Messino Cancer Centers Oncologists Recognized for Giving Back to Their Community

December 16, 2020

This time of year is a time of thanks and gratitude, at Messino Cancer Centers the focus is on supporting their patients and community

Asheville, N.C., Dec. 16, 2020, Messino Cancer Centers (MCC), an American Oncology Network, LLC (AON) partner, is pleased to announce that Medical Oncologist Christopher Chay, MD is a recipient of the 2020 Excellence in Medicine *Pride in the Profession Award*. This award is one of the highest honors given by the American Medical Association (AMA) and recognizes physicians who aid underserved populations in the U.S. Dr. Chay has been honored for his efforts in championing an Oncology Medical Home model of delivering quality and value in cancer care to rural areas. The national award ceremony will be in 2021 but it is unclear at this point if it will be in person or virtual due to COVID-19.

Through his initiatives, Dr. Chay recruited leading medical oncology experts, developed a clinical trials program and successfully launched a triage/urgent care for cancer patients in the most rural parts of Western North Carolina. His actions resulted in some of the lowest rates of emergency room visits and hospitalizations for this areas oncology patients.



“I am so honored yet humbled to receive this award by the American Medical Association,” said Dr. Chay. “I am passionate about helping my patients during their cancer journey, but I also care deeply about giving back to the community where my patients live, making sure they have access to quality care and positive outcomes.”

With this award, Dr. Chay receives a $2,500 grant which he is donating to LoveLights. This charitable foundation serves patients who have a cancer diagnosis and need assistance during treatment. The charity provides support for food, utilities and transportation for those in need.

Founder of Messino Cancer Centers Medical Oncologist Michael Messino, MD was also awarded earlier this year for his service to the community. Dr. Messino was the recipient of North Carolina’s highest award for state service granted by the Office of the Governor.

“From the start our philosophy has been to provide cutting-edge, evidence-based medicine with personalized care without worrying about the patients’ socioeconomic background or location,” said Dr. Messino.

This recognition for Dr. Chay is a great acknowledgement for him and the MCC team. Messino Cancer Centers was built on over 30 years of family caring for family by providing genuine kindness and compassion for their patients and their community. The team of 14 medical oncologists and 18 physician assistants and nurse practitioners and 120 staff members demonstrate their commitment to their community holding fundraisers throughout the year to raise money for various charitable organizations including LoveLights and Toys for Tots. Staff wishing to participate donate $5 to “dress down” on Fridays. Additionally, every month members of the MCC team cook and serve meals to the residents at Steadfast House.

“We admire the Messino physicians for their merited awards for giving back to their communities,” said AON CEO, Brad Prechtl, MBA. “As an AON partner practice, Messino Cancer Centers embodies AON’s mission of providing the highest quality, cost effective—yet compassionate cancer care close to where patients live.”

About Messino Cancer Centers: (MessinoCancerCenters.com)

Messino Cancer Centers (MCC) provides treatment for adult patients diagnosed with all types of cancer and blood disorders. We are experienced physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses and clinical support staff dedicated to providing the most advanced and innovative treatments of the

highest quality. We work together as a team and recognize that each patient is not just a person with cancer, but a unique individual. Care is provided with the utmost concern and consideration of what is best for the whole person throughout their cancer journey.

MCC physicians provide state-of-the-art evidence-based medicine for patients, incorporating personalized medicine, standard and nationally accepted guidelines, and clinical trials. Through care management and dedicated oncology certified staff, we provide support for patients through all phases of their diagnosis and treatment. The physicians of MCC are grounded in the region of Western North Carolina and devoted to providing care to patients in their communities.

About American Oncology Network, LLC: (AONcology.com)

American Oncology Network, LLC (AON) is an alliance of physicians and seasoned healthcare leaders partnering to ensure the long-term success of community oncology. Launched in 2018, the rapidly growing AON network represents 88 physicians and 57 nurse practitioners and physician assistants practicing across 15 states. The executive management team of AON brings more than three decades of oncology practice management experience, enabling physicians to focus on what matters most – providing the highest quality care for patients.

The organization provides unique and comprehensive protocols for managing administrative procedures and enhancing ancillary services for its affiliates. AON is able to aggregate volume and attain economies of scale, as it guides its member physicians and practices through the transition to value-based reimbursement models that improve the patient experience and help to reduce the per-capita cost of cancer care.

AON also provides a unique model of physician led, community-based oncology management. With services such as a centralized specialty pharmacy, diagnostics, pathology, fully integrated electronic medical records, a care management team and a variety of financial assistance programs, an alliance with AON ensures that patients' experiences will be at the very pinnacle of cancer care today.

LoveLights:

LoveLights was established in 1998 to assist patients receiving cancer treatment. The LoveLights program provides aid by paying electric bills, buying heating oil, providing local transportation to appointments for cancer care, and supplying gift cards for groceries and incidentals.

Steadfast House:

Monthly members of the Messino Cancer Centers team cook and serve a meal to the residents at Steadfast House. Steadfast House is transitional housing that gives hope, healing, health, and home to single women, mothers with children, and female veterans in need.

Toys for Tots:

Western North Carolina Toys for Tots is a locally operated campaign of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Foundation. Messino Cancer Centers supports Toys for Tots during the iHeart Radio Toy Campaign in November and Jackson County Toy Run in collaboration with a local motorcycle club, Hell on Wheels.

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