

Join a movement to accelerate a cure for multiple myeloma this August at Marina Green

Meet MaryLee Millard, Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation MMRF 2024 Walk/Run: San Francisco Spirit of Hope Honoree

WEST BLOOMFIELD, MI, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2024

[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- For over 25 years, the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation® (MMRF) has been the leading cancer research organization solely focused on multiple myeloma, the second most common blood cancer.



MaryLee Millard, Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation San Francisco Spirit of Hope Honoree

When you [sign up for an MMRF Walk/Run event](#), you join nearly 30,000 participants across the country to accelerate a cure for each and every myeloma patient.

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Looking back to where we began over 25 years ago, myeloma research has been transformed thanks to the entire myeloma community.”

*Michael Andreini, CEO,
Multiple Myeloma Research
Foundation®*

“Looking back to where we began over 25 years ago, myeloma research has been transformed thanks to the persistence of the entire myeloma community. Yet, there is still much work to be done,” states Michael Andreini, President and Chief Executive Officer, Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation®. “We remain committed to taking calculated risks and driving innovation through collaboration with our partners, [we will continue to do great things on behalf of myeloma patients](#) everywhere.”

On Saturday, August 24th Marina Green, MMRF Walk / RUN San Francisco
Event Open 9:00am
Program Begins 9:20am

Walk/Run 10:00am – 11:15am
Closing Remarks 11:15am

Since the MMRF was founded over 25 years ago, it has raised over \$600 million for research, opened nearly 100 clinical trials, and helped bring over 15 FDA-approved therapies to market, which have tripled the life expectancy of myeloma patients.

Funds raised through past events have enabled the MMRF to:

- Invest over \$600M in research.
- Bring 15+ FDA-approved drugs to market.
- Triple patient survival.



MaryLee Millard, MMRF San Francisco Spirit of Hope Honoree

The Spirit of Hope Award is given to individuals/groups who inspire hope and show extraordinary commitment to the MMRF. This award is presented at every Walk/Run to a patient, caregiver, or family member who inspires hope through their resilience, perseverance, and dedication to the MMRF and its mission. The MMRF San Francisco Spirit of Hope Honoree is MaryLee Millard and this year's Chair is Dr. Jeffrey Wolf, Dr. Tom Martin, & Dr. Ajai Chari, UCSF.

Meet MaryLee Millard, MMRF 2024 Walk/Run: San Francisco Spirit of Hope Honoree

How did you get involved with the MMRF?

Spirit of Hope Honoree is MaryLee Millard, Dennis and I didn't always have cancer. We were in the middle of a sailing circumnavigation, when I first started noticing how fatigued Dennis was getting. I would think that's how I will feel someday when I get to be Dennis's age (we were ten years apart in age). And then I noticed that we were both losing weight, but I thought that was from a healthy lifestyle living off the grid. But then I started getting fatigued too, which I attributed to the fact that I was doing more of the sailing and chores because Dennis was so tired and taking more naps.

All the signs of cancer were there for the two of us, but it took a boating accident off a remote island in Northern Australia that prompted us to get medical attention. Because we didn't have immediate access to good medical care, it took us a little over three months of sailing from Australia via Indonesia up to Singapore to get a proper diagnosis; we were told to go home immediately.

Once home, the doctors officially diagnosed Dennis with multiple myeloma. Because myeloma was my husband's first cancer diagnosis, we both felt that it was important to support and fundraise for this treatable, but not curable, cancer. Dennis started the tradition as he wanted to do something and felt that this was something that he could do from a hospital bed in the

cancer clinic. Our hopes were for a cure and to keep those treatments coming for those patients like Dennis who did not respond to the available treatments. Sadly, Dennis exhausted all the treatments, so it's important to keep pushing for more treatments until there is a cure.

Why did you choose to participate in the MMRF Walk/Run?

MMRF is considered one of the best charitable organizations where your dollar goes the furthest to fund research for a cure; that's important! It's a dream of mine to have a world without cancer

After I finished cancer treatment, Dennis and I started participating in the MMRF walks. He wanted to do something for the fight and realized that he could call family and friends for donations while getting chemo and blood/platelet infusions. While Dennis was in the early stages of his cancer, he was able to participate in the walks. Dennis was getting treatment at UCSF and we felt that it was important to support both MMRF and UCSF. We also have three neighbors (Bob, Alan, and Robin) fighting myeloma; plus, I lost a high school classmate (Gary) to myeloma, so the MMRF mission is near and dear to our hearts.

The Spirit of Hope is given to "individuals/groups who inspire hope and show extraordinary commitment to the MMRF." What does being given the award mean to you?

I am a grateful cancer survivor but have sadly lost many of my family members to cancer. This includes my husband Dennis Millard (total of four cancers: two blood cancers multiple myeloma and acute myeloid leukemia; head and neck cancer; and skin melanoma); my sister Teri Bent, my brother-in-law Mike Millard; my niece Heidi Chamberlain, my daughter-in-law Theresa (the mother of my three grandchildren, Brenton, Alex, and Maddie); my Aunt Pat; and many others. They are why this is a very meaningful honor. There is also an alarming rise of cancer amongst young people, including my niece Claire Bent, who was diagnosed with colon cancer at only 34 years old with a young baby not even six months old. I am grateful that I was cured but truly feel that I must carry the torch for those who have not been so fortunate. Every time there is a survivor, I jump for joy. I was deeply touched when I received this honor because volunteering/fundraising is how I channel my grief. It gives me hope for a cure and encourages me to continue volunteering.

The MMRF is delighted to recognize MaryLee Millard Spirit of Hope Honoree at the 2024 MMRF Team for Cures: San Francisco Walk/Run.

To learn more, Visit www.themmr.org.

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