

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The EndBrainCancer Initiative to Feature Renowned Brain Cancer and Modified Polio Virus Duke Researcher, Dr. Annick Desjardins, as its Keynote Speaker for the 2019 Annual May “Brains Matter” ACTION Dinner as Advocacy is Underway Now to Bring this Treatment Option to the Seattle Area

Seattle, WA - May 13, 2019 - The [EndBrainCancer Initiative](#) (EBCI) announced today that noted Duke researcher and neuro-oncologist, [Annick Desjardins](#), M.D., will be the keynote speaker at its 8th annual “Brains Matter” Education, Awareness, and ACTION Dinner, to be held at the Bellevue Club on May 16th, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Dr. Desjardins is best known for her work with the re-engineered poliovirus to treat recurrent glioblastoma, rGBM, presented on the [CBS News 60 Minutes program](#) in 2015 and on a follow-up [CBS News segment](#) in 2018. The original report featured Stephanie Lipscomb who was the first human to receive this treatment and who was cured. Dr. Desjardins keynoted EBCI's 2016 “Brains Matter” event and Stephanie received the EndBrainCancer Initiative's national HOPE Award presented by [Novocure](#).

“We are thrilled to welcome back Dr. Desjardins who will update us on the progress of the phase 1 & 2 nationwide clinical trials,” commented Dellann Elliott Mydland, President & Co-founder of EBCI. The poliovirus therapy obtained “breakthrough therapy” designation in 2016 from the FDA and Phase 1 trial [early results](#) showed, according to a June 2018 Duke Medical Center report in *Science Daily*, improved survival for some patients. Researchers including Dr. Desjardins urge caution as the research is in the early stages. Trials are expanding to six other sites in the U.S. The EndBrainCancer Initiative has been advocating for several years for this treatment option/clinical trial to open in the Seattle area. EBCI can now report that discussions are underway at the Swedish Neuroscience Institute/Ivy Center for Advanced Brain Tumor Treatment and the University of Washington Medical Center/Alvord Brain Tumor Center to discuss this possibility in the future.

EBCI also announced that Kristen McQueen is the [2019 National HOPE Award winner](#) presented by [Novocure](#). Kristen was selected following a national outreach campaign to nominate a brain cancer patient who most embodies HOPE in facing this



Stephanie Lipscomb, first patient to receive modified poliovirus treatment and 2016 National HOPE Award Winner and Dr. Annick Desjardins, 2019 Keynote Speaker



Dr. Annick Desjardins, Duke University Researcher

disease. Kristen was selected in part due to her work with Camp “Mak-A-Dream” where she mentors children facing cancer in themselves or a family member. Kristen will receive the award and share her story at the May 16th Dinner.

The “Brains Matter” Education, Awareness, and ACTION Dinner (Presenting Sponsor, [AbbVie](#)) benefits the national programs, services and advocacy work of the EndBrainCancer Initiative (EBCI). May is national Brain Tumor Awareness month and the EBCI team is celebrating its 17 years of national programs and services to the brain tumor industry. EBCI works with patients regionally and nationwide to directly connect them to Centers of Excellence, specialists, advanced treatments, and clinical trials. The event also includes a champagne reception, Live Auction and Raise the Paddle fundraiser. Tickets are \$150. Registration and Corporate Table sponsorship details can be found on [EBCI's web site](#).



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“While continuing our national advocacy work, programs and services, our focus over the next several years will be fueling research and getting patients into this research as appropriate within the Greater Puget Sound,” Mydland concluded. “The Puget Sound region features several phenomenal cancer research and treatment centers, but currently there are only a very limited number of clinical trials actually recruiting for brain cancer. Patients are often forced to leave our region to participate in trials. Our renewed focus is to change this hardship and we are actively advocating for new clinical trials right here in the Greater Puget Sound. Our vision, shared by local partners, is to make the Puget Sound a major brain cancer research and treatment hub for the U.S. and world.”

The 2019 “Brains Matter” Dinner is sponsored by: Presenting Sponsor, [AbbVie](#); Media Sponsor, [Comcast Spotlight](#); National HOPE Award Sponsor, [Novocure](#); [JMS Construction](#); [University of Florida Health](#); [The Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center at Duke](#); Corporate Partner, [Store My Tumor](#).

About the EndBrainCancer Initiative

The [EndBrainCancer Initiative](#) (EBCI, formerly the Chris Elliott Fund) is a national brain cancer and brain tumor patient advocacy and services organization and 501(c) 3 social enterprise with offices in Redmond, Washington. Established in 2002 and now celebrating 17 years of service, EBCI is committed to finding a cure for brain cancer and bringing HOPE to the lives of patients and their families through its programs:

- “Direct Connect” Patient Support and Services Program
- Brain Tumor Disease Education, Awareness, and Outreach Program
- Brain Tumor Patient Advocacy and Access
- [First Step Initiative](#)
- [Team Up Initiative](#)

Since its founding, EBCI has helped thousands of patients, caregivers, and their families and has become a credible and trusted resource at all levels in the brain cancer treatment community from patients to research institutions to pharmaceutical and regulatory entities advocating on the National and State level for the approval and reimbursement of new therapies for cancer patients. EBCI also participates as the “Patient Voice” in clinical trial design, an example can be seen in *CNS Oncology* ([Link to Article](#)).

The EndBrainCancer Initiative (EBCI) also participates in a program at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Cancer Institute (NCI), Center for Cancer Research (CCR), Neuro-Oncology Branch (NOB) called [NCI-CONNECT](#) (Comprehensive Oncology Network Evaluating Rare CNS Tumors). The program aims to advance the understanding of rare adult central nervous system (CNS) cancers by establishing and fostering patient-advocacy-provider partnerships and networks to improve approaches to care and treatment.

EBCI supports about 900+ patients, caregivers and families, free of charge annually through its “Direct Connect” Program, and provides Education/Awareness/Outreach to over 8.7 million annually, including members of the Brain Tumor Community. EBCI is a member of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), Society for Neuro-Oncology (SNO), American Association of Neuroscience Nurses, American Association for Cancer Research, and Life Sciences Washington, among other organizations.

If we can help, please contact us at WeCare@EndBrainCancer.org or 425.444.2215. To support EBCI’s efforts, programs, and free services, provide a gift today at www.endbraincancer.org

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