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GRANT SPOTLIGHT: DESIGNATED

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Dr. Jill M. Siegfried investigates the mysterious link between estrogens and lung cancer, a probable factor in risk of lung cancer in non-smoking women. Dr. Siegfried's 2009 V Foundation Designated Grant helped establish new clinical trials for lung cancer patients at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute. The \$1 million grant was instrumental in translating her lab research into "bench-to-bedside" trials that potentially benefit smoking and non-smoking patients. Her studies showed that the link to estrogen is also important in men with lung cancer.

"I am very honored to have received this funding at such a critical time, when it is very hard to obtain research funds from federal grants," said Dr. Siegfried. "This money is allowing me to continue moving my research forward to patients in the clinic."

Dr. Siegfried is a professor of pharmacology in the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and co-director of the Lung and Thoracic Malignancies Program at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI). Her research examines the role of hormones in the development and growth of lung cancer. She is currently exploring if an estrogen-targeting drug combo, often used to treat breast cancer, may also help prevent lung cancer.

Dr. Siegfried and her UCPI colleagues received a five-year, \$12 million National Cancer Institute Specialized Program of Research Excellence (SPORE) grant for lung cancer research. The grant allowed Dr. Siegfried to further study how estrogens affect the risk of developing lung cancer in men and women. "I was able to renew a major grant from the National Cancer Institute in part because The V Foundation grant allowed us to complete a clinical trial."

Dr. Siegfried lends her scientific expertise to the UCPI and the National Lung Cancer Partnership scientific advisory board. She received the 15th Annual Alton Ochsner Foundation Award Relating Smoking and Health, recognizing her contribution to understanding the enhanced susceptibility of women to lung cancer.

"Although the research path can often be slower than we would wish," says Dr. Siegfried, "foundations like The V Foundation help us maintain our enthusiasm and commitment to helping patients achieve better outcomes. The legacy of Jimmy Valvano lives on in the many contributors to The V Foundation and its grant recipients."