

# 2023 Impact Report

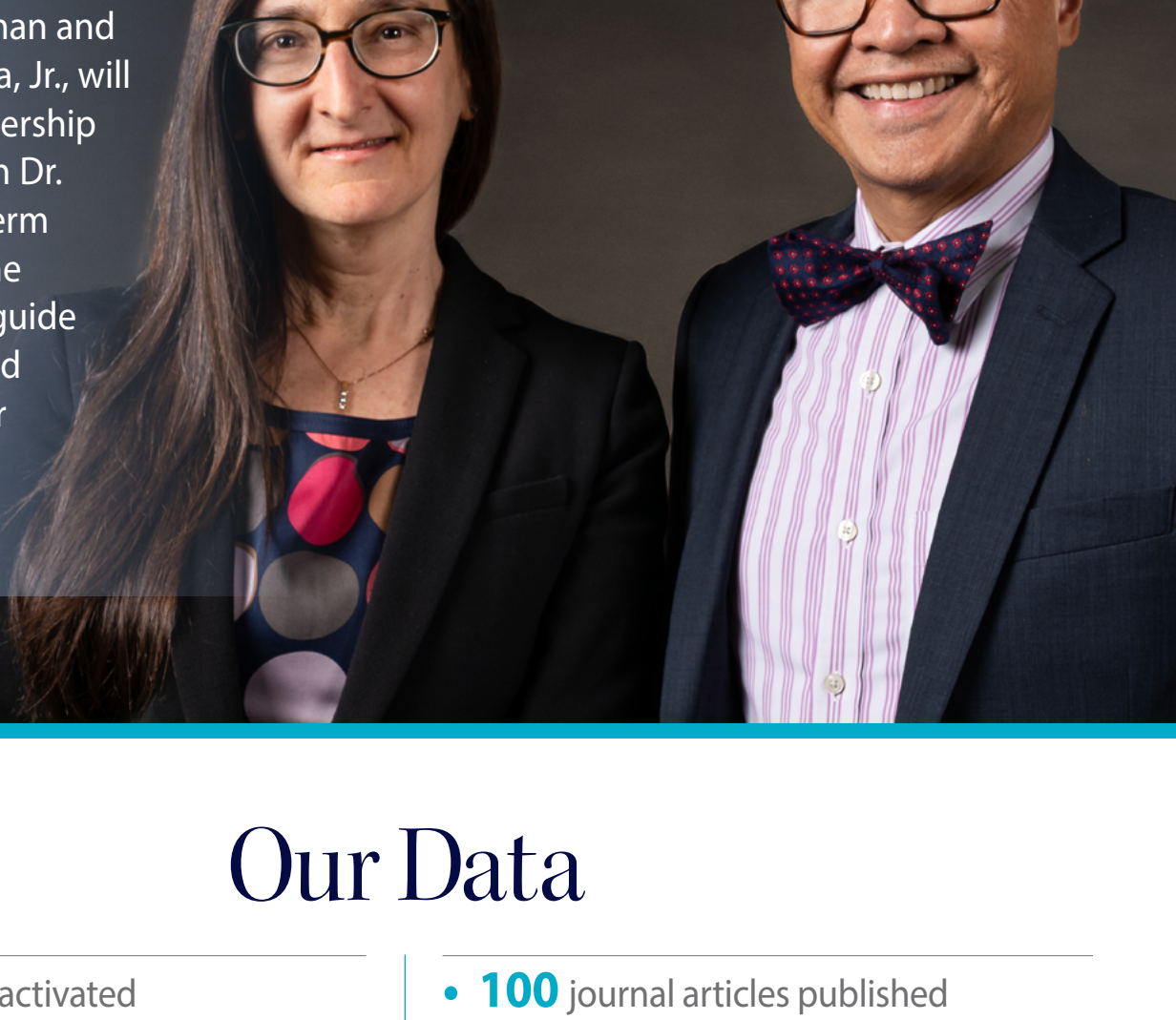
🎉 **2023 was a memorable year for SWOG! Our scientific impact was unmistakable, with practice-changing results in bladder cancer, leukemia, lymphoma, and melanoma. We opened the groundbreaking Pragmatica-Lung, completed Stage 1 of our ImmunoMATCH pilot, published a hugely successful palliative care study, and are on the cusp of activating myeloMATCH. With a return to historic numbers of trial activations and patient enrollments, SWOG's future has never been brighter.** 🎉

*Charles D. Blanke, MD*

**Charles D. Blanke, MD**  
Chair, SWOG Cancer Research Network

## We made SWOG history this year by choosing our first group co-chairs-elect.

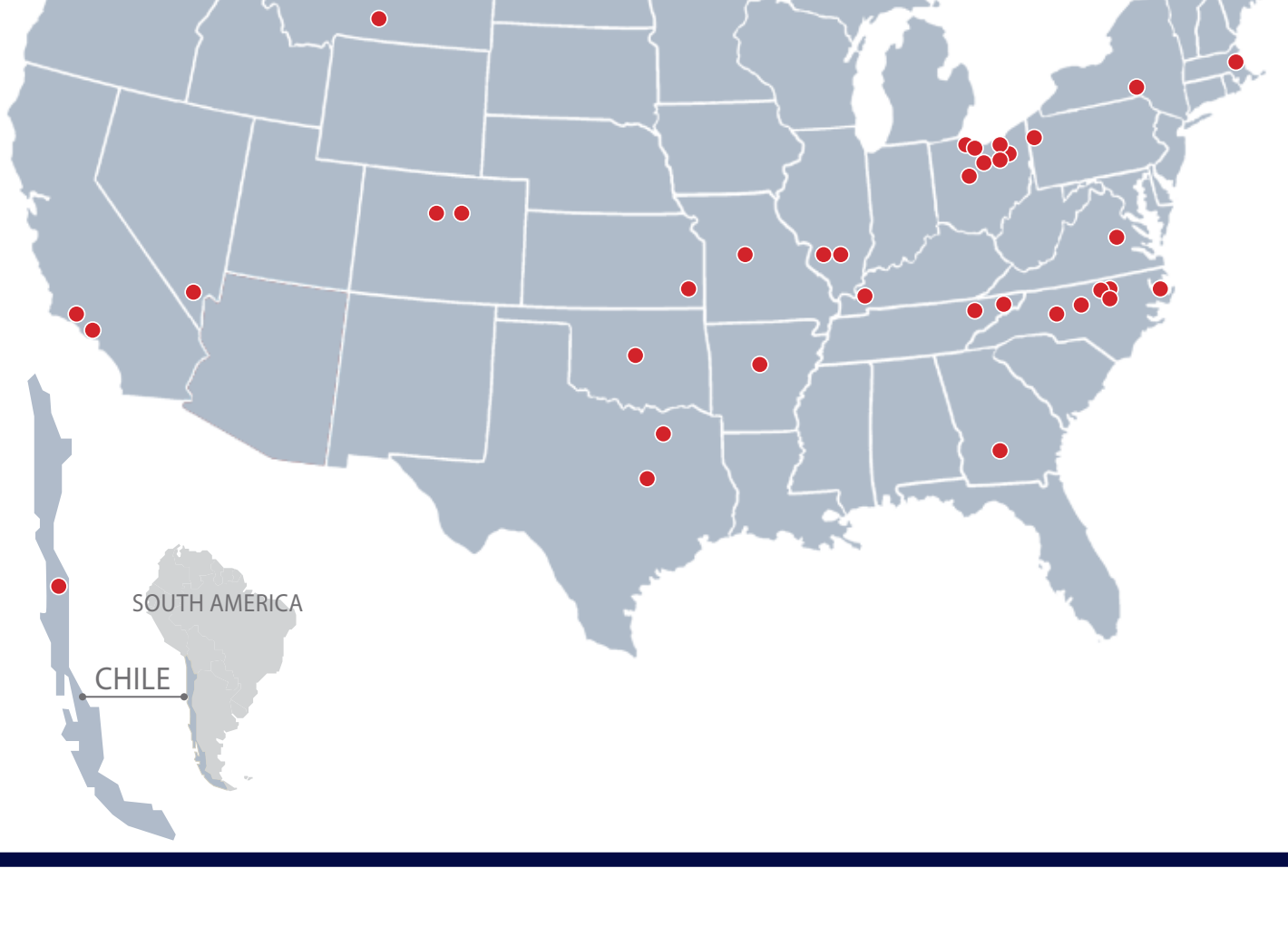
Drs. Dawn Hershman and Primo "Lucky" Lara, Jr., will equally share leadership of the group when Dr. Charles Blanke's term ends in 2026. In the interim, they will guide SWOG's next round of National Cancer Institute grant applications.



## Our Data

- **13** SWOG trials activated
- **7** SWOG trials closed
- **39** SWOG clinical and translational concepts reviewed by leadership
- **9** requests for trial data approved
- **4,232** patients enrolled on all SWOG-run trials, not counting screening registrations
- **100** journal articles published
  - **58%** published in high impact factor journals
- **93** oral or poster presentations made
  - **26%** of presentations were oral

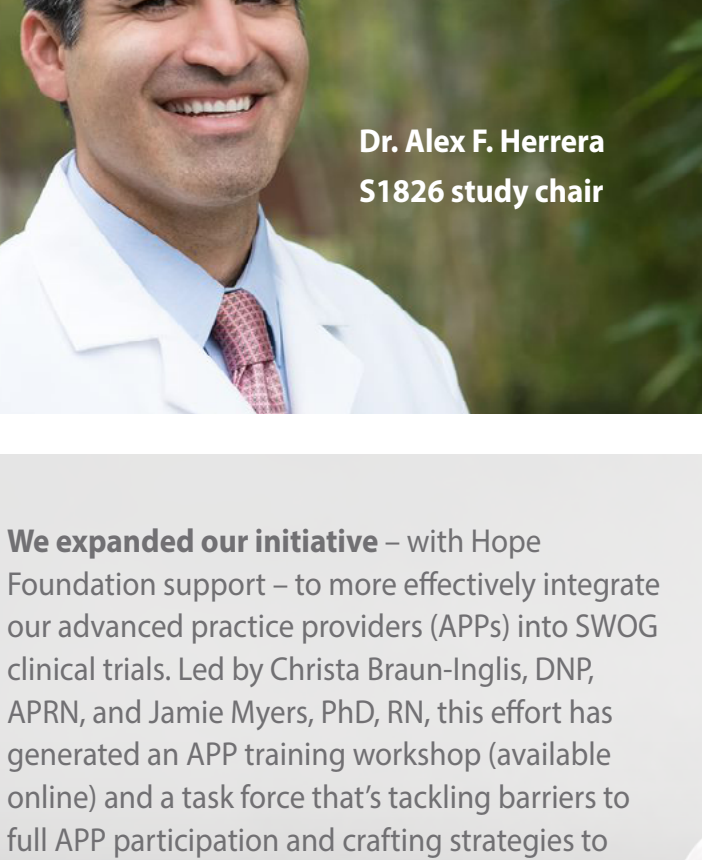
## 37 New Member Sites



## Our Highlights

**We'll remember 2023 as the year we launched S2302 Pragmatica-Lung** to extraordinary enthusiasm, as a model for streamlined, pragmatic clinical trials that can be opened everywhere and are designed to enroll a widely representative population of patients. Ten months after activation, accrual is both robust and diverse!

**Pragmatica-Lung**  
A real-world clinical trial for patients whose non-small cell lung cancer has returned after chemo- and immuno-therapy



**Dr. Alex F. Herrera**  
S1826 study chair

**With S1826, we set a new standard of care for treating patients with advanced Hodgkin lymphoma**, with an immunotherapy combination that cut patients' risk of progression or death by one-half, resulted in fewer side effects, and which will help harmonize treatment regimens for pediatric and adult patients. The largest ever NCTN effort in this disease, S1826 was also the first collaboration between the Children's Oncology Group and the adult NCTN groups on a joint study in pediatric and adult patients.

**We expanded our initiative** – with Hope Foundation support – to more effectively integrate our advanced practice providers (APPs) into SWOG clinical trials. Led by Christa Braun-Inglis, DNP, APRN, and Jamie Myers, PhD, RN, this effort has generated an APP training workshop (available online) and a task force that's tackling barriers to full APP participation and crafting strategies to expand their roles within SWOG.



**Christa Braun-Inglis, DNP, APRN, and Jamie Myers, PhD, RN, asked a simple question: Given that APPs do so much of the clinical care, why are they not more integrated into clinical research?**

Anne Marie Mercurio

**We marked a watershed leadership transition in our patient advocate committee**, with a pair of advocates now sharing the leadership role as co-chairs. Barbara Segarra-Vazquez, DHSc, and Anne Marie Mercurio are poised to move the committee forward, ensuring SWOG is conducting the most patient-centric research possible. In welcoming new co-chairs, we extend profound thanks to inaugural chair Rick Bangs, whose leadership and vision were essential in building the NCI's largest, most experienced advocate team.



Barbara Segarra-Vazquez



**We brought the landmark DART trial, the first such federal effort in patients with rare cancers, to a successful close.** Under Drs. **Young Kwang Chae, Sandip Patel, and Razelle Kurzrock**, this basket trial treated 798 patients with 53 different rare tumor types at more than 1,000 sites. DART's results have already led to changes in a number of NCCN guidelines, with more to come. Stay tuned for DART-2!



**We had a year to remember at professional meetings.** At ASCO, we reported our work in a record 41 abstracts, 30 SWOG-led, including five oral presentations, headlined by a plenary talk on the S1826 results in Hodgkin lymphoma. We also presented results at AACR and ASH that are likely to change practice in melanoma and leukemia.

**We again showed that public-powered cancer research is vital**, definitively answering two important surgical questions unlikely to have been addressed with industry trials. S1011 found patients with bladder cancer derive no survival benefit to do face greater risks when they get extended versus standard lymph node removal at surgery. And S1316 demonstrated that patients with advanced cancer who develop a malignant bowel obstruction have better quality of life when they have surgery versus non-surgical management.

**We held our first DEI Town Hall**, welcoming Dr. Christopher Cross from ASCO's Center for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, opening doors to future collaborations in this domain between ASCO and the NCTN. We also congratulate our inaugural DEI champions as they round out their official terms working to diversify enrollment to SWOG trials.



**SWOG DEI champions Dr. Manuel Gutarra, recipient of a Robert A. Winn Diversity in Clinical Trials Career Development Award in support of his efforts on S2209, and Lucy Gansauer, who visited selected sites to boost S2302 Pragmatica-Lung enrollment of patients from historically underrepresented groups**

## THE HOPE FOUNDATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH

# The Sky's the Limit

As a non-profit dedicated to advancing the best cancer science, we enjoy a special vantage point at the forefront of breakthroughs. It's hard to convey how exciting our work can be. Trials take time, but the payoff is real, and it's measured in years saved and improved for patients.

In 2023, our 30th supporting SWOG research, we offered research funding, advanced training, professional development, and travel awards to more network members than ever. As I said, it's an exciting time to be leading Hope. We owe many thanks to the incredible staff who power our work behind the scenes.

### This year we:

- **Funded a new VA storefront**, a consortium of several VA medical centers coordinated and supported by a central hub site and staff. This new hub is based in San Antonio, at South Texas Veterans Healthcare System, and has made promising progress in its first year.
- **Announced three career awards** for clinicians leading group studies testing new approaches in lymphoma, kidney cancer, and genomics, as well as a **new Impact grant** to advance bladder cancer research.
- **Approved our largest ever, multi-year pledge to fund complex biostatistical effort** for the statistical team in Seattle – \$1.4 million over four years.

These are just a few of our newest funding awards, and they fall into the largest of the categories shown in the pie chart below – research awards and priority initiatives. Research awards fund members' unique projects and trials, while initiatives include some of our long-term efforts to advance group priorities like diversity and inclusion, strategic partnerships – and complex statistical efforts, as noted above.

Time and again, we've helped SWOG to build a critical mass, seeding innovation that eventually becomes an integral part of the everyday work of the network. And, I'm pleased to report, we continue to do this with minimal administrative costs, which means more of every dollar we raise directly supports our mission.



This past spring, when I sat down to talk with colleague Cathy Tangen for our 30th anniversary retrospective, she said something that's stuck with me since: *"In the beginning, as The Hope Foundation came on the scene, we didn't know what it could do. As we continued to communicate and express our needs and see what was available ... sky's been the limit."*

And she's right. Thanks to the incredible minds of our leaders and members, the sky truly is the limit. I can't wait to see what we accomplish together in the year ahead.

*Johanna R. Horn*  
**Johanna R. Horn**  
President & CEO