



The Beacon

E-NEWSLETTER OF THE BLADDER CANCER ADVOCACY NETWORK • BCAN.ORG

August 1, 2025

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A Path Through Uncertainty and Strength



Dave Oravetz had no idea that a simple act of helping his daughter would be the first step in a life-changing journey. What began with a few small, unexplained symptoms soon unfolded into a complex search for answers involving multiple doctors and difficult choices.

Drawing on his past experiences with other cancers, he leaned on the strength of his loved ones and his own resilience to navigate the uncertainty ahead. His story is one of persistence, thoughtful decision-making, and finding hope in each new challenge.

[Read Dave's Story](#)

BCAN Sends Well-Wishes to Deion Sanders Following His Revelation of Bladder Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment

The Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN) extends heartfelt well-wishes to University of Colorado head football coach and NFL Hall of Famer Deion Sanders, who on July 28 publicly shared his diagnosis and treatment for bladder cancer.



Mr. Sanders revealed that he underwent a radical cystectomy—the surgical removal of his bladder—after a malignant tumor was discovered. His physician, Dr. Janet Kukreja (former BCAN [John Quale Travel Fellow](#)), noted that the cancer was detected early, before it could spread. Due to the high risk of recurrence associated with his specific cancer type, Mr. Sanders opted for this procedure.

[Read BCAN's statement here](#)

Upcoming Webinars

Understanding A New Treatment Option for Advanced Bladder Cancer

EV + pembrolizumab is reshaping advanced bladder cancer treatment, offering a new option that has doubled patient survival compared to traditional chemotherapy. Join Dr. Vadim S. Koshkin, a Genitourinary Oncologist at UCSF, to learn how this therapy works, who it can benefit, and what patients can expect. You'll also hear directly from a patient who has received this treatment, sharing their experience and insights.

August 14, 2025 | 6:00 PM ET

[Register here](#)

Meet August's Partner in Progress: Ferring Pharmaceuticals

BCAN is proud to partner with [Ferring Pharmaceuticals](#) during August in our shared quest to create better todays and more tomorrows for bladder cancer patients and families.



This month, Ferring is focusing on the often unsung heroes of a bladder cancer journey: **the caregivers**.

We have a wonderful story about Drew and Erica who were caregivers to their mom, Fran. You can read more about it by [visiting their Partner in Progress page](#) on the BCAN web site.

2025 Young Investigator Awardees Named

At BCAN, we're committed to supporting the next generation of scientists working to create better todays and more tomorrows for patients and families. Our Bladder Cancer [Young Investigator Awards](#) provide one-year, \$75,000 grants to early-career researchers across a range of scientific fields.



These awards help promising investigators grow their careers while advancing research that has the potential to transform the lives of bladder cancer patients. They are part of BCAN's broader commitment to research, with **over \$11 million in grants funded to date**.



The recipients of the 2025 Young Investigator Awards are: **Meera Chappidi**, MD MPH, Acting Instructor and Fellow in Urologic Oncology at the University of Washington; **Patrick McGillivray**, MD, Medical Oncology Fellow at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; and **Mohamed Osman**, MBBCh, Postdoctoral Associate at Weill Medical College of Cornell University.

[Learn more about the awardees](#)

Fall Summit 2025: Fostering Community, Sharing Insights, Inspiring Hope

Save the date—**October 17–18, 2025**—and join us in Columbus, Ohio for a free and uplifting event that unites the bladder cancer community. BCAN's [Summit for Patients and Families](#) offers a special opportunity for patients, survivors, caregivers, and healthcare professionals to come together, share experiences, and find support in a welcoming and hopeful setting.

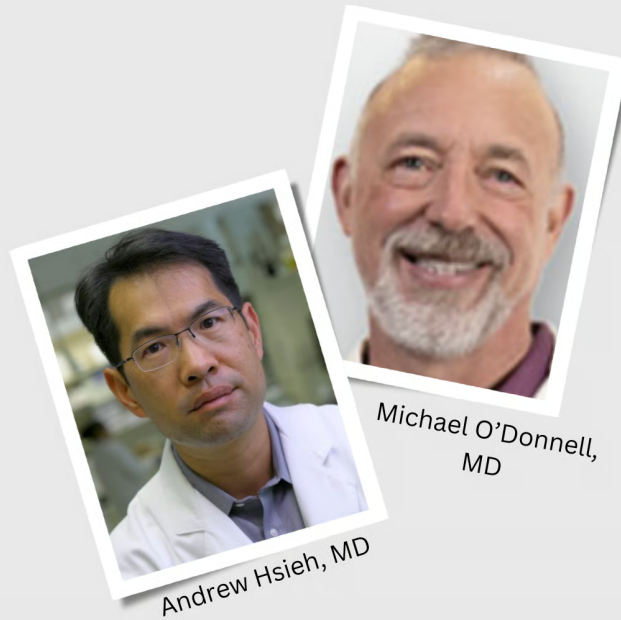


This is a unique opportunity to connect with others who truly understand, gain meaningful insights, and renew a sense of hope. With sessions covering everything from survivorship and life beyond treatment to the latest advancements in bladder cancer research, you'll leave feeling informed, supported, and inspired. Wherever you are in your journey, you'll find community and encouragement here. Join us in Columbus for an experience that will empower, uplift, and energize you.

[Register today!](#)

Want to know more about our Summits? Explore videos from our [Spring 2025 Summit for Patients and Families](#).

2025 BCAN Research Innovation Award Recipients



At BCAN, we're confident that the future of bladder cancer research is full of promise.

On July 10th, we proudly announced the two recipients of our esteemed 2025 Research Innovation Awards. These \$300,000 grants honor exceptional researchers who are leading the way with bold, innovative approaches and a strong dedication to advancing the field of bladder cancer research.

This year's honorees are **Michael O'Donnell**, MD, Richard D. Williams Chaired Professor of Urology and Director of Urologic Oncology at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, and **Andrew Hsieh**, MD, Professor and Associate Director, Human Biology Division, Professor Clinical Research Division, Fred Hutch Cancer Center.

[Read more about their research proposals here](#)

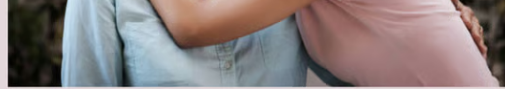
Secure Your Loved Ones' Future Using FreeWill

It's National Make-A-Will Month

This month is all about protecting what matters most - create your will today!

Make my will





August is **National Make a Will Month**, and BCAN is proud to offer a free and simple way for our community to create a legally binding will. We've partnered with [FreeWill](#), an easy-to-use online platform that helps you take care of what matters most—in just 20 minutes.

By creating your will this month, you can gain peace of mind, protect your loved ones, and even choose to support the future of the Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN). With nearly 67% of American adults currently without a will, this is a meaningful opportunity to plan ahead and ensure your wishes are honored.

Click below to get started with this free and valuable resource.

[Tell me more about FreeWill](#)

FREE RESOURCES FOR OUR COMMUNITY



BCAN News

Stay up to date with the latest stories, research updates, and community highlights by visiting our news page.

[Explore here »](#)



Clinical Trials

Discover bladder cancer clinical trials in your area and explore potential new treatment options.

[Learn more »](#)



Bladder Cancer Survivorship

Helpful tools and resources created specifically for patients and families navigating the bladder cancer survivorship journey.

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