



## **Hyundai Hope on Wheels Hyundai Scholar Research**

**Dr. Naomi Jill Balamuth**  
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

I am dedicated to improving the care of pediatric sarcoma patients through clinical and translational research. My fellowship training at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) has provided me with an excellent starting point for a career in pediatric oncology. My fellowship research project focused on the discovery of novel therapeutics in pediatric neuroblastoma. CHOP currently has one of the premier programs in the country for caring for patients with neuroblastoma. I will use the neuroblastoma model developed here as a guide to develop a world-class sarcoma program. Our sarcoma program will integrate outstanding patient care with scientific advancement, and hopefully bring novel therapies from the bench to the bedside. During the period of time I am supported by the Hyundai Scholar Award, I will establish a pediatric sarcoma patient database needed to initiate this program. I will also continue to contribute to a growing body of knowledge on solid tumors, particularly sarcomas.

Receiving the Hyundai Scholar Award will serve as a launching point for my career. The CHOP Oncology Clinic sees approximately 50-60 new sarcoma patients each year. I will build a database to capture information about our patients' care – including diagnosis, treatment plans, surgical approaches, complications from therapy, and supportive care. In addition, I will integrate this clinical information with other biological information, including tumor pathology, molecular genotyping, and expression profiling. By taking advantage of our division's vast experience with this particular patient population, there is certainly much to be learned by examining this large dataset. I will use this information to develop standards of care for our patients. In addition, I will use this information to implement novel programs, both therapeutic and supportive, for our sarcoma population. Because many sarcoma patients are adolescents and young adults, we plan to develop an Adolescent/Young Adult (AYA) clinic in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania, to care for these and other cancers that affect this population.

In addition to data collection and analysis, I also plan to move carefully selected novel therapies for pediatric sarcoma patients to the clinic. This will require careful collaboration with other investigators such as Drs. Womer and Peter Adamson at CHOP, and Drs. Arthur "Chip" Staddon and Keith Flaherty at Penn, as well

as the pharmaceutical industry as new, targeted agents are developed. The above-mentioned individuals have extensive experience with clinical trials, and moving new drugs through the pipeline.