



Susan G. Komen

Research Grants – Fiscal Year 2015

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Tufts Breast Cancer Training Program to Reduce Asian Health Disparities

Investigator(s): Karen Freund, M.D.; Susan Parsons, M.D.

Lead Organization: Tufts Medical Center

Grant Mechanism: Graduate Training in Disparities Research Grants **Grant ID:** GTDR15333918

Public Abstract:

The Tufts Breast Cancer Training Program to Reduce Asian Health Disparities will train students to conduct breast cancer health disparities research, to ensure equity for all women with breast cancer. Our program will focus on breast cancer health disparities in Asian Americans, especially immigrant Chinese women. Asian Americans are the only racial/ethnic group in which cancer is the leading cause of death. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer in Asian women. There is a lack of knowledge about breast cancer in Asian American women, and Chinese American women specifically. We know this group has delays and incomplete breast cancer treatment. This is in part due to language barriers, cultural barriers, and lack of trust in western medical care. It is also in part due to differing beliefs in what causes cancer and how it should be treated. We need to study the best methods to address these barriers. Tufts Medical Center sits within Boston's Chinatown and provides care for this vibrant community. We will train students to find ways to best support immigrant Chinese women through their breast cancer journey. We will identify interested students from the Tufts Cancer Center oncology fellowship training program, and students interested in the master's or doctoral program. We will select students with the background to complete the coursework. More importantly, we will choose students with the dedication to serve Asian American women with breast cancer. Tufts University will provide a rich set of resources to help trainees achieve their goals. Trainees will work with two breast cancer advocates, a consultant in traditional Chinese medicine, and a network of Chinese community based organizations already committed and engaged to participate in research and research training of our



students. Each trainee will have a team of mentors to help their progress. They will have an overall mentor, a research project mentor, a mentor to help with data analysis, and an advocate to support their work. Our mentors are nationally known researchers in cancer disparities. Students will have their own research projects, drawn from the ongoing projects of the mentors. Students will complete a thesis, and present their work at local and national cancer meetings. They will prepare their research for scientific publication. The program will evaluate the progress of students and provide extra support for those who need it. Our training program will prepare students to perform research in Asian breast cancer disparities that meets important community needs. If successful, this research will have a major impact on the care to Asian women with breast cancer.

