetings, website and communications: \$665,000	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Funding for SWOG’s expanded patient advocate committee, young investigators, and other virtual training opportunities: \$100,000
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